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THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN DRAMA IN THE PHILIPPINES (1898-1912) AND ITS SOCIAL, POLITICAL, CULTURAL, DRAMATIC AND THEATRICAL BACKGROUND

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ABSTRACT

The social, political, cultural, dramatic and theatrical factors which contributed to the emergence of modern Filipino drama date back to the latter half of the nineteenth century. They achieved their maximal impact during the Revolution against Spain in 1896 and the subsequent American occupation of the Philippines in 1898. By 1898, modern Filipino drama had been born, and by 1912, it was established. Before the Revolution, one major form of native drama which appealed exclusively to the masses flourished. This was the kumedya or moro-moro, an acculturated form of the Spanish comedia, metrical romance, and danza de moros y cristianos which the Spaniards introduced as early as 1565. A vernacular play in verse, the kumedya or moro-moro dramatized the conflict between Christians and Muslims which, as the kumedya's theatrical highlight, was expressed in choreographed stage battles. Around this conflict revolved a romantic plot which featured exotic characters entangled in fantastic situations.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Spanish theatrical artists introduced then-current dramatic forms, notably the Spanish zarzuela, to the bourgeois theatre in Manila, whose audience included the nascent middle class. The desire of this native bourgeoisie to attain urbanity in the Spanish manner led them to look down upon the kumedya and to patronize imported Spanish plays and other foreign entertainments which sustained the bourgeois theatre in Manila. Moreover, in the 1880's, the ilustrados, a group of disaffected middle-class intellectuals, created a body of propagandistic writings that

initiated the nationalistic tradition in Philippine literature. Engendered by the ilustrados, nationalism culminated in a revolt of the masses.

The Revolution was the climax of the social, political, cultural, dramatic and theatrical processes which began in the 1850's, and which served as catalytic forces in the eventual birth of modern Filipino drama. The early manifestations of this drama include anti-colonialist plays, both musical and non-musical; native zarzuelas on domestic themes; and domestic, non-musical plays--all in the vernacular.

Thematically, anti-Spanish, then anti-American plays were radically different from the kumedya, which featured romantic complications and religious conflicts. The same nationalistic impulses that led to the Revolution also prompted native playwrights to adopt the zarzuela as a more appropriate native drama than the kumedya, which they viewed as a reflection of the intellectual repression characteristic of Spanish colonial rule. Through the zarzuela, these playwrights sought to raise the vernacular to a comparable level of prestige as Spanish. Vernacular prose dialogue brought domestic, non-musical plays closer to everyday reality than the kumedya with its archaic verses. Moreover, the contemporary situations and local characters of these domestic plays were more recognizably Filipino to the native audience than the fantastic situations and exotic characters of the kumedya.

The early manifestations of modern Filipino drama displayed dramaturgical shortcomings as loose structure, obvious contrivances, and the constant use of deus ex machina; and their characters, despite their modern costumes, were reminiscent of the kumedya's lovers and villains. Nonetheless, early modern Filipino plays offered native

audiences an alternative to the thoroughly romantic and escapist attitude of the kumedya: that of an immediate, though perhaps feeble, confrontation with the actualities of Philippine society at the turn of the twentieth century.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The year 1898 marks the emergence of modern drama in the Philippines. It was a drama that, unlike the vernacular kumedya or moro-moro (the major genre of the pre-modern period which employed verse dialogue, featured exotic characters, and dramatized a religious conflict) depicted contemporary native characters, themes, and situations. During the fifteen years that followed its initial appearance, modern Filipino drama developed, and by 1912, its distinctive characteristics had been established.

This dissertation defines the social, political, cultural, dramatic and theatrical factors which contributed to the emergence of modern Filipino drama and the characteristics of its early manifestations. These manifestations include anti-colonialist plays, both musical and non-musical; native zarzuelas on domestic themes; and domestic, non-musical plays--all in the vernacular. Moreover, this dissertation discusses how the impetus of the Revolution against Spain in 1896 and the effects of the subsequent American occupation in 1898 helped shape early modern Filipino plays. Finally, it describes how these plays embody the indigenous traditions found in the kumedya, and foreign influences found in late nineteenth century Spanish genres, especially the zarzuela.

No study of this nature and scope has yet been made. Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio's The Tagalog "Seditious" Playwrights: Early

American Occupation (1972)[1] deals only with anti-American plays and their historical background. It provides documented contemporary accounts of plays, performances, and playwrights' arrests by the American authorities. While it has proved invaluable to this study, it has left a need for a more thorough analysis of plays and of their relation to other genres of early modern Filipino drama. Such analysis this dissertation proposes to undertake. Each of four Master's theses[2] studies one playwright of the early modern period: Mariano Proceso Pabalan, Catalino Palisoc, Severino Reyes, and Juan Crisostomo Soto. The concentration on the individual playwright and his works has limited the scope and perspective of these theses.

General histories of theatre in the Philippines fail to provide a satisfactory overall picture of the beginnings of modern Filipino drama. This is understandable in the case of Vicente Barrantes' El teatro tagalo (1889)[3] and Wenceslao Retana's Noticias . . . de el teatro en filipinas . . . hasta (1909).[4] Both end their discussion with 1898, the year modern Filipino drama was born. Raymundo Bañas' Pilipino Music and Theater (1924)[5] provides

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[1]Manila: The Zarzuela Foundation of the Philippines, Inc., 1972.

[2]See bibliography, p. 204.

[3]Madrid: Tipografía de Manuel G. Hernandez, 1889.

[4]Noticias histórico-bibliográficas de el teatro en filipinas desde sus orígenes hasta 1898 (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suárez, 1909).

[5]Rpt. Quezon City, Philippines: Manlapaz Publishing Co., 1969.

biographical sketches of early modern playwrights, actors, and producers, but makes no coherent statement about modern Filipino drama per se. Ang Dulang Tagalog (1951)[6] by Federico Sebastian discusses the major playwrights of the early modern period and their significant plays, but is largely impressionistic rather than critical, and is totally devoid of documentation. The most recent historical survey of Philippine theatre, A Short History of Theater in the Philippines (1971),[7] edited by Isagani Cruz, which is a collection of essays by different authors, contains an essay on the native zarzuela[8] and another on the theatre of the early American occupation,[9] but no specific discussion of modern Filipino drama.

Apart from superficial references to modern drama, glaring inaccuracies in a number of textbooks on Philippine literature dramatize the need for a serious and careful study of modern drama in the Philippines. For instance, Philippine Literature from Ancient Times to the Present (1968)[10] by Teofilo del Castillo and Buenaventura Medina makes the sweeping statement that "modern playwriting in Tagalog started

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[6]Quezon City: Bede's Publishing House, 1951.

[7]Manila, Philippines: n.p., 1971.

[8]Isagani R. Cruz, "The Zarzuela in the Philippines," in A Short History, ed. I. Cruz, pp. 123-156, rpt. with slight modification in Solidarity, 7, no. 4 (April 1972), 69-80.

[9]I. Cruz, "The Colonial Theater," in A Short History, pp. 157-70.

[10]Quezon City: Del Castillo & Sons, 1968.

with Severino Reyes' serious attempts at presenting contemporary Philippine problems and scenes on stage at the inception of the American occupation."[11] This statement inexcusably overlooks the achievements of earlier playwrights whom Reyes himself acknowledged in his lifetime. In The Literature of the Filipinos (revised 1963),[12] the authors Jose and Consuelo Panganiban categorically state that Severino Reyes' first play was Walang Sugat (in fact, it was his third). Furthermore, the same authors have relied unquestioningly on Eufronio Alip's Tagalog Literature: A Historico-Critical Study (1930)[13] which contains many errors.[14] In the section on theatre of the American occupation, Alip classifies the native playwrights into "greater" and "minor" dramatists without, however, defining his criteria for "greatness." Such classification seriously and unjustifiably disregards distinctions of genre, subject matter, and chronology--distinctions which must be maintained. The need for the separation of fact from fiction and truth from error compellingly justifies a comprehensive study of the beginnings of modern drama in the Philippines.

In pursuit of this objective, this dissertation will first establish the historical context in which the birth of modern Filipino drama

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[11] del Castillo, p. 261.

[12] 1956; rpt. San Juan, Rizal, Philippines: Limbagang Pilipino, 1963.

[13] Manila: University of Santo Tomas Press, 1930.

[14] See Leopoldo Yabes and Teodoro Agoncillo, Glaring Errors in a Doctoral Dissertation: A Criticism of Eufronio M. Alip's "Tagalog Literature: A Historico-Critical Study" (Manila: n.p., 1935).

occurred. Then it will proceed to an analytical discussion of the early manifestations of this drama: anti-colonialist (first anti-Spanish, then anti-American) plays, native zarzuelas, and domestic, non-musical plays in the vernacular. This discussion constitutes the major portion of the dissertation, and provides the strongest justification for this study. To date, no analysis of this nature has been undertaken, and no precise description of early modern Filipino drama has been attempted. In view of the current desire in the Philippines for the creation of a national drama, an understanding of early modern Filipino drama in the light of its social, political, and cultural context might prove helpful.

As a point of departure for an examination of the backgrounds of modern Filipino drama, the next chapter presents an overview of the major pre-modern native drama, the kumedya or moro-moro.[15] Titled "Pre-Modern Filipino Drama," Chapter II deals with the kumedya because of all the dramatic or quasi-dramatic genres of the period, it most fully exemplifies the characteristics of pre-modern native drama. It manifests the poetic traditions found in the duplo (literally "double") and the karagatan (open sea),[16] which some authors, because of the dramatic qualities of these genres, have considered examples of pre-Spanish

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[15]Popular usage has made these two terms synonymous. The purposes of this dissertation do not warrant a determination of their chronology.

[16]Both genres are dramatic debates in verse. The karagatan involves a quasi-plot: to find a princess' ring at the bottom of the sea. The duplo consists of a series of defenses declaimed by the participants who are "accused" of a "crime."

native dramas.[17] Like the cenaculo--the staged version of the pasyon (the Passion chanted during Holy Week), and the tibag--a dramatization of St. Helena's search for the Holy Cross, both of which the kumedya predated,[18] the kumedya or moro-moro exhibits the deeply religious orientation of the pre-modern native theatre. Another genre, the shadow puppet play, whose origins are nebulous, appears--as far as actual evidence shows--to have evolved subsequent to the kumedya.[19] And finally, the kumedya was the most popular form of dramatic entertainment before and immediately after the Revolution, a fact which a group of early modern playwrights so resented that they launched a movement to dislodge it from the local stage in favor of what they considered a modern genre, the zarzuela. This chapter is not a detailed history of the kumedya; rather, it is an investigation of the salient features of the kumedya and a description of its audience.

Chapter III, "The Backgrounds of Modern Filipino Drama: Period Before the Revolution," describes the historical developments in the

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[17]See for instance, Francisco Tonogbanua, A Survey of Filipino Literature (Manila: The Author, 1959), p. 74; J. V. Mallari, "Drama in the Philippines," Pillars, 1 (March 1944), 6; Eric I. David, "The Roots of Philippine Theater in the Pre-Spanish Period," in A Short History, p. 39.

[18]The first pasyon was Gaspar Aquino de Belen's Ang Mahal na Passion ni Iesu Christong Poon Natin na Tola (The Holy Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in verse, 1704) in Tagalog. No date has been assigned to the first tibag (literally, the root of the Tagalog word which means "to dig"), but the absence of any mention of it in the earliest references to the kumedya might indicate its later emergence.

[19]Tonogbanua (p. 43) claims that the puppet plays of pre-Spanish times were "patterned after such Javanese puppet shows as wayang orang and the wayang purwa." No evidence of such influence has been shown. A nineteenth century puppet genre, the carrillo (literally, "pulley") first appeared in 1879. Retana (p. 153) surmises that "carrillo" was the surname of the genre's originator.

latter half of the nineteenth century which directly or indirectly influenced the subsequent emergence of the drama. It intends to show the fruitful interaction between the political, social, and economic forces which led to the Revolution and the cultural, dramatic, and theatrical influences which led to the birth of modern Filipino drama. Moreover, this chapter reveals the bourgeois roots of this drama. Throughout the chapter, the terms "bourgeois" and "bourgeoisie" are limited in connotation. Since the native middle class in the nineteenth century was more an elite rather than a business class, they differed little from the principalía or upper class. And since they were practically all mestizos (half-Spaniards), they differed little from the local Spaniards. The native bourgeoisie did not function independently of the upper class, so that in reality, there existed only two social classes: the elite and the masses. Furthermore, to speak of a bourgeois theatre in the Philippines does not presuppose the existence of an aristocratic theatre. In the Philippines of the 1850's until the outbreak of the Revolution, the Spanish theatre was at one and the same time the aristocratic and the bourgeois theatre: it was, to be more precise, the elitist theatre. Nonetheless, the repertoire of this theatre was dominated by Spanish and other foreign plays which were decidedly bourgeois in their subject, characters, and values; for this reason, the terms bourgeois and bourgeoisie have been employed.

The developments discussed in Chapter III reached a climax during the Revolution, which constitutes the subject of Chapter IV, "The Backgrounds of Modern Filipino Drama: Period of the Revolution." The first phase of the Revolution (1896-1897) sought to terminate more

than three centuries of Spanish rule. The second phase (1898-1902) coincided with the American occupation of the Philippines: Spanish rule ended, but American colonization immediately began. Antipathy toward the former Spanish oppressors easily turned against the new American colonizers; thus, early modern Filipino drama was, in part, a reaction against American presence. Chapter IV discusses only the negative aspects of early American occupation because early modern anti-American plays did not reflect the positive aspects. That the Philippines benefited from American colonization cannot be denied, but a discussion of these benefits is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

These three chapters lead to the examination of early modern Filipino plays in Chapter V. The core of this dissertation, Chapter V focuses on what constitutes the modernity of "Early Modern Plays and Playwrights." By an analysis of plot, theme, character, and scenic requirements or descriptions of actual productions--supplemented by brief biographies of playwrights and actors who wrote and performed early modern Filipino plays, as well as descriptions of theatrical companies which produced them--this chapter defines the nature of early modern Filipino drama and theatre. To complete the picture, the chapter closes with a discussion of the audience of early modern Filipino drama.

Two factors determined the selection of plays in Chapter V. The dearth of published play scripts and unpublished manuscripts, or of contemporary accounts and descriptions of them, necessarily restricted the range of possible choices, and in some cases necessitated a reliance on synopses found in secondary sources. Between 1898 and 1912, the period covered by this study, we know of one hundred fifty play titles

(see Table 1). Of these, one hundred eighteen are zarzuelas; the remainder, non-musical plays. This chapter analyzes fifty-nine vernacular zarzuelas and thirteen non-musical plays. The analysis of zarzuelas is based on seven complete scripts (all that were available), thirty-four synopses from secondary sources, and eighteen titles; the analysis of non-musical plays, on seven complete scripts (all that were available), one synopsis, and five titles (see Table 2). Language was another factor. Unarguably, the drama which was a direct and forceful expression of Philippine nationalism and which in part was engendered by the Revolution should be in the vernacular. For this reason, although dramatic works in Spanish were written by native playwrights during the period of early modern Filipino drama, that is, the first decade of the twentieth century, analyses of such works have been excluded from Chapter V. One exception is Manuel Xeres-Burgos' Spanish play, Con la cruz y la espada (With the Cross and the Sword), the only extant play of the period which reflects the ilustrado attitude toward Spanish tyranny and the Revolution, and this attitude calls for a representation. Furthermore, the play's anti-friar sentiments, together with its popular success on stage at a time when anti-colonialist plays were at their peak justify its inclusion in this study.

A second aspect of language limited the selection of plays studied. Of the eight major Philippine languages and over a hundred dialects, Tagalog is the most developed and has the most extensive literature. Understandably, a majority of early modern Filipino plays were written in Tagalog, and the bulk of extant materials are Tagalog plays. Furthermore, although the first known vernacular play generically distinct from

Table 1

Number of Zarzuelas and Non-Musical Plays (1898-1912)[a]

Year	Zarzuelas		Non-Musical Plays		Total Plays
1898		0	Tag:	1	1
1899	Tag:	1	Tag:	1	2
1900	Tag: 4) Cap: 3)	7	Cap: 1) Spa: 1)	2	9
1901	Tag: 6) Cap: 4) Pan: 1) Sug: 1)	12	Sug:	1	13
1902	Tag: 11) Cap: 1)	12	Tag:	4	16
1903	Tag:	8	Tag:	3	11
1904	Tag:	9	Tag:	4	13
1905	Tag: 6) Pan: 2)	8	Tag:	2	10
1906	Tag: 5) Pan: 1) Bik: 3)	9		0	9
1907	Tag: 8) Pan: 1) Bik: 6)	15		0	15
1908	Tag: 6) Pan: 1) Bik: 6) Ilo: 4)	17	Tag:	2	19
1909	Tag: 9) Cap: 1)	10		0	10

Table 1 (continued) Number of Zarzuelas and Non-Musical Plays (1898-1912)

Year	Zarzuelas		Non-Musical Plays		Total Plays
1910	Tag: 3) Cap: 1) Bik: 3) Sug: 2)	9	Tag: 2) Sug: 1)	3	12
1911	Bik:	1	Tag:	3	4
1912		0	Tag: 3) Sug: 3)	6	6
		118		32	150
	Tag: 76 Cap: 10 Pan: 6 Sug: 3 Bik: 19 Ilo: 4		Tag: 25 Cap: 1 Sug: 5 Spa: 1		

Tag = Tagalog; Cap = Capampangan; Pan = Pangasinan; Bik = Bikol; Sug = Sugbuhanon; Ilo = Ilokano; Spa = Spanish (see p. 9)

[a]Based on "A Check List of Philippine Plays from 1900 to 1946," comp. Isagani R. Cruz, in A Short History of Theater in the Philippines, pp. 269-306.

Table 2

Classification of Plays According to Genre and Subject Matter[a]

	Scripts	Synopses	Titles	Total Plays
ZARZUELAS				
Anti-Col.:	3	13	5	21
Domestic:	4	21	13	38
Total	7	34	18	59
NON-MUSICAL PLAYS				
Anti-Col.:	5	1	4	10
Domestic:	2	0	1	3
Total	7	1	5	13

TOTAL RECORDED TITLES OF PLAYS (1898-1912)	150
TOTAL NO. OF PLAYS DISCUSSED	72
TOTAL RECORDED ZARZUELAS (1898-1912)	118
TOTAL NO. OF ZARZUELAS DISCUSSED	59
TOTAL RECORDED NON-MUSICAL PLAYS (1898-1912)	32
TOTAL NO. OF NON-MUSICAL PLAYS DISCUSSED	13

[a]Discussed in Chapter V.

the kumedya was a Bisayan play, Cornelio Hilado's Ang Babaye nga Huaran (A Model Woman, 1878), major upheavals in theatre originated in Manila--the cultural center of the Philippines--where Tagalog was the vernacular spoken. Thus, except for the plays of Catalino Palisoc (in Pangasinan) and of Juan Crisostomo Soto (in Pampango), all the plays represented in this chapter are in Tagalog. The vernacular plays analyzed in this study, therefore, do not constitute the widest possible geographical and linguistic representation. Such representation, however, is unnecessary for the purposes of this dissertation, since the beginnings of modern Filipino drama occurred in and around Manila.

The sixth and final chapter summarizes the social, political, cultural, dramatic and theatrical background of the emergence of modern drama in the Philippines, and the distinctive characteristics of early modern Filipino plays, which in subject matter, plot, character, language, staging, and audience reflected early twentieth century Philippine society.

CHAPTER II

PRE-MODERN FILIPINO DRAMA

The evolution of the kumedya or moro-moro, the major dramatic and theatrical genre of the pre-modern period in Filipino drama, began with the Spanish occupation and Christianization of the Philippines in 1565. Indigenous elements from primitive rituals and oral poetry encountered foreign genres introduced by the early Spanish missionaries, soldiers, and sailors. In its developed stage, the kumedya not only reflected the political, social, and cultural changes which Hispanization effected, it also embodied the sentiments and ideals of a specific segment of Philippine society--the native masses--who constituted the audience of the kumedya.

When the Spaniards first arrived in 1521, they did not discover any extant manuscript of a native drama. At least two reasons could explain this: one, the fact that the literature of the natives was largely oral;[1] and two, the fact that even if the natives had a written drama, this drama could not have resembled autos, comedias, or biblical and pseudo-biblical plays which were the current genres of Spanish drama at the time, and which therefore were the only forms which the Spanish chroniclers would have considered "dramas." Whether or not a native drama existed before the Spaniards came, the descriptions of

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[1]The Jesuit Pedro Chirino, in Relación de las islas filipinas (1604), trans. Ramón Echevarría (Manila: Historical Commission Society, 1969), p. 296, states that the natives never used their alphabet except to correspond with one another.

rituals by Spanish chroniclers indicate at least three dramatic elements--myth, mimesis, and spectacle--which later appear in the kumedya or moro-moro.

The Kumedya and Indigenous Elements

The mythic element resides in epic poems which deal with the adventures of legendary heroes and deities. The natives sang these poems to the accompaniment of native melodies played on native musical instruments.[2] These stories and characters constituted potential dramatic material, and their legendary quality persisted in later poetic and theatrical genres, notably the kumedya.

Rituals wherein the officiating priest or priestess, called catalonan or babaylan,[3] acted as the alter ego of the deities, manifest

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[2]According to Chirino (p. 296), "government and religion . . . are preserved in songs which [the natives] have committed to memory and learned from childhood. . . . In these barbaric songs they relate the fabulous genealogies and vain deeds of their gods. . . ." Miguel de Loarca, Relaciones de islas filipinas, in The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898, ed. and annotated Emma Blair and James Alexander Robertson (Cleveland, Ohio: A. H. Clark Co., 1903-09), V, 121, writes: ". . . since these natives are not acquainted with the art of writing, they preserve their ancient lore through songs, which they sing in a very pleasing manner--commonly while plying their oars. . . . Also during their revelries, the singers who have good voices recite the exploits of olden times."

The natives performed ritual dances with the agong (gong), guimbao (drum), culintangan (graduated gongs), and kudyapi (string instrument). See Norberto Romualdez, "Musical Instruments and Airs of Long Ago," in Encyclopedia of the Philippines, ed. Zoilo M. Galang, VII (Manila: Exequiel Floro, 1953), pp. 64-98.

[3]Chirino, Relación, p. 300. "Catalonan" was the Tagalog term; the Bisayans called the priestess "babaylan." John Phelan, The Hispanization of the Philippines (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1959), p. 24, says that the priestesses were actually transvestites.

the mimetic impulse. Possessed by the spirit, the priestess-actress in a ritual described circa 1590 by the Spanish missionary Juan de Plasencia "seemed to shoot flames from her eyes; her hair stood on end, a fearful sight to those beholding, and she uttered words of arrogance and superiority."[4] Similarly, the lis-lis rite of the Igorots, a tribe of the Mountain Province, performed when the rice is ready for harvesting, contains a mimetic reenactment of ancient battles.[5]

Spectacle is the third dramatic element in primitive rituals. The Spanish missionary Francisco Combes recounts a ritual of blood sacrifice among the Mindanao heathen which occurred in the 1660's. In this ritual, the priestesses wore "embroidered handkerchiefs on the head; magnificent red skirts, rich glass beads hanging from the neck; silver medals fastened to the breast; [and] large gold earrings with strings of beads."[6] After they had taken their places at the sacrificial altar, they began to dance to the sound of the culintangan (see footnote 2) and the hawks' bells fastened to their ankles. Another tribe, the Tagbanuas, wore ritual costumes of "fluttering stripped

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[4]Juan de Plasencia, "Customs of the Tagalogs (1588-1691)," in Blair and Robertson, VII, 190.

[5]Juan Roger, Estudio etnológico comparativo de las formas religiosas primitivas de las tribus salvajes de filipinas (Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicos, 1949), p. 146. Unless otherwise specified, all translations from foreign sources are mine.

[6]Francisco Combes, Historia de las islas de mindanao, jolo, y sus adjacentes (1667), trans. in Blair and Robertson, XL, 135 (footnote).

leaves of palm gathered closed with a circlet of tiny bells."[7] At times, long knives and long lengths of ceremonial plants or bowls were balanced on their heads throughout the "most tempestuous dances."

Moreover, a theatre, in the elementary sense of a community of performers and spectators, existed in these ritual festivities. The catalonan or babaylan was an actor playing a role; there was an audience, and even if the rituals were primarily religious in purpose, the audience looked forward to the entertainment which ended every ritual, at which time, more singing and dancing occurred. The subsequent development of a native drama and theatre, specifically the kumedya, exemplifies this combination of a deep-seated religiosity and unabashed hedonism. Likewise, these rituals contain the link between native poetry and native drama.

The art of poetic declamation was fairly well developed when the Spaniards arrived. The essential combination of wit and moralizing, as exemplified in the riddle and the proverb, respectively, was inherent in the native poetic tradition. Early forms of Tagalog poetry composed and orally transmitted before the Spanish occupation were the bugtóng (metaphorical riddle) and the sáwikain (proverb).[8] To satisfy a demand

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[7]Ma. Teresa Muñoz, "Notes on Theater: Pre-Hispanic Philippines," in Brown Heritage, ed. Antonio Manuud (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo University Press, 1967), p. 664.

[8]Julian Balmaseda, "Ang Tatlong Panahon ng Tulang Tagalog," Publication of the Institute of National Language, 4, no. 3 (August 1938), p. 12; see also Bienvenido Lumbera, "Tradition and Influences in the Development of Tagalog Poetry," Ph.D. Diss. Indiana University, 1967, pp. 16 ff.

for communal activity, the gregariousness of the Filipinos gave rise to a social-literary art; working within this milieu, native poets developed a dual tendency toward naive symbolism and didacticism. All of these indigenous ritualistic and poetic elements underwent modification after the establishment of a Spanish colonial government in 1565; for the next hundred years these indigenous traditions came in fruitful contact with foreign dramatic and theatrical elements.

The Kumedya and Foreign Elements

The underlying motivation of the Spanish occupation of the Philippines was to Christianize the pagan tribes. As Phelan states, ". . . the [Spanish] occupation of the Philippines was essentially a missionary enterprise. . . . More than any single factor a religious and missionary commitment kept the Spanish state in the economically profitless colony of the Philippines."[9] To accomplish the Christianization of the natives with the least resistance from them, the missionaries carefully retained--with slight modifications--elements of the indigenous culture for catechetical functions.[10] One may thus view Christianization in the Philippines as a series of cultural substitutions[11] which led to the emergence of folk Catholicism: sermons,

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[9]Phelan, Hispanization, pp. 13-14.

[10]Horacio de la Costa, The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581-1768 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 156-57. He writes in part: "[The friars] never destroyed or forbade a pagan usage without introducing a similar Christian usage to take its place. This was in line with the policy of making Christianity permeate the culture and its institutions in the same way as the popular pagan beliefs had done."

[11]The same phenomenon occurred in Mexico. See Arturo Warman, La danza de moros y cristianos (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1972), pp. 83 ff.

prayers, and formulas were substituted for the words, but not the music, of pagan songs of heroism and love; the blessing of crops before planting and harvesting took the place of pagan rituals which sought the protection of the anitos (deified ancestors) and asked for a gainful yield; blessed crosses served as scarecrows, in lieu of anting-anting and similar amulets and charms; prayers replaced the extravagant funeral banquets which often left the guests inebriated and the family of the deceased in heavy debt; patron saints assumed the socio-religious functions of the countless pagan deities which the natives used to honor in ritual festivities.

Reciprocity characterized the process; the natives were not merely passive observers. As Phelan observes, they "endowed certain aspects of the new religion with a ceremonial and emotional content, a special Filipino flavor which made Catholicism in the archipelago in some respects a unique expression of that universal religion."[12] Catholic weddings and funerals, for example, combined the sacred and the profane; doctrinal tenets lent sanction to superstitious practices.

Essentially a Christian substitute for the pagan ritual, the fiesta was introduced as early as 1565. It was held at least three times a year: during Holy Week, on the feast of Corpus Christi, and on the feast of the patron saint of the locality. Holy Week particularly appealed to the natives, due perhaps to the sensual and graphic aspects of the candlelit processions, of hooded penitents and flagellants, and of ornate floats which depicted scenes from the passion of Christ, all

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[12]Phelan, p. 72.

enveloped in the fumes of incense and heightened by music. In the eighteenth century, this appeal took concrete artistic form in the pasyon and its staged version, the cenaculo.

Fiestas served as the occasion for the dramatic encounter of indigenous traditions and foreign influences. They enabled the natives to express under the guise of Church celebrations the mimetic, mythic, and spectacular impulses of primitive rituals. Likewise, aware of the natives' attraction to spectacle, the missionaries devised dramatic presentations based on current Spanish genres--the auto sacramental, the comedia, the loa (a short poem of praise recited as a prologue to a comedia), and the entremés (a comic interlude)--for religious purposes.

An account of a Lenten fiesta in 1600 by the Jesuit Melchor Hurtado reveals native modes of emotional expression: "After a brief discourse . . . [everyone] went down on their knees and cried out asking forgiveness for their sins with much tenderness and weeping, which drew tears of emotion from those of us who were witnessing it."[13] At the fiesta of St. Ignatius Loyola in 1611, the natives performed their more profane version of a spectacle: "[They] took two carts very well adorned in the rustic manner, pulled by gentle oxen. Accompanied by a good number of savages, the barbarian king sat on his throne, and gave a signal with a raucous and discordant trumpet. Out of their carts came so many fires, flying rockets, bombs, and serpent firecrackers that joined together with the howls and shouting of the savages, making

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[13]Chirino, p. 399.

horrible and dreadful music."[14] The latter description indicates the introduction of a genre which served as a conscious instrument of Christianization in Mexico and Peru: the danza de moros y cristianos (dance of Moors and Christians). This dance originated in eastern Spain during the twelfth century as a reaction against the Moorish occupation.[15] Although no study of its introduction and development in the Philippines has yet been made, there are sufficient references to some of the dance's characteristics in seventeenth century chronicles of Spanish missionaries to warrant the assumption that the genre was known to the natives. For instance, descriptions of fiestas invariably mention the frequent use of fuegos artificiales (fireworks) and the occurrence of torneos (tournaments), juegos de cañas (equestrian exercises), corridas de toros (bullfights), and máscaras (masquerades), all of which were constituents of the dance in its popular variant known as espectáculo de masas (spectacle of the masses).[16] Moreover, before 1632 the Jesuit missionary, Francisco Colin, witnessed a native war dance, even by that time called moro-moro,[17] which accompanied and solemnized Christian fiestas.

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[14]Francisco Colín, Labor evangélica (1663), ed. Pablo Pastells (Barcelona: Imprenta y litografia de Henrich & Compañía, 1900), I, 271.

[15]Warman, p. 17.

[16]Warman describes two basic variants which the danza in Spain assumed in the sixteenth century: "la pieza predominante teatral y el gran espectáculo de 'masas,'" pp. 31 ff.

[17]Footnote 5 in Colin-Pastells, I, p. 63.

The evidence for the introduction of the comedia and other genres is undisputed. In 1598, on the occasion of the visit of Cebu province's first bishop, Pedro Agurto, a fiesta was held at which time a comedia in Latin and Spanish by Fr. Vicente Puche, the first recorded theatrical presentation in the Philippines, was performed.[18] In 1601, the loa (a short poem of praise recited as a prologue to a comedia), which from that year greeted every Spanish governor-general who came to the Philippines, was first introduced at the inauguration of the Jesuit college of San José in Manila.[19] In 1619, five comedias in honor of the Immaculate Conception were presented on five consecutive days: these plays dealt with the beauty of Rachel, the martyrs of Japan, the mystery of the Immaculate Conception, the sale of Joseph (from the Old Testament), and the Prince of Transylvania.[20]

Another account of a fiesta in honor of St. Ignatius reveals that comedias were performed by the sons of the principalía.[21] While the religious education of the masses was effected mainly through fiestas and other Church rituals, the education of the native upper class was conducted with greater formality within the confines of sectarian colleges which were established in and around Manila and Cebu. Here,

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[18]Colin-Pastells, III, p. 133; de la Costa, p. 166; Retana, Noticias, p. 19.

[19]Retana, pp. 21, 37.

[20]Retana, pp. 28-29.

[21]Colin-Pastells, I, p. 273.

the sons of the principalía or native nobility, together with the children of local Spaniards, received a formal education, and next to the word of God, Latin and Spanish oratory and colloquy were taught. During fiestas, the students of these colleges held literary and oratorical contests within the convents, while the lower class paraded in their carabao-driven carts and engaged in rowdy celebration. At the end of a week-long (or longer) fiesta, public competitions were held, and at this time, the masses received their dose of classical education. For example, after Mass at the Jesuit college of San José, "a boy born among the Itas or barbarians of the mountains, seven years old . . . danced, somersaulted, and praised our Father Saint [St. Ignatius] in Latin and Spanish, with the grace of a skillful dancer and eloquent orator."[22] Then, in the afternoon, a grand colloquy on the life and singular virtues of St. Ignatius, "expensively and unusually embellished, was performed [publicly] by the students under various symbols and ingenious plots"[23] and was attended by many people. In Cebu, on the same feast day, "a boy recited a panegyric in Spanish verse, wherein he dealt very gracefully with the principal events in the life of the saint. Then followed a very ingenious dialogue by well prepared boys in which dances were mixed in accordance with the intent of words."[24] Here, the dialogues were not merely recited, but staged--i.e., there were movements, particularly dances, which interpreted, or at least complemented, the spoken words.

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[22]Colin-Pastells, I, p. 271.

[23]Colin-Pastells, I, p. 271. [24]Colin-Pastells, I, p. 273.

Conforming to their philosophy of reaching the natives more effectively by using the native languages, the missionaries also composed and staged religious plays in the vernacular. As early as 1602, the boys in a Jesuit boarding school in Antipolo (a northern suburb of Manila) performed a Tagalog play, "to the great delight and satisfaction of the people."[25] In 1609, missionaries staged a Bisayan comedia on the martyrdom of St. Barbara to rid the natives of their idolatries.[26] In the same year, the Spanish historian Antonio de Morga reports that the natives "play short comedias in Spanish and in their own tongue, very gracefully."[27]

The Galleon Trade,[28] which dominated Philippine economy from 1565 to 1815, exerted an equally important, though indirect, secular influence on the evolution of the kumedya. The Spanish galleons not only brought gold from Acapulco in exchange for Chinese silks and porcelains from Manila, they also carried guachinangos--adventurous sailors, soldiers, and merchants--who freely associated with the natives, and often intermarried with native women. Largely through the guachinangos, bastardized versions of the metrical romance--a literary genre of medieval vintage which dealt with the chivalrous exploits of

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[25]Quoted in de la Costa, p. 189. [26]Retana, p. 22.

[27]Antonio de Morga, Sucesos de las islas filipinas (1609), ed. Jose Rizal and trans. Encarnacion Alzona (Manila: Jose Rizal National Centennial Commission, 1962), p. 311.

[28]For a comprehensive study of the Galleon Trade, see William Schurz, The Manila Galleon (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1939).

knights errant who saved helpless damsels from the Moors--found overwhelming favor with the native masses.[29] Vernacular adaptations emerged: the octosyllabic corrido and the dodecasyllabic awit. Onstage, the metrical romance provided the conflict of the kumedya.

The Characteristics of the Kumedya

Conceivably, the first kumedya or moro-moro appeared between 1637 and 1690. In 1637, the first recorded comedia dealing with the Christian-Muslim conflict was performed in Cavite province at a fiesta in honor of of Corcuera's (then governor-general of the Philippines) victory over the Moro Corralat. Titled Gran comedia de la toma del Pueblo de Corralat, y conquista del Cerro (Great Comedia about the Seizure of Corralat's Town and the Conquest of Cerro), the comedia was written by Fr. Jerónimo Pérez in Spanish verse and performed by Spanish students.[30] In 1690, an Augustinian priest, Gaspar de San Agustín, wrote a friend in Spain that the natives "are especially fond of comedias and farces, and therefore, there is no feast of consequence, unless there is a comedia."[31] This letter, which describes other aspects of Philippine culture, is the first known document which indicates the existence of a distinctive native drama--a form which the Spaniards recognized as

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[29]See Rafael Bernal, México en filipinas: estudio de una transculturación (México: Universidad nacional autónoma de México, 1965), p. 122; also Lumbera, "Tradition," p. 91.

[30]Retana, pp. 35-36.

[31]Gaspar de San Agustín, "Carta," in Blair and Robertson, XL, p. 244.

drama, but was different from the Spanish religious comedias which the missionaries introduced in the previous century. While the latter had been an instrument of the Church, the native genre posed a moral danger to its audience: San Agustín in his letter expressed concern that the performances of native comedias "be not harmful . . ."

The most striking difference between the Spanish comedia and the kumedya or moro-moro is the latter's secularism. This quality is evident in the emphasis on romantic themes. As Retana observes, in the kumedya "both moros and cristianos loved with much greater ardor than that which is customarily deemed lawful on stage."[32] In his Estadismo (1803), another Spanish priest, Joaquín Martínez de Zuñiga, writes that the complication in the kumedya is always caused by the desire of Christian princes to marry Moro princesses, or of Moro princes to marry Christian princesses. Prompted by the opposition of the princesses' fathers to intermarriage, the Moros and Christians wage war. In these armed conflicts, a Moro prince might perform heroic deeds; the conflict is resolved with his eventual conversion to the Faith. The conversion of a Christian prince to Mohammedanism is never permitted, however, and therefore the prince and his Moro princess might experience countless predicaments. A battle brings the play to a climax, and at the end of the play the Moro princess is inevitably converted to the Faith. Sometimes the prince dies tragically in battle, but he could be resurrected by some miraculous device. Or else he could be saved by

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[32]Retana, p. 41.

a crucifix or some relic his mother gave him before she died. The hero might even confront lions and bears on stage, but he manages to survive. If not the hero, then one of the principal characters must die tragically, or else the native audience considered the kumedya dull and insipid.

Diffuse poetic style, deliberate elocution, and extravagant language match visual ostentation, which the audience loved as much as the extraordinary: "If the kumedya does not have three or four kings, many princes and princesses, many actors . . . ; if there are no swoons; eagles which show up; lions or bears or other animals which like to devour a man, and if there are no apparitions or miracles, they consider the kumedya bad. . . ."[33] While the native audience found no difficulty in empathizing with the alien heroes and heroines in their tragic predicaments, they also found a concomitant release of a less serious nature from the antics of the irreverent gracioso, the omnipresent clown of every kumedya. He too worried San Agustín, who complained that the natives "pay attention only to the witty fellow who does innumerable foolish and uncouth things, and at each of his actions they burst into hearty laughter."[34]

Martínez de Zuñiga gives a more detailed description of the gracioso:

> Every kumedya has one or two graciosos who . . . dress extravagantly. . . . Every now and then, they take food and wine from a shoulder bag; in the process, they grimace and contort their bodies, actions which make the audience laugh. Standing behind a principal character, a gracioso makes a gesture of slapping him, [and this] so amuses the audience that many go to the

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[33]Joaquín Martínez de Zuñiga, Estadismo de las islas filipinas (Madrid: [Imprenta de la viuda de M. Minuesa de los Rios], 1893), p. 140.

[34]San Agustín, p. 245.

> kumedya solely to see the gracioso. At the end of the play, the gracioso speaks to the audience with sufficient wit about all his defects . . . [and] criticizes some government servants. Everyone laughs as though he were a blessing of God, even those who are criticized.[35]

The popularity of the kumedya in the eighteenth century was due in part to the unstable political conditions which obtained in the Philippines. Local revolts were rife; they reflected the dissatisfaction of the natives with existing conditions. Likewise, in 1762, the British invaded and occupied Manila, and the natives found themselves in the midst of a war wherein they were forced to lay down their lives for no perceptible cause. The romanticism of the metrical tales and the kumedya enabled the natives to take relief in flights of their own fancy. Moreover, there was a state of literary isolation in the Philippines at this time. The Church required ecclesiastical approval prior to publication of any book; before 1872, the religious congregations owned the three printing presses in the country; and Spanish customs held all foreign books for censorship. However, censorship encouraged, rather than inhibited, clandestine publications of awits and corridos. Hence, literary isolation not only prevented exposure to other genres, but assured the continued popularity of the native metrical tales and the kumedya.

Unfortunately, none of the kumedyas produced in this century is extant. Most were written as manuscripts which the authors apparently never bothered to sign. Nevertheless, every barrio (village) had at least one or two original kumedyas which were performed by its own

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[35] Zuñiga, pp. 74-75.

group of amateur actors on open platform stages. Two playwrights, Jose de la Cruz and Francisco Baltazar, of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively, have fortunately been recorded in history. But all that are available of the older playwright are titles, and of the younger, some excerpts reconstructed from memory by his children.

Jose de la Cruz (1746-1829), nicknamed "Huseng Sisiw"[36] presumably because he charged a chicken for his services, was born in Tondo, Manila. The few known facts about his life indicate that he was a ladino,[37] who was a fluent speaker of Spanish at the age of eight, and later a composer of Latin verses. He was good at impromptu versification, a talent which must have served him well in playwriting. After he achieved fame as a master of Tagalog poetry, disciples flocked to him for instruction. De la Cruz composed awits and corridos derived from Spanish metrical romances. His kumedyas were obviously derived from the same sources, as the titles of a few of them indicate: La guerra civil de Granada (The Civil War of Granada), Reina encantada ó casamiento de fuerza (Enchanted Queen or Forced Marriage), Los dos virreyes ó la copa de oro (The Two Viceroys or The Golden Cup), and Conde Rodrigo de Villas (Count Rodrigo de Villas). Only a few of de la Cruz's works were published, and none is extant. More than a playwright, de la Cruz

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[36]Literally, "Chicken Joe," but the original phrase in Tagalog does not have the comic connotation of this translation.

[37]The term was first used to apply to a native poet, Fernando Bagongbanta, who could read and write in Tagalog and Spanish, by the author of Memorial de la vida, Blanco de San Jose, in his preface to Bagongbanta's poem included in his book. Lumbera, p. 62.

also served as critic-censor of Tagalog kumedyas at the Teatro de Tondo (built ca. 1840).

Francisco Baltazar (1788-1862), popularly known as Balagtas, was supposedly one of the last disciples of de la Cruz. His fame, which he earned independently of his supposed mentor, rests almost entirely on an awit which has become a landmark of Tagalog poetry--Plorante at Laura (Plorante and Laura, 1853?).[38] It is probable that Balagtas wrote more than a hundred kumedyas which were produced in all the Tagalog provinces;[39] unfortunately, the absence of scripts precludes any critical evaluation of his merits as a playwright. A few facts, however, are known. For instance, in 1841, his kumedya titled Almanzor y Rosalina (Almanzor and Rosalina) was staged continually for twelve days, from two-thirty in the afternoon until dusk, in the church plaza of Udyóng, a town in Bataan province.[40] The majority of his known kumedyas were produced at the Teatro de Tondo in the 1870's. These were: Abdal y Miserena (Abdal and Miserena, 1859), Bayaceto y Dorlisca (Bayaceto and Dorlisca, 1877), Mahomet at Constanza (Mahomet and Constanza, n.d.), Orosman at Zafira (Orosman and Zafira, n.d.),

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[38]The full title of the awit is Pinagdaanang Buhay ni Plorante at Laura sa cahariang Albanya (The Past Lives of Plorante and Laura in the Kingdom of Albania). There is no certainty as to the year the awit was first published. Critics disagree whether Balagtas spelled the hero's name with an "F" or a "P." The absence of an "F" in the Tagalog alphabet seems to me to be good reason for not using it.

[39]Lumbera, p. 182, assigns ten plays to Balagtas; Epifanio de los Santos, "Balagtas y su Florante," Revista Filipina (August 1916), p. 45, claims: "Undoubtedly [Balagtas] wrote more than a hundred plays which were staged in all the Tagalog provinces, [although] in most instances, [these] were adulterated." (Translation from Spanish mine.)

[40]Hermenegildo Cruz, Kun Sino ang Kumatha ng Florante (Manila: Librería "Manila Filatelico," 1906), p. 157.

Don Nuño y Zelinda ó la desgracia del amor en la inocencia (Don Nuño and Zelina or The Misfortune of Innocent Love, n.d.), Auredato y Astrone ó la felicidad de una mujer (Auredato and Astrone or A Woman's Happiness, n.d.), and Clara Belmori ó el sitio de la Rochela (Clara Belmori or The Place of the Rocela, n.d.).[41] Despite the scarcity of information on Balagtas' dramatic achievements, he is significant to modern Filipino drama for being the first native writer to introduce allegory as a device to express a radical discontent with Spanish colonial rule. This radical thread reappears, strengthened, in the literature of the Propaganda Movement; dramatized, it runs through the initial manifestations of modern drama: the anti-colonialist plays.

Possibly the only kumedya which became subject to an analysis--in this case by Vicente Barrantes in his El teatro tagalo--was Doña Inés Cuello de Garza ó el Príncipe Nicanor (Lady Ines, Heron-necked or Prince Nicanor, n.d.) by Honorato de Vera. Although Barrantes does not include the Tagalog text in his book, he provides excerpts translated to Spanish. Based on the legendary history of Doña Inés de Castro, posthumous queen of Portugal, the kumedya is in three parts, each with three acts. It contains a total of 5,323 lines, at least nineteen scene changes, and more than seven rounds of choreographed mock battles (which Barrantes calls moro-moro). Among the dramatis personae is the gracioso.

Sarcastically, Barrantes acknowledges an original contribution of de Vera to literature: "the intervention of the Granadine Moors in purely local . . . questions."[42] He criticizes this "novelty" as

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[41]Cruz, pp. 129-31.

[42]Barrantes, Teatro, p. 128.

indicative of the inability of the Filipinos to accept Christianity without a trace of heresy, and he points out in disbelief that in this kumedya, a Moorish king, and worse, his lieutenant, are the counselors of a Christian king. What this "novelty" indicates, however, is the departure of native drama from purely religious motives to secular, mundane concerns. This reversal of roles--that is, the Moro helping the Christian, rather than the Christian defeating the Moro (so that the Moro becomes good rather than invariably evil)--is really no novelty; Balagtas had done it earlier in Plorante at Laura. Unfortunately, no evidence exists that he did this reversal in his kumedyas as well. Be that as it may, Barrantes' analysis is important because it reveals salient characteristics of the genre and its audience. He decries, for instance, those "terrible" scenes wherein the head of Doña Inés is passed from one son's hand to another, and which elicit from the native audience repeated "Aba's," their favorite phrase of admiration; or the "violent" and "unrealistic" scene in which Armina, dying in her adorned cot, makes her husband promise to marry his concubine. Most disgusting to Barrantes is the frequency of swoons and suicide attempts, a phenomenon which he thought called for some physiological investigation, since it affects men as much as women.

A parodistic description of the kumedya in the 1880's is found in a sainete titled Cuadros Filipinos (Philippine Portraits, 1882) by Francisco de P. Entrala. Here, the kumedya actor appears with an arrogant and ferocious face, he strides like a rooster, and he speaks in a very high-pitched voice. In terrible moments of reproach and fury, his nostrils flare, and he moves his arms up and down

alternately like the vanes of a windmill. In amorous scenes, he cries "Ay!" between shouts, or in embraces an enthusiastic "Oh!" When he hears the shout of "Moro!" he pretends to be on horseback, and grabbing the Moro by his collar, gives him a vicious blow. These conventions, according to Entrala, are the elements of an established acting style in Tondo, where the kumedya theatres were located.

In the performance of the parody of the kumedya, which occurs in the second act of the sainete, the prompter or apuntador dictates dialogue and directs movement from his box, called the concha. Using a stylized intonation pattern, the actors introduce themselves after an entrance march, characterized by "slow steps, measured and tragic." The Queen of Hungary enters in the same manner, while Moro and Christian soldiers who flank the room mark step without moving from their positions, "as though obedient to a mechanical impulse." In the middle of a silent and fervent pause, the second prince shouts, "War!" and the much-awaited battle scene takes place. There is "disconcerted movement" onstage; weeping and supplicating, the Queen goes from one to the other, and assumes all the tragic poses which the actress's talent may suggest to her at the moment. The battle occurs to the rhythm of the Hymn of Riego, and at the end, everyone succumbs to the cutlass of the Sultan. The performance ends with a dance called Sayao Buquit (country dance) or fandango.

The foregoing description cannot, of course, be taken too seriously. Its source is, after all, a parody of the kumedya. But despite the confusing arrangement of events and the exaggerated details, not to mention the reversed ending wherein the Moro apparently wins, the essential

qualities of stylization and folksy naiveté are still evident. Moreover, the very intention to parody the kumedya implies the widespread popularity of the genre among the natives and the dichotomy that had arisen between the native theatre and the local Spanish theatre.

Historically, the initial separation of the native theatre from the Spanish theatre occurred when native dances, particularly that known as moro-moro, disappeared from the program of Spanish theatrical entertainments.[43] This phenomenon occurred at some undetermined date, but by 1772, the first theatre intended exclusively for the Spanish community existed at the palace of the Spanish governor-general.[44] Apart from the information that the performances were private, little is known about this theatre. In 1791, the Teatro Comico was constructed for public performances of Spanish plays; the natives went about their old ways, "raising a platform where they could."[45] When in 1846 the Teatro de Binondo was built to replace the Comico, two native theatres already existed, those of Tondo and Arroceros. While the Binondo was "consecrated to Spanish art," the Tondo and Arroceros "were devoted to the Tagalog art."[46]

The differences in the architecture of the Binondo and the Arroceros reflected the dichotomy between the Spanish and native theatres. The former was "magnificent";[47] it had a vestibule the length of its facade, crowned by a high gallery, which was used during intermissions.

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[43]Retana, p. 75.

[44]Retana, p. 56.

[45]Retana, p. 57.

[46]Retana, p. 71.

[47]Retana, p. 71.

It also had two wings which comprised two high rooms below which were two cafes. Mallat, a French visitor, provides a description of the native theatre circa 1846: "the auditorium . . . is remarkable in that, despite its embellishment, it is built with nothing but bamboo and nipa. As in all the buildings of this nature, there is neither metal nor nails in its construction; bamboo pegs and rattan cords take their place."[48] This kind of construction seems to have changed little, as a description of the Arevalo theatre circa 1875 indicates: "[the] kumedyahan or moro-moro theatre [was built] in [the owner's] backyard. . . . It was constructed of bamboo and wood with nipa roof and could accommodate 500 or more persons."[49] Likewise, the two audiences which emerged manifested this theatrical dichotomy: the native mass audience for the kumedyas, and the Spanish-speaking audience for Spanish entertainments.

The Audience of the Kumedya

Philippine social organization before the arrival of the Spaniards did not extend beyond the immediate family or clan.[50] The social unit was the barangay, which on the average consisted of thirty to a hundred families. There were four distinct social classes: the datus (chieftains) and their families; the maharlika or nobles; the timagua or freemen; and

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[48]Quoted in Retana, p. 63.

[49]E. Arsenio Manuel, Dictionary of Philippine Biography, I (Quezon City: Filipiniana Publications, 1955), pp. 63-64.

[50]Culled from Phelan, pp. 15-18.

the dependent class, which was of two kinds: the sharecroppers and the debt peons.

Such political, social, and geographical isolation proved to be a great obstacle to evangelization; it was impossible for fewer than five hundred priests to administer the sacraments and to catechize five hundred thousand natives scattered in tiny communities. Thus, in the 1580's and 1590's the Spanish colonial administration initiated a resettlement program based on similar programs in Mexico and Peru, whereby the numerous barangays were "reduced"[51] to compact villages with as many as five thousand people in each. The entire archipelago was divided into twelve alcaldías mayores (large mayoralities; the more extensive were subdivided into corregimientos or districts) under alcaldes mayores. Alcaldías in turn consisted of pueblos (towns); pueblos included a cabecera (capital) where the parish church was located, and a series of outlying visitas or barrios (villages), each of which consisted of one barangay. The chief official of the pueblo was the gobernadorcillo (petty governor); the chieftain of each barangay, which remained the smallest unit of local government, was the cabeza de barangay (headsman), whose primary function was to collect tribute from the members of his barangay. Other local officials were the deputy gobernadorcillo, the constable, the inspector of palm trees, the inspector of rice fields, the notary, and the fiscales (overseers) and cantors of church choirs. The fiscales played a major role in the preparations for fiestas, and served as stage managers in the dramatic

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[51] The official term used for resettlement. See Phelan, pp. 44-48.

productions which the parish priest chose for the particular occasion.[52] All of these officials were chosen from the native nobility, whom the Spaniards transformed into a native upper class, or principalía.

This system of local administration created an essentially two-class social system--the principalía and the masses. As a result of their role in organizing the material and human resources of the native population, the principalía remained affluent. The system also encouraged the political monopoly by the upper class, whose members became the "caciques" or "bosses" of their respective communities. Such a situation, known as "caciquism," was one of the evils of Spanish colonialism. The masses, on the other hand, remained the exploited victims of wealthy native landowners who continued the practice of debt peonage and sharecropping. Unlike the native chieftains and their eldest sons, the lower classes paid yearly tribute in labor or goods.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the altered geographical organization, with its political and social repercussions, had stabilized. Resettlement gave rise to larger communities, which meant larger audiences, especially in the suburban villages of Greater Manila, where the program met with the greatest success. Contributing to the success of resettlement was the fiesta, which the missionaries used to

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[52]Phelan, p. 59: "During the 17th century, the burden of organizing and supervising catechismal instruction fell increasingly on the fiscales. An important personage in the community, the fiscal was more than a sacristan. He was the intermediary between the clergy and their parishioners. Among his other duties were those of organizing the village's patronal fiesta, and cajoling if not compelling, his scattered charges to attend Mass and catechismal classes."

entice the natives to the cabecera and to encourage them to settle around the parish church or in the adjacent suburbs. Apart from its religious character, the fiesta became a popular form of public entertainment--an affirmation of communality not unlike the pre-Hispanic rituals. The class distinctions, however, remained; in fact, Hispanization made Philippine society more deeply stratified than it had been during pre-Spanish times. On the one hand were educated upper and middle class natives, nurtured by a Spanish education; and on the other, the uneducated masses, who were, however, closer to native traditions. The masses--woodcutters, shipbuilders, crewmen, munitions workers,[53] farmers, poultry and livestock raisers--constituted the audience of the kumedya. José Rizal, in his novel Noli me tangere (Touch Me Not, 1886), gives a picturesque description of the native audience of the 1880's:

"The Filipino of that time liked the theatre and was passionately fond of the drama. But he listened to the songs, or admired the dancing and the acting, in silence; he neither hissed nor applauded. Did the performance bore him? He quietly chewed his betel-nut or went away without disturbing those who might be enjoying it. Some boor might howl when the actors kissed or embraced the actresses; that was all."[54]

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[53]These were the types of workers who fulfilled the polo, a system of draft labor which was initiated during the Hispano-Dutch War (1609-1648). As early as the beginning of the Galleon Trade, native laborers performed unskilled, rough work at the various shipyards in Camarines, Bagatao (Albay), Marinduque, Mindoro, Masbate, and Pangasinan provinces. See Schurz, pp. 195 ff.

[54]José Rizal, Noli me tangere (1886), trans. León Ma. Guerrero (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961), p. 164.

During the last performance of a play, "the authorities of the municipality, the Spaniards, and the rich from out of town" joined the masses. "The common people, those with neither titles nor dignities, occupied the rest of the square." Rizal continues:

> Some had come carrying benches on their shoulders, more to supply their defects in height than to provide themselves with a seat. But no sooner did they attempt to stand on these benches than those behind them broke out into noisy complaints; they got down immediately but were soon on top of the benches again as if nothing had been said or done.
>
> Comings and goings, screams, exclamations, roars of laughter, a belated firecracker, all added to the hullaballoo. Here a bench lost a leg and threw to the ground, to the laughter of the crowd, those who had come far to be spectators, and now made a spectacle of themselves. There a quarrel broke out over a seat. A little farther off there was the crash of bottles and glasses; it was Andeng [a character in the novel] bearing refreshments and drinks on a large tray with both hands; she had met her sweetheart, who had tried to take advantage of the situation.[55]

This was the audience of the kumedya or moro-moro. The Spanish-speaking audience for Spanish entertainments consisted not only of local Spaniards, but of the native upper class and later, of the native middle class. Although the local Spanish theatre and its audience coexisted with the native theatre during the last years of the pre-modern period, the former served as one of the factors in the emergence of modern Filipino drama, and will therefore be discussed in the next chapter.

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[55]Rizal, pp. 254-55.

CHAPTER III

THE BACKGROUNDS OF MODERN FILIPINO DRAMA: PERIOD BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, even while the kumedya or moro-moro held sway over the masses, there were already at play diverse factors which contributed to the eventual birth of modern Filipino drama in the succeeding century: the native bourgeoisie, the birth of nationalism, and the bourgeois theatre which consisted of zarzuelas and other Spanish genres, Italian operas, local Spanish plays, and other imported entertainments.

The Native "Bourgeoisie"

The Filipino "middle class" which emerged in the nineteenth century was a professional and bureaucratic group with a high level of Western-style education.[1] In the seventeenth century, the principalía consisted exclusively of the native nobility, who became the hereditary cabezas and other local officials after the arrival of the Spaniards. During the eighteenth century, the original principalía underwent significant changes. Because its members had begun to acquire a Spanish education and also because they were isolated geographically from the rest of the natives (since they lived in the cabeceras), the principales became increasingly "different" from the masses. Among other factors, the

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[1] Fred W. Riggs, "A Model for the Study of Philippine Social Structure," Philippine Sociological Review, 7, no. 3 (July 1959), p. 13.

termination of the Galleon Trade in 1815, the establishment of banks in 1830 and the increase of foreign trade enabled the local mestizaje to join the ranks of the traditional principalía by reason of economic prosperity rather than heredity. Mestizos were the children of women from the native nobility who married either Spaniards or Chinese; thus there were Spanish and Chinese mestizos. The Spanish mestizos had the additional advantage of social and cultural prestige over the Chinese mestizos and "pure" natives. Wealth, however, rendered prestige accessible through education; Chinese mestizos and natives could now afford to send their children to school. These mestizos constituted what was in effect a "middle class": a class between the hereditary upper class at one end of the social scale and the masses at the other end. The generation of natives born from this eighteenth century principalia (which combined upper and middle classes) included a small group of disaffected intellectuals who have been called the ilustrados. Originally, the term "ilustrado" referred to an educated individual, usually a peninsular Spaniard, a Philippine-born Spaniard (who before 1880 had been derisively called "Filipino"), or a Spanish mestizo. After 1880, the term acquired a profoundly political connotation; Rizal described the ilustrados as "a numerous enlightened class . . . created and continually augmented by the stupidity of certain officials [a stupidity] which forces the inhabitants to leave the country, to secure education abroad, . . . and if today it is only the brain of the country, in a few years it will form the whole nervous system and will manifest

its existence in all its acts."[2] The ilustrados' realization that the various and diverse regions of the Philippines were not factions opposed to each other, but were in fact one nation oppressed by Spanish rule, was a major force in the birth of Philippine nationalism.

The Birth of Nationalism

Sporadic, local revolts early in the eighteenth century manifested resistance to Spanish sovereignty, but the absence of a national consciousness enabled the Spaniards to play one local group against another to subdue these revolts. Through the efforts of the ilustrados, the Filipino masses awakened to the abuses of Spanish rule and realized that they were one people and one nation united by common grievances.

Various factors led to the birth of Philippine nationalism.[3] In the first place, the decline of Spain as a world power and the instability of the Spanish Crown exemplified by the constitutional monarchies (1812-1814 and again 1820-1823), Spain's loss of Mexico in 1821, and the Spanish Revolution of 1868 which deposed Queen Isabela, left a historical record in which the ilustrados discovered ideas of liberty, equality before the law, rights of citizens, and duties of government. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which reduced the

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[2]Jose Rizal, "Las filipinas dentro de cien años," La Solidaridad, I ([October 31] 1889), trans. Guadalupe Forés-Ganzon (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1967), p. 667.

[3]For a comprehensive study of Philippine nationalism, see Usha Mahajani, Philippine Nationalism: External Challenge and Filipino Response, 1565-1946 (Sta. Lucia, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 1971).

geographical distance between the Spanish Peninsula and the Philippines, not only encouraged radical Spaniards to seek refuge in the Philippines, it also enabled the principalía to send their children to Europe for their education. By these means, the ilustrados acquired ideals of liberalism and republicanism.

In the religious sphere, the execution of three native priests--Jose Burgos, Mariano Gomez, and Jacinto Zamora--ostensibly for their leadership in the Cavite Mutiny of 1872, served as an emotional catalyst in the birth of Philippine nationalism.[4] These priests openly agitated for the secularization of Philippine parishes, which would have meant the diminution of the friars' power. Obviously, their execution was a retaliatory action by the friars, and their alleged implication in the Cavite Mutiny a convenient excuse to eliminate them. The selfless dedication of the seventeenth century Spanish missionaries had deteriorated into the greed of the nineteenth century Spanish frailes (friars) for secular power. To perpetuate the subordination of the natives to them, the friars ignored all royal edicts, decrees, and directives designed to establish popular education in the Philippines.[5] Moreover,

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[4]The so-called Cavite Mutiny was the result of the abolition by Governor Izquierdo of a century-old exemption of Cavite shipyard workers from tribute and forced labor. All evidence indicate the innocence of the native priests, and the refusal of the Archbishop of Manila to defrock them supports this view. For documents on the incident, see John Schumacher, S. J. and Nicholas Cushner, S. J., Burgos and the Cavite Mutiny (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1969).

[5]See Census of the Philippine Islands [1903] (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1905), I, 335 ff.

the friars collectively owned forty-eight percent of the agricultural land in the Philippines.[6] The high incidence of immoral acts, verbal insults, and outward discrimination worsened the image of the Spanish friars: they became a clear symbol of oppression. Motivated by the need to obtain reforms in the Spanish administration of the Philippines, a handful of ilustrados who had fled to Spain to escape persecution initiated the Propaganda Movement in the 1880's.

The Propagandists were essentially reformers, not revolutionaries; they favored assimilation, not secession. They believed that the ideal solution to Philippine problems was an enlightened policy which would ultimately make the Philippines a province of Spain. Not Spanish rule per se, but the administrators in the Philippines, particularly the friars, were the culprits. Thus, in an effort to unite the masses against the friars, the Propagandists established Masonic lodges in the Philippines. This action gave the friars the excuse they needed to oppose the Propaganda Movement. They led the government to believe that the Propagandists were in reality filibusteros, that is, subversives;[7] moreover, since the Propagandists were at the same time Masons, they constituted a grave threat to the Faith. Consequently, the Propagandists'

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[6] In 1896, the friars owned forty-eight percent of the total agricultural lands in the Philippines. See John Carroll, Changing Patterns of Social Structure in the Philippines, 1896 [and] 1963 (Quezon City: Ateneo University, 1968), p. 39.

[7] In the seventeenth century, the term "filibustero" referred to pirates who infested the Caribbean Seas. In the nineteenth century, it was used to refer to those who worked for the emancipation of the colonial possessions of Spain (Diccionario Enciclopédico Salvat, 1968).

families and supporters suffered constant threats to their lives and property; letters and literature were censored, especially those which came from Spain. Propagandistic literature reached the Philippines despite these restrictions. Consisting of political essays, satirical sketches, orations, manifestos, poems, and novels, the literature of the Propaganda Movement initiated the development of Philippine nationalism.

The literature of the Propaganda Movement departed radically from the strange situations, alien characters, and romantic themes of the kumedya, the awit, and the corrido in two specific aspects: first, in a strong anti-friar sentiment; and second, in a well-articulated theme of nationalism. Graciano Lopez Jaena (1856-96), founder and first editor of La Solidaridad (Solidarity, 1889), the organ of the Propaganda Movement, wrote a biting literary caricature of the Spanish friar titled Fray Botod (Friar Botod--"botod" is a Bisayan word for pot-bellied--in Spanish, 1876), which circulated in manuscript form. "If the famous Zola," wrote Lopez Jaena, "were to describe [Fray Botod], he would say of him more or less: Fray Botod is a well-fattened pig, who eats, drinks, sleeps, and does not think of anything other than the satisfaction of his carnal appetites in their various manifestations."[8] In 1880, Lopez Jaena secretly sailed for Spain to escape persecution.

Marcelo H. del Pilar (1850-1896), who succeeded Lopez Jaena as editor of La Solidaridad, wrote parodies in Tagalog of the Ten

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[8]Graciano Lopez Jaena, Fray Botod, in Discursos y artículos varios, ed. Jaime C. de Veyra (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1951), p. 206. The full text of the work is found on pp. 203-27.

Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Prayer Book--all vehemently anti-friar. In the first parody, for example, del Pilar wrote that the "Ten Commandments of the Friars boil down to two things: . . . Worship the friar above all, and offer him thy honor and wealth."[9] His parody of the Lord's Prayer, called "Our Uncle," began: "Our uncle who art in thy convent, cursed be thy name, may we be delivered from thy greed, may thy throat be slit here on earth as it is in heaven."[10]

Dr. Jose Rizal (1861-1896), the Philippine national hero, and perhaps the most cultured of the Propagandists, wrote Noli me tangere (Touch Me Not, 1886), a novel in Spanish which sought, as he himself confessed, to unmask the "hypocrisy which, under the cloak of Religion, came to impoverish [and] to brutalize us."[11] An ecclesiastical committee in Manila judged the novel to be "heretical, impious, and scandalous in the religious order, and anti-patriotic, subversive of public order, offensive to the Government of Spain and to its method of procedure in these Islands in the political order."[12] In El Filibusterismo (Filibusterism, 1891), a sequel to the Noli, the portrayal of the Spanish friars is more severely anti-clerical. With the publication of his two novels, Rizal signed his own death warrant. Upon his second

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[9]Magno S. Gatmaitan, Marcelo H. del Pilar (1850-1896): A Documented Biography (Quezon City: The Author, 1965), Appendix D, p. 405.

[10]Gatmaitan, p. 404.

[11]Rizal's letter to Filipino painter Resurreccion Hidalgo, quoted in John Schumacher, S. J., The Propaganda Movement, 1850-1895 (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1973), p. 74.

[12]Quoted in Schumacher, p. 83.

return to the Philippines in 1892, he was secretly exiled to Mindanao; four years later, he was tried and subsequently executed on December 30, 1896, a few months after the outbreak of the Revolution.

The entire literary output of the Propagandists strove to articulate a national identity. The earliest work with this purpose, Sampaguitas (the name, in its plural form, of the national flower), a small volume of Spanish verses by Pedro Paterno published in Spain in 1880, was the first in an intended collection titled Biblioteca filipina (Philippine Library), whose goal was to introduce the "mature fruits produced by the Filipino youth."[13] Gregorio Sancianco's El progreso de filipinas (The Progress of the Philippines, 1881), a study of the economic problems of the country and their solutions, was permeated with a deep sense of the dignity of the Filipino. In innumerable articles which appeared in the Revista del Círculo Hispano-filipino (Review of the Spanish-Filipino Circle, Madrid, 1882), Diariong Tagalog (Tagalog Daily, Manila, 1882), Los Dos Mundos (The Two Worlds, Madrid, 1883), España en filipinas (Spain in the Philippines, Madrid, 1887), and La Solidaridad, the criticism of Spanish colonial policy, the demand for legal equality and the defense of native culture reflected the growing consciousness of a Filipino nation. Paterno's novel, Ninay: costumbres filipinos (Ninay [proper name]: Filipino Customs, 1885) exalted indigenous civilization; Rizal's Noli, apart from its anti-clerical motives, was in itself "a proclamation of the gospel of Filipino nationalism, a call to the regeneration of the Filipino people";[14] and although in its sequel,

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[13]Schumacher, p. 22.

[14]Schumacher, p. 74.

Fili, Rizal never advocated revolution, he nevertheless envisioned a free nation of educated Filipinos.

The Propaganda Movement did not produce any dramas. In the first place, the circulation of its literature in the Philippines was done in secret. Obviously, it was more feasible to do this with printed matter, e.g., newspapers, pamphlets, and the like, than with productions of propagandistic plays. Even if propagandistic plays had been written, the masses were still too completely enamored of the kumedya to patronize political plays, and the native middle class preferred Spanish zarzuelas devoid of any political implications. Furthermore, the Propagandists had neither the finances nor the personnel to produce plays. Finally, they wanted a means that offered the most direct appeal at the least expense to the widest possible audience. Thus, the Propagandists chose the newspaper. Jose Rizal felt differently at a later period in his nationalistic development, but he chose the novel as the suitable vehicle for his particular purposes. Before he joined the Propaganda Movement, however, he had already written a short zarzuela for a school program at the Jesuit Ateneo Municipal. Titled Junto al Pasig (By the Pasig [River]), the play was performed once by Rizal's schoolmates on December 8, 1880.

Chronologically, this zarzuelita (literally, "little" zarzuela) may not belong to the Propaganda Movement,[15] but thematically, it does: it

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[15]There is no agreement regarding the date of the birth of the Propaganda Movement. Teodoro Agoncillo, The Revolt of the Masses (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1956), note 5, p. 315, adopts 1882, the year the first organization of Filipinos in Madrid, the Círculo Hispano-Filipino, was organized. Schumacher, Propaganda, p. x, gives the year 1880, the publication date of Paterno's Sampaguitas. Rizal did not join the Propaganda Movement until 1882, when he first arrived in Spain.

dramatizes the conflict between the native spirit (personified by the Diwata--native muse, nymph or goddess) and Spanish sovereignty (personified by Leonido, the schoolboy). In the fourth of seven scenes, for instance, the Diwata unflinchingly accuses Spain of having impeded the growth of indigenous culture: "At that time did this rich land enjoy/Such a happy age,/ That in its delights it rivalled heaven;/ But now, disconsolate, sadly it groans under foreign subjugation,/ And slowly dies, at the impious hands of Spain!"[16] A few lines later, the Diwata foretells impending disaster: "Ah! the future shall bring/ The misfortunes I reserve/ For your race, which acclaims this impure cult:/ Woeful Calamities,/ Pestilence, Wars, and Cruel Invasions/ By diverse nations/ In coming ages soon;/ Your people will shed blood and tears/ On the dry sands of your nation."[17] Rizal's prophecy came true; sixteen years later a national identity unified the masses, and nationalism, which began as a literary movement, culminated in a revolution against Spain.

Meanwhile, a "bourgeois" theatre had arisen in Manila; although essentially the local Spanish theatre, it exerted the strongest dramatic and theatrical influence on early modern Filipino drama.

The "Bourgeois" Theatre

During the nineteenth century, increased foreign trade brought the luxuries of bourgeois living to the households of the native middle

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[16]Jose Rizal, Junto al Pasig, in W. E. Retana, Vida y escritos del Dr. Jose Rizal (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suarez, 1907), p. 44.

[17]Rizal, p. 45.

class, and made European culture an affordable commodity. Musically, the visits of foreign artists[18] and the popularity of Italian operas bear evidence not only of the demand which the new social and economic order had created, but of the ability of the nascent bourgeoisie to pay for it. This material advancement, along with the desire to be "urbane" in the Spanish manner (a desire which found concrete manifestation in the correctness of nineteenth century Tagalog poetry[19]), created among the middle class, particularly the mestizos, a cultural dissatisfaction with native art, music, literature, and theatre. Native playwrights could not provide the kind of drama which portrayed the middle-class man embroiled in middle-class situations--a drama which the kumedya or moro-moro was not and could not be. The kumedya embodied the inclinations of a mass audience who were a world apart from the taste, the education, and certainly the wealth of the native bourgeoisie. Understandably, the middle-class audience turned to imported Spanish plays and other foreign entertainments.

The rise of a bourgeois theatre in the Philippines may be attributed to at least five developments: first, the establishment of various literary societies which sought to maintain theatrical activity in Manila; second, the construction of indoor theatres intended specifically for the staging of Spanish plays; third, the arrival of Spanish and other foreign theatrical artists who introduced current trends, styles, techniques of staging, and new dramatic genres (comedia

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[18] Raymundo Bañas, Pilipino . . . Theater, pp. 137 ff.

[19] Lumbera, "Tradition," p. 164.

de magia, zarzuela grande, zarzuela chica, alta comedia, sainete, Italian opera, French operetta, and vaudeville); fourth, the emergence of local playwriting in Spanish; and fifth, the success of the first generation of Filipino actors trained in the nineteenth century representational style of performance.

Literary Societies

The earliest artistic society, founded in 1844, was the Sociedad de Recreo (Society of Leisure) which had its own small theatre for amateur productions.[20] In the 1850's, other literary societies were established--La España (Spain), La Alianza (Alliance), and La Confianza (Confidence). The oldest of these, La España, was partly responsible for bringing modern Spanish drama--the alta comedia and social dramas--to the Philippines and for partly subsidizing the construction of the Teatro del Príncipe Alfonso in 1862.[21] In 1878, the most cultured men of the Philippines founded the Liceo artístico-literario (The Artistic-Literary Lyceum) in Manila. It published a magazine, which, in the first issue of August 10, 1879, enunciated the aims of the society: "the propagation of all the legitimate manifestations of literature and of art, in agreeable fellowship."[22] The Liceo introduced works of Narciso Serra, Rodriguez Rubí, Perillán, and José Echegaray either in the performance of scenes at monthly soirees, or in their weekly magazine. Though the Liceo dissolved in 1883, it generated excitement

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[20] Retana, Noticias, p. 64.

[21] Retan, p. 77; Juan Atayde, "Los teatros de Manila," La Ilustracion Filipina, 2, no. 51 (November 21, 1892), p. 402.

[22] Quoted in Retana, Noticias, p. 101.

in literary pursuits by promoting contests. Rizal was among the winners of these contests; his one-act allegory, El consejo de los dioses (The Council of the Gods, 1880), was a prize-winning play.

Physical Theatres

Of paramount importance to the rise of the bourgeois theatre in Manila was the unflagging initiative of the local Spanish-speaking community in the construction of indoor theatres. These theatres not only provided the physical plant, but in making possible the productions of nineteenth century Spanish and other foreign genres in the representational style such genres required, they also created a concrete theatrical alternative to the presentational style of the kumedya.

The long line of proscenium theatres began with the Teatro Cómico (1790?-1812?), followed by Teatro de Binondo (later called Teatro Español, 1846-1863), the "first formal and modern theatre in Manila."[23] No description of their stages survives. A renovation designed to enlarge the stage weakened the architectural framework of the Binondo and rendered it useless even before an earthquake destroyed it in 1863.[24] "Rough curtains and humble equipment formed the wealth of the small"[25] Teatro de Quiapo (also called Teatro de Gunao, 1852?), a theatre which was patronized by both the Spanish and the native communities, and thus,

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[23]Retana, p. 36.

[24]Retana, p. 75; p. 79.

[25]Quoted in Retana, pp. 81-82; 1852 is the year given by Retana, p. 76; he refers to the theatre as "bilingüe" on p. 78.

was bilingual in its offerings. In 1860, prompted by the Ayuntamiento's (Municipal Council of Manila) offer of 4% to 5% of the capital interest to any enterprise which would build a theatre to replace the Binondo, members of La España built the Teatro del Príncipe Alfonso (also known as Nuevo Teatro de Arroceros, 1862-1877).[26] This theatre used gas lighting.[27] In 1878, an octagonal dancing kiosk was converted into the Coliséo-Artístico (variously called Kiosko de Variedades, Teatro de Variedades, Teatro de Novedades), which a storm destroyed in October 1882. No description of its stage facilities exists. Originally a bullfight arena built by a Spanish officer named Quesada, the Circo-Teatro de Bilibid was covered by an umbrella-shaped galvanized iron roof supported at the center by a vertical pillar, from which hung huge candelabra (as a substitute for the grand chandeliers of great theatres).[28] The latter gave the theatre an odd appearance, but it was nevertheless spacious, well ventilated, and fairly adequate.[29] On the flying buttresses of the central column were hung gas burners. The first experiment with gas lighting occurred in this theatre, with poor results, because coconut oil was used for the gas lamps.[30] Built in 1880, the Teatro Filipino was an average theatre, but poor in ornament and lighting.[31] It had

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[26]Retana, p. 81.

[27]Atayde, in La Ilustración, December 21, 1892, p. 434. A servant allegedly started the fire while arranging the deposit of petroleum in the storage room.

[28]Atayde, in La Ilustración, February 21, 1893, p. 50.

[29]Atayde, p. 50.

[30]Atayde, p. 50.

[31]Retana, p. 108.

one row of boxes, whose railing was wooden. Small and very modest, the Teatro de la calle del Príncipe, built in 1885, catered to the young and the gay.[32] In this theatre, the initial ventures of native actors as zarzuela producers attained extraordinary success. Built in 1893, the Teatro Zorrilla had 400 orchestra seats, 48 parquet boxes, 4 proscenium boxes, and a lobby that could accommodate 900 people. Its foyer displayed the paintings of Santos, Tur, and Antillón. The latter was Filipino, whose paintings a local Spanish newspaper lauded for their mastery of perspective and representative realism.[33] In this theatre another Filipino, José Estella, made his debut as a zarzuela composer. All of these indoor theatres provided the theatrical locus for the visiting and resident directors, actors, singers, choreographers, and scenographers, who came to the Philippines in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Foreign Artists and Genres

Among the first political deportees who came to the Philippines in the 1840's was Don Alvaro Carazo, who at the newly-built Teatro de Binondo reorganized the then flagging company of local Spanish and mestizo amateurs plus a handful of native supernumeraries. The second group of exiles included Don Narciso de la Escosura and Carlota Coronel, an actress from Madrid. Escosura was particularly fond of comedias de magia (magical plays) which required spectacular staging; this earned

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[32]Retana, p. 153.

[33]Cited in Retana, p. 168.

him the title mago escénico (scenic magician).[34] His productions of La Conjuración de Venecia (The Venetian Conspiracy, 1834) and La Pata de Cabra (The Crowbar, 1849) consistently played to full houses at the Binondo. These two plays exemplify romanticism in the Spanish theatre of the first half of the nineteenth century.[35] Upon the return to Spain of Escosura and Coronel subsequent to the declaration of amnesty, the news of their successes motivated Manuel Lopez de Ariza and his company in Balon to come to Manila in 1852. For his initial productions, he directed sainetes of Ramón de la Cruz.

An eighteenth-century form of the entremés with songs interspersed, the sainete was a short, comic piece written in octosyllabic verse. Its most popular exponent, Ramón de la Cruz (1731-1794), described it as "the exact picture of civil life and the customs of the Spaniards."[36] The sainete was not totally unfamiliar to the local Filipino audience; its predecessor, the entremés, had been a regular feature of fiestas since the seventeenth century. By the first decade of the eighteenth

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[34]Atayde, in La Ilustración, December 28, 1892, p. 346.

[35]Guillermo Díaz-Plaja, A History of Spanish Literature, trans. and ed. Hugh A. Harter (New York: New York University Press, 1971), p. 257.
La Conjuración de Venecia, a historical drama in prose by Martínez de la Rosa (1789-1862).
La Pata de Cabra, a comedia de magia first staged at the Teatro del Drama y Lírico Español on September 23, 1849.

[36]Francisco Ruiz Ramón, Historia del Teatro Español (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1967), I, pp. 361-63.

century, there appeared entremeses "according to the custom of the land."[37]

Balagtas wrote a sainete in Tagalog and Spanish titled La india elegante y el Negrito amante (The Elegant Native [woman] and the Negrito Suitor, 1860).[38] This neglected work of Balagtas, which unlike his kumedyas has been preserved in its entirety, might be the earliest example of a native drama which exhibits realistic characterization. According to the critic Epifanio de los Santos, the characters of this sainete are "Filipinos in flesh and blood . . . drawn with local color and pulsating with vitality."[39] Based on an actual incident, the play is a light-hearted dramatization in verse dialogue and song of the ultimate triumph of love. Capitan Toming, the Negrito suitor of the elegant Tagala Menangue, dresses in an expensive Spanish outfit to impress her. She rejects Toming, however, because of his color. Although the musical duet--extolling the great power of love--which ends the play leaves the theme of racial prejudice unresolved, the criticism of the Filipino who apes the fair-skinned Spaniard as well as of the Filipino who refuses to acknowledge the equality of the aboriginal Negrito lends a strong satirical tone to the whole work, which some

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[37]Retana, p. 45.

[38]The Spaniards called the natives "indios"; the term "Filipino" was reserved for the insulares (Philippine-born Spaniards) until the ilustrados began to use it to refer to themselves and the masses. The Negritos are the aborigines of the Philippines; they are short, kinky-haired, and very dark. The year 1860 was given by the author's children as the year of the first production. See Cruz, Kun Sino, p. 159.

[39]Epifanio de los Santos, "Balagtas y su Florante," p. 45.

twenty years later, would be found in another local sainete by a Spaniard, Entrala's Cuadros Filipinos (Philippine Portraits).

The local audience had its initial experience of Italian opera in the form of interludes featured with the regular programs at the Teatro de Binondo.[40] The first Italian opera company to visit the Philippines arrived at the initiative of an oboist named Pompey (who had given a recital in Manila) and two local Spanish newspapermen, the brothers Eduardo and Diego Jimenez.[41] The company made its debut in 1868 at the Teatro del Príncipe Alfonso. The conductor Stefani was so pleased with the success of this initial venture, that he returned with the tenor Sabatini (who had captured the hearts of the Manila bourgeoisie) and a new company. Stefani returned a third time, and from November of 1868 to February of the following year he conducted the operas La Favorita and Poliutto at the Príncipe Alfonso. Encouraged by the reception of these productions, Stefani returned for a fourth and last time with Faust, but the lack of official support (due to the preoccupation of the Spanish authorities with the Jolo campaigns[42]) disappointed him. The seeds of operatic art, however, remained in the country, specifically in the Capozzi school for singers, named after its director, who was

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[40]Retana, p. 73.

[41]Data on the introduction of the opera in the Philippines culled from Atayde, "Los teatros," La Ilustracion Filipina, December 21, 1892, p. 434.

[42]The Jolo campaigns lasted from 1851 to the end of the Spanish rule. The purpose of the military campaigns was to establish absolute sovereignty over the southern islands of the Philippines (which were under Muslim rulers) lest the French, Dutch, and British establish theirs first. See Cesar Adib Majul, "The Decline of the Sultanates; the Sixth Stage of the Moro Wars," in Muslims in the Philippines (Quezon City: The Asian Center, 1973), pp. 283-316.

the concertmaster in Stefani's company. For his opera productions at the Teatro de Tondo, Capozzi imported Italian soloists but used his advanced students for supporting roles. The opera continued to delight local audiences, and in the two decades following the successful performances of imported companies, native singers and musicians, under foreign artists, underwent training in the genre. Finally, in 1887 or 1888, a Franciscan parish priest, Cipriano Gonzalez, founded an opera company, composed entirely of native performers, in the district of Pandakan, Manila.[43] At his own expense, he built a theatre exclusively for opera productions. The company called itself the Círculo Musical de Pandakan (Pandakan Music Club) and continued its activities even after its founder left the parish.

The production of Ventura de la Vega's Jugar con fuego (To Play with Fire, 1851) introduced the zarzuela grande to Manila theatregoers, just as it had reestablished the popularity of the genre in Spain when it premiered in 1851.[44] In late 1878 or early 1879, Darío Céspedes and his company staged this zarzuela at the Coliseo Artístico, originally a dancing kiosk across the street from the Príncipe Alfonso. Céspedes's most popular production was El barberillo de Lavapiés (The Little Barber of Lavapies, 1874),[45] another zarzuela grande. With the dissolution of the company in 1880, the appeal of the zarzuela grande diminished and

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[43]Retana, pp. 155-56.

[44]See José Subirá, Historia de la música española e hispano-americana (Barcelona: Salvat [1953]), p. 729.
With music by Francisco Barbieri, Jugar con fuego premiered in 1851.

[45]Libretto by Luís Mariano de Larra, music by Barbieri, first staged at the Teatro de Zarzuela on December 19, 1874.

gave way to the more recent género chico. Influenced by the sainete, which was revived in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the one-act zarzuela chica[46] focused on a realistic portrayal of local customs and current events, built around characteristic songs and dances. A distinct trait of the chica was the low comedy and wit (called sal by the Spaniards), governed by an overall undisciplined spirit.[47]

The arrival of Alejandro Cubero, the Father of the Spanish Theatre in the Philippines,[48] marked a turning point in the history of the Spanish zarzuela in the Philippines. Cubero, a retired Spanish actor, came to Manila with his mistress, the Madrid actress Elisea Raguer. In 1881, they founded the Teatro Portatíl Fernández, superseded a few months later by the Compañía Lírico-dramática. In 1884, Cubero established the Compañía de Zarzuela Cubero, which became the leading zarzuela company in Manila. Cubero and Raguer trained native actors for principal roles. Notable among these actors were Práxedes Fernández, Jose Carvajal, Patrocinio Tagaroma, and Nemesio Ratia.

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[46]At the end of the nineteenth century, a revival of the sainete occurred. It differed from the earlier sainetes popularized by Ramón de la Cruz in the previous century in that music called género chico accompanied it. In time, the entire work itself became the zarzuela chica. See Matilde Muñoz, La zarzuela y el género chico, Part III of Historia del teatro en españa (Madrid: Editorial Tesoro, 1965), pp. 199 ff.

[47]Sterling MacKinlay, Origin and Development of Light Opera (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1971), p. 78.

[48]The title given to Cubero by the newspaper El Renacimie to (September 28, 1901). Cited in Retana, p. 118.

Three other Spanish theatre people contributed to the rise of the local bourgeois theatre: Juán Barbero, Rafael Llanos, and Antonio García Ecija. A comic actor, Barbero came to Manila to perform with itinerant companies at the Teatro del Príncipe Alfonso in the 1860's. In the 1880's he worked with native actors, notably Fernández and Carvajal. Llanos came from the Madrid Conservatory and was responsible for importing numerous talents from Spain. Among the artists he brought to Manila was a Señor Galán, a scenic director. One of Llanos' associates, García Ecija directed the debut of the first group of imported Spanish actors in a production of Juán Palou's La campana de la Almudaina (The Bell of the Almudaina, 1859), a verse drama in three acts.[49] Llanos and García Ecija were also responsible for a repertory which included plays of Echegaray, the alta comedia Consuelo (Consolation, 1878) by Adelardo López de Ayala (1828-1879), El nudo gordiano (The Gordian Knot, 1872), a social drama by Eugenio Sellés (1844-1926), and the famous play of Manuel Tamayo (1829-1898), El drama nuevo (The New Drama, 1867).[50]

Other foreign artists who visited Manila include the French opera company of Mogard, which staged Norma and Lucia de Lammermoor; the Italian conductor Carreras and Italian soloists, who offered Lucrecia Borgia and Faust; the Saigon-based French vaudeville and operetta troupe

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[49]The play was first performed at the Teatro del Circo on November 3, 1859.

[50]Díaz-Plaja, p. 412. Consuelo is a satire on usury and materialism; El Nudo Gordiano premiered at the Teatro Apolo de Madrid in 1872; El Drama Nuevo, considered to be the masterpiece of Tamayo, prefigures Pirandello in the theme of reality vs. illusion (see Ruiz Ramon, pp. 411-12).

of Deplace; the scenic painter Divela, whose backdrops for the Assi-Panadés opera company at the Circo-Teatro de Bilibid were wonders of perspective, and who, with the painter Alberoni (presumably of the same company) taught a handful of local students the art of decoration (which could be witnessed in temples, public edifices, and houses of the wealthy scions of Manila); and finally, the Italian dance teacher Apiani, who came from Madrid with the Spanish deportees of 1848. Apiani organized a dance school and later built his own theatre at Sibacon. Leaving a host of outstanding students (some of whom later became masters of the choreographic art in the Philippines), Apiani returned to Spain in 1853 after his theatre crumbled due to the damage caused by an earthquake a year before.

Local Spanish Plays

With the imported Spanish zarzuelas, romantic dramas, bourgeois comedies, and Italian operas, the more than twenty-four Spanish plays written and staged in the Philippines in the latter half of the nineteenth century constitute the corpus of Western-style drama which in the twentieth century, early modern Filipino playwrights would equate with modernity. The operas excepted, these plays bear a greater semblance of reality in their representation of contemporary characters, situations, and locales than the kumedyas. While this realism may not be attributed to the Italian operas, the latter in their music exemplify, just as the zarzuelas do, the modernity which native playwrights would strive for in their works. Perhaps even more than the imported Spanish plays, local plays manifest those qualities which characterize the legacy of nineteenth

century Spanish drama to early modern Filipino drama: exaggerated stereotypes, hackneyed situations, and forced resolutions. For example, the plot of La Agencia Matrimonial (The Marriage Agency),[51] staged by the Sociedad de Recreo on December 10, 1846, involves mistaken identities: Doña Rosenda, an insufferably fat, middle-age, and husband-starved woman, is infatuated with Don Fernando, whom she mistakes for the owner of the agency. Thinking that his sister had been enamoured of Don Gaudencio (a five-time, decrepit widower, who is the real owner), Don Donato storms into the agency and brings the play to a happy, but contrived, denouement. In Salir á tiempo de pobre (Farewell to Poverty),[52] first performed at the Binondo on May 18, 1852, Don Severo wants his daughter Matilde to marry the old and asthmatic, but wealthy lawyer, Don Canuto. Matilde, however, is in love with a penniless poet, Pablo, and their secret correspondence is arranged by the faithful maid, Juana. Don Severo finally consents to the marriage of Matilde and Pablo after the latter reveals that he has won 1,000 reales at a lottery. Premiered at the Teatro de Quiapo on September 8, 1860, Amor de alojamiento (House Lovers) features an elderly landlady who is overwhelmed by a servant's "volcanic" declarations of love.[53] The marriage of Elvira to an old usurer, Don Simplicio (who has loaned a huge sum of money to her uncle-guardian

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[51]Verse comedia in two acts by Manuel Rances e Hidalgo and José María Birotteau. Synopsis in Retana, pp. 65-67.

[52]One-act verse comic essay by Antonio Robles. Synopsis in Retana, p. 74.

[53]One-act comedia by Federico de Bouvier. Synopsis in Retana, p. 80.

Don Juán), seems imminent in Una página de gloria (A Page of Glory, 1876), until a stranger arrives.[54] The stranger reveals himself as Don Manuel, Elvira's father. In a climactic revelation, Don Manuel recognizes Don Jenaro, a boarder in Don Juán's house, and beloved of Elvira: Jenaro had saved Manuel's life during an encounter with the Moros in Jolό. In gratitude, Don Manuel gives Jenaro his daughter in marriage. What appears to be the first locally-written zarzuela, Una novia de encargo (Made-to-order Bride),[55] which premiered at the Teatro Filipino on March 1, 1884, contains the idyllic notion of true love conquers all, and in typical zarzuela fashion, a song compensates for lack of psychological motivation. Felipe and his sister Faustina have come to visit the family of Don Matías. After a comic sequence which illustrates the provincialism of the visitors, Faustina and Luís, Matías' son, find themselves alone, and fall in love. Meanwhile, offstage, Rosa, Matías' daughter, and Felipe have also fallen in love. In this first local zarzuela, four native actors appeared: Nemesio Ratia as Luís, Jose Carvajal as Felipe, and Venancia Suzara as Rosa.

Of greater import to the emergence of early modern Filipino drama are the local Spanish plays which were set in the Philippines, and which dealt with native customs. Federico Casademunt and Regina Escalera wrote República . . . doméstica (From Liberty to Domesticity),

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[54]One-act occasional drama in verse by Federico Casademunt and Regino Escalera, first performed at the Teatro del Príncipe Alfonso on April 23, 1876. Synopsis in Retana, pp. 90-93.

[55]Ricardo Castro Ronderos, Una Novia de Encargo, music by Maestro Goré (Manila: Establecimiento tipográfico de "La Oceanía Española," 1884).

first performed at the Príncipe Alfonso on June 30, 1878. While the play extolled the virtues of Filipino women, the comic treatment of native servants whose frequent simplicities were the source of laughter displeased the native members of the audience.[56] A year or two later, a mestizo, Juán Zulueta de los Ángeles, wrote a one-act comedia titled José el carpintero (Joseph the Carpenter).[57] Its realistic and critical portrayal of local customs earned the boos and hisses of the Filipino audience.

The production in 1882 of Entrala's sainete, Cuadros Filipinos,[58] fared no better than José el carpintero; the Filipinos did not consider the parody of market vendors and kumedyantes amusing. Still, this sainete is significant to the beginnings of modern drama in the Philippines because apart from being an early attempt at local realism, it was an intentional criticism of the native kumedya. Here was a play which sought to modernize the native theatre, i.e., the kumedya, by showing its absurdities and inanities. A decade later, José Conde y de la Torre and Mariano Garcia del Rey wrote Apuros de un pedáneo (Predicaments of a Steward). Premiered at the Teatro Filipino on August 23, 1891, this comic sketch "without pretensions" suffered the same unfavorable reception that met Cuadros and Carpintero ten years earlier: the Filipino segment of the audience frowned on the ridiculous

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[56] Retana, p. 93.

[57] Manila, Imprenta de "La Oceanía Española," 1880.

[58] Francisco de P. Entrala, Cuadros Filipinos (Manila: Imprenta de "La Oceanía Española," 1882). First staged at the Teatro Filipino in 1882.

and patronizing portrayal of a native gobernadorcillo (petty governor) and the other native characters in the play.[59] Perhaps, as Retana contends, the authors merely presented an "honest work of observation, done without any other motive than that of providing pleasure to the readers and spectators,"[60] but the political atmosphere of the 1880's and 1890's could explain such response: national consciousness had been awakened in the 'eighties, and in the 'nineties it had greatly intensified.

Equally significant about these local Spanish plays is the fact that they were written specifically for the local theatres. Thus, they are more valid than the imported plays as an indication of the conventions of stage representation that were formalized by the local bourgeois theatre. Invariably, the setting described by the stage directions of local plays is a room--amply or luxuriously or poorly furnished--with a door at the back and a door on each side, tables and chairs. The mise-en-scene for the historical spectacle, La Conquista de Jolo (The Conquest of Jolo, first performed at the Príncipe Alfonso on June 11, 1865), attests to the concern for representational realism.[61] Act I calls for a beach in Jolo: "to the right and left are palm, coconut, and banana trees; the sea in the background. Between the trees to the left of the spectator, on the

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[59]Synopsis in Retana, pp. 163-65.

[60]Retana, p. 162.

[61]Antonio G. del Canto, La Conquista de Jolo; drama histórico, de grande espectáculo, en trés actos y en verso, original (Binondo: Imprenta de Miguel Sánchez y compañía, 1865).

first boundary,[62] will be seen a bamboo shack, whose front door faces right and has a small window on the side. In the exterior part of the door will be a lancan. In the interior will be no more than a table and a roughly-made armchair." Acts II and III occur in the council room of the Sultan's palace: "in the background is a gallery which extends into a balcony, and in the distance the sea. Four doors--two on the right and two on the left. Between the doors to the right of the spectator will be seen the Sultan's throne, and around the room will be divans. In the first boundary, to the left of the spectator will be a writing table and an armchair on each side; in the middle of the room and behind the gallery will be adorned crystal globes on the ceiling, which illumine the room. It is night." Moreover, stage directions in this play exemplify a demand for representational stage effects. In Act III, the character León is upstage, "looking right and left, and later comes into the scene mysteriously. In each of the side doors will be a Moro sentinel and two more at the back. Cannon roars will be heard intermittently. In the distance will be seen the sea, sail boats, and Spanish battle ships. It is midday." Additionally, La Conquista requires a working canoe. The zarzuela, El Diablo Mundo (What a Devil of a World)[63] which was first performed at the inauguration of the Teatro Zorrilla on October 25, 1893, reveals other conventions

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[62]The Spanish word used in the stage directions is "termino," which means boundary, limit, or "plane" in the vocabulary of painting. It suggests the position of wing drops.

[63]One-act zarzuela by Emilio and Rafael Val, music by José Estella. Synopsis and scenic descriptions found in Retana, pp. 169-71.

of staging, with specific relevance to the zarzuela form. It calls for a trapdoor and a balcony which, the playwrights are careful to note, is "practicable." What is suggested here is the use of painted scenery, and where doors or other objects are functional, they become workable set props. This zarzuela also requires a telón corto (brief curtain) which represents a dark and gloomy cellar. The telón corto is a standard feature of zarzuela staging. It is distinguished from the telón de boca which is the front curtain, and from the telón de foro or telón de fondo, which is the backdrop. In front of the telón de corto are staged brief (and thus the name) episodes, during which a change of scenery occurs on the stage behind the telon.[64] In some zarzuelas, the drop represents a street, in which instance, it is called telón de calle (street drop). These scenic demands typify the two basic scenic conventions of the zarzuela: one, the "decor plante," or the set-up scene, with actual set props arranged in front of a backdrop; and two, the painted backdrop with no other props on stage.[65]

Finally, the body of Western-style plays which formed the repertoire of the local bourgeois theatre served as the material for the training of native actors and singers in the conventions of representational production. Their popular success in Manila and other provinces provided incentive and inspiration for early modern Filipino playwrights

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[64]Diccionario de la Lengua Española 18th ed. (Madrid: Real Academía Española, 1956).

[65]Henry Lyonnet, Le Théatre en Espagne (Paris: Paul Ollendorff, 1897), p. 159.

who, in the first decade of the twentieth century, wrote plays modeled on Spanish genres. The next section will briefly deal with the theatrical careers of these native actors.

Native Actors[66]

Of the more than a dozen native actors who received their training in Spanish zarzuelas and other genres, four had gained recognition for their exceptional talents: Nemesio Ratia, the senior member of the group, sang principal roles in numerous zarzuelas chicas; Práxedes Fernández established herself as the queen of the Spanish zarzuela in the Philippines; Patrocinio Tagaroma excelled in soubrette roles; and José Carvajal became the leading comic actor of the local Spanish theatre.

Nemesio Ratia (1854-1910) portrayed the protagonist in José el carpintero and Cuadros Filipinos. He also appeared in local Spanish plays such as Una página de gloria, an occasional verse drama, and Una novia de encargo, a zarzuela chica. Under the direction of Cubero, he sang important roles in several other chicas which were currently popular in Spain, like El hombre es débil (Man is Weak)[67] and El barberillo de Lavapiés (The Little Barber of Lavapiés). Ratia held the distinction of being the first Filipino actor to perform in Spain.

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[66]Data culled from Retana, pp. 118 ff., 149; Manuel, Dictionary, I, pp. 123-27, 166-71, 282-83, 362-64, 440-42; Bañas, pp. 188-99.

[67]One-act zarzuela by Mariano Pina y Domínguez, music by Barbieri, first performed at the Teatro de Zarzuela on October 14, 1871.

In 1889, he sailed for Madrid and made his debut at the Teatro Felipe in the zarzuela chica El lucero del Alba[68] (The Star of Alba) on July 17 of that year. In 1894, he formed his own company, but the revolution disrupted its activities.

Praxedes Fernandez (1871-1919), fondly known as Yeyeng, started her career as a dancer in the carrillo, the shadow-puppet theatre of the 1880's. She learned the basics of acting from Juán Barbero, and singing from her godfather, Pedro Castañeda, and an Italian teacher. Later, she joined Cubero's company, where she worked with Carvajal, Ratia, and Tagaroma. Yeyeng portrayed the princess of the kumedya in Cuadros Filipinos, but after its unfavorable reception, she joined another company headed by Barbero and another Spanish director, Carlos Rodríguez. In 1890, she and two other Filipino actresses, Suzara and Tagaroma, formed the FERSUTA company (from the first syllables of their surnames), which went on successful tours of the Bisayas during the next two years. In 1894, she married and transferred to Iloilo, and in 1899 she sailed for Spain, where she and her husband remained until 1902. Like Ratia, Yeyeng achieved her greatest success in zarzuelas chicas, where her delivery of lines, her singing and especially her sensuous dancing won for her the admiration of the local audience.

Like Fernandez, the seductive qualities of a dancer brought fame to Patrocinio Tagaroma (1874-1926), popularly known as Patring, who as a young girl sang at the carrillos. Like Fernandez and Ratia, she had

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[68] One-act zarzuela by Pina, first performed at the Teatro de Apolo in 1879.

a role in the controversial Cuadros, which was the first of many Cubero productions in which she was involved. With Fernández and Suzara in the FERSUTA company, she performed in zarzuelas, the most successful of which were Boccaccio and La Mascota.[69] In 1892, she appeared in a local Spanish prose drama, El secreto de un médico (A Doctor's Secret) by Camilo Millán.[70] When the Revolution broke out she was acting with the Compañía Española of Fernando Augustí, who was noted for doing non-musical plays.

Born José Maganti in 1862 (died 1928), Carvajal made his theatrical debut in the female role of Brigida in a carrillo production based on the story of Don Juán Tenorio. After a period of acrobatics and circus clowning, he joined the company of Juán Barbero who became his teacher. In Cubero's zarzuela companies he mastered the techniques of zarzuela acting, and later in another company he appeared in a famous chica, Cádiz (1886)[71] by Javier de Burgos, one of the founders of the género chico. In 1889, he was co-director of another landmark of the zarzuela chica, La gran vía (The Great Way, 1886) by Felipe Pérez y González.[72]

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[69]Boccaccio is a three-act verse zarzuela by Luís Mariano de Larra, music by Franz de Suppe. It is based on the German comic opera by Camilo Walzel and Ricardo Genée.

La Mascota is a French operetta (La Mascotte) by Edmond Audran, composer; libretto by Henri-Charles Chivot and Henri-Alfred Duru. First performed at the Bouffes-Parisiens in 1880.

[70]First performed at the Teatro Filipino on January 8, 1892.

[71]Music by Federico Chueca, first performed at the Teatro Apolo in 1886.

[72]One-act "revista madrileña cómico-lírico-fantástico-callejera," with music by Chueca, first staged at the Teatro Felipe in 1886. This work established the zarzuela chica as a Spanish institution.

In 1893, with the help of Patring Tagaroma, his wife and leading lady, Carvajal formed a company (the second, it appears; the first one he formed with Raguer after the death of Cubero in 1888), the Compañía Zarzuela de Carvajal, based in the Bikol region. The company came to Manila to perform Cádiz at the Zorrilla, with Carvajal and Tagaroma in the principal roles. Antillón painted the backdrops for this production. At Palomar the same year (1893) he built the Teatro Colón, a modest edifice of bamboo and nipa.[73] With the income from this theatre, Carvajal supported the Propaganda Movement. When the Revolution broke out in 1896, he was apparently in the provinces.

Ratia, Carvajal, Fernández, Tagaroma, and over a dozen other actors developed independently of the kumedya. These actors were mostly mestizos, interpreters of Spanish dramas which in subject matter, character, enactment, and audience, differed from the native kumedya or moro-moro. As Retana puts it, between the zarzuelistas and kumedyantes existed the same veritable abyss, "which exists between the modern theatre and the stale, hackneyed, ridiculous, and absurd theatre of 'moros y cristianos.'"[74] Like the kumedyantes, however, who transformed the Spanish comedia into a native genre, the zarzuelistas "Filipinized" the Spanish zarzuela.

The Spanish zarzuelas which served as the immediate models of the native, vernacular versions were twice removed from the original Spanish works. Not only were these Spanish zarzuelas enacted by native actors, these actors instilled a distinct trait into the zarzuela,

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[73]Retana, p. 172.

[74]Retana, p. 120.

specifically the zarzuela chica, of the 1880's and 1890's. The zarzuela chica in Manila became very risqué, especially in the dance numbers, of which the most popular was the can-can. Such was the predominant spirit of the theatre in Manila in the 1880's that the Archbishop of Manila finally denounced the theatre as a "school of corruption."[75] The incident which led to the Archibishop's denunciation was a command performance of the zarzuela Pascual Bailón at the governor's palace in August 1886. The Spanish comic actor Valentín Fernández and the native actress Praxedes Fernandez (no relation to the former) danced the can-can "without reservations, so uninhibitedly that not a few gentlemen closed their eyes."[76] The Archibishop issued a caustic pastoral letter wherein he judged the current theatrical spectacles in Manila (of which the performance at the governor's palace was an embarrassing example) to be "more proper to the bordellos of a city of mediocre culture."[77] Expectedly, the controversy only aroused the curiosity of the audience, who had all along, according to the pastoral letter, "applauded the most obscene and voluptuous actions, gestures, and attitudes of the current theatrical spectacles in Manila with frenetic enthusiasm."[78] Pascual Bailón packed the theatre every night, and in every performance the can-can garnered the most enthusiastic applause.

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[75] Pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Manila, dated August 15, 1886, quoted in Retana, p. 151.

[76] Retana, p. 150.

[77] Retana, p. 151.

[78] Retana, p. 151.

In the 1890's, the local "bourgeois" theatre reached its fullest development, largely because of the successful careers of Fernández, Carvajal, Ratia, Tagaroma, and other native actors, who had become accomplished interpreters of Spanish genres, particularly the zarzuela. Concomitantly, the kumedya--with its spectacular battles between moros and cristianos and its sentimental love plots--remained the favored entertainment of the masses. This was the theatrical situation when the Revolution erupted in 1896. Although the masses led the uprising, the theatre which was characteristically theirs--the kumedya--did not survive the upheaval. The kumedya gave way to a new drama--nationalistic in intent, native in characters, local in situations, for the most part realistic in plot, and prosaic in dialogue--which more directly derived from the local bourgeois theatre. The next chapter will examine how the Revolution served as a catalyst which brought together nationalism, the bourgeoisie, the masses, and their theatres, in fruitful interaction.

CHAPTER IV

THE BACKGROUNDS OF MODERN FILIPINO DRAMA: PERIOD OF THE REVOLUTION

To show how the Revolution helped shape modern Filipino drama, this chapter will examine the historical, political, social, cultural, dramatic, and theatrical backgrounds of the Revolution.

Historical and Political Background

Historians usually divide the Philippine Revolution into two phases: the first, from 1896, when the uprising began, to 1897, when a truce was declared; the second, from 1898, when the fighting resumed between the Spaniards and the Filipinos, the latter aided by the Americans, through the subsequent Philippine-American War, to 1902, when the last Filipino general surrendered and amnesty was declared.

First Phase: 1896-1897

Convinced that an organization based in the Philippines was essential to unify the people into a vigorous nation, José Rizal returned to the country from Spain and founded La Liga Filipina (The Philippine League) in July 1892. Less than a week later, the Spanish authorities arrested Rizal and secretly deported him to Dapitan, a town in Mindanao. For a while, the members sustained the Liga mainly to solicit support for La Solidaridad in Madrid. Eventually, conflict developed between the upper class and the lower class members. The latter, led by Andres Bonifacio, no longer believed in peaceful methods

for obtaining needed reforms. A few months later, the Liga dissolved, but Bonifacio had already gathered people from the lower class and founded a secret society, the Katipunan, with the express objective of obtaining through violent means not only reforms, but independence from Spain.

As the membership of the Katipunan (short for Kataastaasan Kagalanggalang na Katipunan nang manga anak nang bayan [The Highest, Most Honorable Society of Sons of the Nation]) grew, the Spanish authorities began to suspect its existence and subversive intents. On August 19, 1896, the Katipunan was discovered through the confession of a Katipunero (member of the Katipunan) to a Spanish friar. This unexpected development forced Bonifacio to begin the revolution five months earlier than he had intended. By the end of the year, the revolution had spread throughout the country. The Spaniards retaliated with a reign of terror: they ordered mass arrests, declared martial law, used torture to obtain names of Katipuneros, and executed both innocent and guilty suspects. The most unfortunate innocent victim of these reprisals was Jose Rizal, who was not in favor of the revolution. On December 30, 1896, Rizal died before a firing squad. Like the execution of the native priests Burgos, Gomez, and Zamora in 1872, the martyrdom of Rizal intensified the revolutionary nationalism of the masses, and won more support for the Revolution.

In Cavite province, two factions--the Magdiwang and the Magdalo--arose within the Katipunan after the outbreak of the Revolution. In an effort to unite them, Bonifacio called for an assembly on March 12, 1897. A central government was elected with Emilio Aguinaldo, an

ilustrado from Cavite province who had had numerous victories over the Spanish troops in Cavite, as president, and Bonifacio as Director of the Department of the Interior. Adding insult to injury, some ilustrado members questioned the educational qualifications of Bonifacio. Consequently, Bonifacio walked out of the meeting and declared the proceedings invalid. Aguinaldo then ordered Bonifacio's arrest, trial, and execution on charges of treason.[1] In July of the same year (1897), Aguinaldo established a provisional government at Biak-na-Bato. Six months later, through the conciliatory efforts of an ilustrado, Pedro Paterno, Aguinaldo agreed to a truce. On December 14 and 15, 1897, Aguinaldo and the Spanish governor-general at the time, Primo Rivera, signed the Pact of Biak-na-Bato, which provided for the exile to Hong Kong of Aguinaldo with twenty-five of his men and the governor's nephew as hostage. On December 27, Aguinaldo and his party sailed for Hong Kong and thus brought the first phase of the Revolution to a close.

Second Phase: 1898-1902

In February 1898, the Filipino army resumed the offensive against the Spaniards in Manila, as the purge of suspected Katipuneros continued. The same month, the American battleship Maine blew up in Havana under most suspicious circumstances. Three months later, the United States declared war against Spain. Commodore George Dewey,

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[1] The extent of Aguinaldo's responsibility and motives vis-à-vis the execution of Bonifacio has been the subject of controversy. For a fuller treatment of the events surrounding Bonifacio's arrest, see Teodoro Agoncillo, The Revolt of the Masses (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1956), pp. 291-311; also Agoncillo and Oscar Alfonso, A Short History of the Philippines (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1960), pp. 214-19.

newly-assigned commander of the U.S. Naval Squadron in Asia, received immediate orders from the Secretary of the Navy to attack the Spanish fleet anchored in Manila Bay. On the basis of a vague understanding that the United States would recognize Philippine independence from Spain, Aguinaldo, who was then in Singapore, promised the support of the revolutionary army. On May 1, 1898, Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet in the famous Battle of Manila Bay. Eighteen days later, Aguinaldo arrived in Cavite on an American ship, and immediately reorganized the Filipino army. On June 12, he proclaimed Philippine independence at Kawit, Cavite.

In the meantime, Dewey had been conducting secret negotiations with the Spanish authorities for a bloodless surrender of Manila. The two foreign parties agreed, first, to stage a mock battle to save Spain's honor, and second, to exclude the Filipino army from any participation in the surrender.[2] On August 14, 1898, representatives of Spain and the United States formally signed the document of surrender, after which the Americans immediately established a military government. Two months later, a Peace Commission met in Paris, and on December 10, without representation by the Filipino people, representatives of America and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris, which provided, among other things, the cession of the entire Philippine archipelago to the United States for $20 million. The outbreak of the Philippine-American War (officially known in American documents as the Philippine Insurrection) on February 4, 1899, assured the ratification of the treaty, which Congress gave two days later.

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[2]Agoncillo, Short History, pp. 237-38.

The initial hostilities which erupted in February 1899 lasted for ten months. From November 1899, until April 6, 1902 when Miguel Malvar, the last Filipino general in the field, surrendered, guerrilla warfare characterized the Insurrection. On July 4, 1902, apparently as a gesture of altruism on the anniversary of American independence, Theodore Roosevelt, who had succeeded President McKinley after the latter's assassination, declared general amnesty and thus officially ended the Insurrection and the Revolution. However, sporadic armed resistance continued, especially in the provinces where the American authorities had prematurely established civil government. After 1906, no more serious outbreaks occurred; a state of general and complete peace was declared, and on October 16, 1907, the First Philippine Assembly was inaugurated.[3] With this Assembly, Filipinos attained a voice in the shaping of their country's future. The long road toward total independence did not, however, take a decisive turn until the accession of a Democratic administration in 1913, which gave the initial promise of eventual independence. From 1898 to 1913, the Republican policy of indefinite retention of the Philippines strove to dampen nationalism and suppress its outward expression. To a large extent, this policy defined the social and cultural milieu in which modern Filipino drama arose.

Social and Cultural Background

When the Americans entered Manila in August 1898, the Philippines had been at war for two years, and economically, the country was

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[3]James Blount, The American Occupation of the Philippines 1898-1912 (New York: Putnam, 1912), p. 408.

drained. Agricultural production had been at a standstill; there had been a severe loss of farm animals, and farmers had left their fields to fight the war. Food for the majority of the population had been reduced to a bare minimum, and as a result, the incidence of disease increased. Coupled with the generally low standard of sanitation, these conditions partly caused the widespread cholera epidemic which lasted from 1902 to 1906.

Physically, the country was, in the words of a contemporary observer, "devastated, demoralized . . . and entirely without the usual reserve resources of capital either native or foreign, upon which to draw."[4] Churches were ruined, entire towns wiped out, irrigation dykes destroyed, roads rendered impassable, and entire coconut groves levelled to the ground. Emotionally, the Filipinos were frustrated. A majority of the population, the uneducated masses, could not fathom the political implications of the American occupation. As far as they were concerned, the revolution was agrarian in nature; when Spanish rule ended in 1898, they believed they could finally have the land which the Spanish friars had appropriated for themselves. To them, the failure of the American military authorities to effect this transfer of ownership and to expell the Spanish friars from the country, and the arrival in January 1900 of a new American Apostolic Delegate, meant a continuation of their former oppression. To a large extent, this explains the popular support of the Philippine-American

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[4]Henry Parker Willis, Our Philippine Problem: A Study of American Colonial Policy (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1905), p. 343.

War. To make matters worse, the Americans in the country created an unwholesome atmosphere of racism, aggravated by atrocities, cultural imperialism, and suppression of nationalism.

Many Americans believed that the Filipinos were an inferior race. This was a prevalent sentiment among the American soldiers in Manila, who were mostly men of "broken fortunes and doubtful records."[5] The U.S. Philippine Commission admitted this to be a major drawback to American policy. In its report of 1903, it stated that "one of the great obstacles that this government had to contend with is the presence, in a large majority of the towns of the Archipelago, of dissolute, drunken, and lawless Americans who are willing to associate with low Filipino women who live upon the proceeds of their labor. They are truculent and dishonest. They borrow, beg, and steal from the native. Their conduct and mode of life are not calculated to impress the native with the advantage of American civilization. When the opportunity offers, however, they are honest in denunciation of the Filipinos as an inferior, lying race."[6]

The termination of Spanish rule in 1898 put an end to Spanish abuses, and the American occupation was apparently motivated by a policy of "benevolent assimilation" which President McKinley vaguely outlined in his proclamation of December 24, 1898. Toward the end of 1900, however, the second military governor, General Arthur MacArthur,

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[5]Willis, p. 248.

[6]U. S. Philippine Commission, Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War [1903] (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), Part I, p. 37.

realized that almost the entire population supported the insurrection which had erupted in February 1899. Consequently, the military officials advised a change to a more stringent policy, whose objective was "to create a reign of fear and anxiety among the disaffected which will become unbearable, in the hope that they will be thereby brought to their senses."[7] MacArthur further requested, and obtained, authority to deport prominent Filipino leaders who he believed were behind the insurgency. The new policy gave rise to atrocities committed under the guise of anti-guerrilla warfare. Testimonies of American military personnel in the Senate investigation of alleged cruelties in the Philippines described various tortures which the military employed to expedite the complete pacification of the Philippines.[8] Equally deplorable were reprisals against innocent civilians who were suspected of sheltering the Filipino guerrillas; such actions were "punishment" for aiding the insurgents. Less atrocious, but also inhumane, was the reconcentration of entire communities within a perimeter which the Americans could effectively patrol. Anyone found outside the reconcentration camp was summarily arrested or shot as an insurgent.

The pacification of the country was also the motivation behind the passage on November 4, 1901 of Act No. 292, the Sedition Act.

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[7]Philippine Information Society, Facts About the Filipinos (Boston: Philippine Information Society, n.d.), p. 41.

[8]See Henry Graff, ed., American Imperialism and the Philippine Insurrection (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1969), pp. 72-80.

Under this act it was a crime to advocate the independence of the Philippines because such advocacy stimulated the continuance of the insurrection. Section 10 later became the sanction for the arrest of anti-American playwrights:

> Sec. 10. Until it has been officially proclaimed that a state of war or insurrection against the authority or sovereignty of the United States no longer exists in the Philippine Islands, it shall be unlawful for any person to advance orally or by writing or printing or like methods, the independence of the Philippine Islands or their separation from the United States whether by peaceable or forcible means, or to print, publish or circulate any handbill, newspaper or publication, advocating such independence or separation.[9]

Soon after the Americans landed in Manila, a process of Americanization began: street signs were changed to English, American newspapers were published, and practically every store sold American beer. During business hours, the downtown area was full of so many Americans that "one forgets he is so far away from home."[10] Dozens of tiny bars opened, each catering to patrons of American beverages. Billboards proliferated, leading an American observer to remark that "it will not take many months of American occupation to make the beautiful Luneta [a park overlooking the Manila Bay] gay with big, noisy signboards, such as Chicago had on the lake shore road north of Lincoln Park."[11]

More significantly, the Americans undertook to educate the Filipinos "democratically." It was necessary to enlighten the masses

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[9]Sulpicio Guevara, ed., Public Laws Annotated (Quezon City: University of the Philippines [1964]), II, p. 149.

[10]Trumbull White, Our New Possessions (Chicago: J. H. Moore and Co., 1898), I, p. 144.

[11]White, p. 145.

regarding the "benevolent" intentions of the United States and to protect them from the insidious influence of the insurgents. General MacArthur urged Washington to appropriate funds for a public school system in the Philippines, "primarily and exclusively as an adjunct to military operations calculated to pacify the people and to procure and expedite the restoration of tranquility throughout the archipelago."[12] Under the military government there were some 1,000 schools in operation. On January 21, 1901, education, with English as medium of instructions and with provisions for a teacher-training school in Manila, was legislated. Eight months later, six hundred volunteer teachers arrived in Manila aboard the U.S.S. Thomas (for which reason they became known as the "Thomasites"). In 1902, a law provided for the opening of secondary schools, and a year later, another law established the pensionado (scholar) program which sent the brightest Filipino high school graduates to the United States for professional education at the U.S. government's expense. Regrettably, education favored the elite.[13] Of 4,973,526 Filipinos aged 10 and above, according to the Census of 1903, 55.5% or 2,762,093 Filipinos were illiterate in any language; 24.3% could read but not write; 20.2% could both read and write; and only 1.6% pursued college education.[14]

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[12] Report of the Philippine Commission (1903), p. 640.

[13] In the selection of pensionades, Gov. Taft required that "each student must be of unquestionable moral and physical qualifications, weight being given to social status." Bonifacio Salamanca, The Filipino Reaction to American Rule 1901-1913 ([Hamden, Conn.]): The Shoestring Press, 1968), p. 92.

[14] Census of the Philippine Islands [1903] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1905), II, p. 78.

Like the Hispanization of the native principalía in the seventeenth century, the Americanization process of the first decade of the twentieth century produced an intelligentsia which belonged to a small percentage of the native population. The only difference between Americanization and Hispanization was that because of the former, the intelligentsia spoke, wrote, and thought in English, which replaced Spanish as the status language.

The Filipinos did not merely accept these changes passively. Even after the official termination of the Revolution in 1902, and even while the middle class with their vested interests eagerly cooperated with the American authorities and became the first "pupils" in the "democratic" apprenticeship of native leaders,[15] literary resistance persisted. An unbroken tradition of nationalistic writing manifested itself in militant newspapers which upheld the ideals of the Philippine Revolution. Between 1900 and 1912, there were at least fifteen Tagalog newspapers which, though short-lived, sustained the resistance to colonial subjugation.[16]

These Tagalog newspapers also became instrumental in the emergence of the Tagalog novel.[17] In 1900, the newspaper Ang Kaliwanagan (The Light) published the first part of a novel by Lope K. Santos, titled

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[15]Salamanca, p. 4, states that when the Americans took over, "there already existed an articulate political and economic elite in the Philippines, behind whom stood the other 90% of the people. . . . Recognizing this, the U.S. decided to govern the Philippines through the elite."

[16]Jose Esperanza Cruz, "Ang Pahayagang Tagalog," Publications of the Institute of National Language, 4, no. 6 (November 1938), p. 17.

[17]See Inigo Ed. Regalado, "Ang Pagkaunlad ng Nobelang Tagalog." Publications of the Institute of National Language, 4, no. 8 (June 1948), pp. 3-16.

Salawahang Pag-ibig (Unfaithful Love). The remaining four parts appeared in another Tagalog newspaper, Ang Kapatid ng Bayan (The Nation's Brother), founded and edited by Pascual H. Poblete. This newspaper also published the first Tagalog drama based on the Revolution, Ang Katipunan (The Katipunan) by Gabriel Beato Francisco. Until they were published in book form in 1905 and 1906 respectively, Nena at Neneng (Nena and Neneng [proper names]) by Valeriano Hernandez Peña and Banaag at Sikat (The Glimmer of Sunrise) by Lope K. Santos, two landmarks in vernacular prose literature, were serialized in the Tagalog newspaper, Muling Pagsilang (Rebirth).

The rise of the Tagalog novel established the prose tradition in vernacular literature. Tagalog novels provided native readers with characters and situations which were more familiar and closer to their own lives than the exotic characters and fantastic episodes of the awit and corrido. Tagalog novels of the early American occupation carried the moralistic tradition characteristic of pre-Spanish riddles and proverbs. Likewise, they exemplified the romantic and sentimental inclinations of nineteenth century Tagalog poetry; but whereas Tagalog poetry tended to be esoteric in nature, the Tagalog novel had carried mass appeal, for they depicted characters and situations more familiar and closer to actual Philippine life than the fantastic episodes of the awit, corrido, and the kumedya.

The fervid nationalism of the newspapers and the local realism of the novels formed, with early modern Filipino plays, an expression of resistance to colonial rule and a reflection of the social and cultural conditions during the first decade of the American occupation of the Philippines.

Dramatic and Theatrical Background

As one might expect, theatrical activity ceased with the outbreak of the Revolution in 1896. Two years later, theatrical functions resumed with a vaudeville show produced by the Manila Dramatic Guild organized by a Mr. Franklin.[18] Apart from being the first recorded performance since the Revolution, this production was the first of light-hearted, commercial entertainments in English intended for American soldiers and the American community in Manila. At the same time, the kumedya reasserted its popularity among the masses, while the bourgeois theatre sought to reestablish itself: in May 1899 an opera (title unknown) was produced at the Teatro Calderon by the Filipino conductor Bibiano Morales;[19] the same year Patring Tagaroma restaged the operetta Boccaccio at the Teatro Filipino; Jose Carvajal joined a Spanish company (name unknown) after he surrendered to the Americans (whom he had fought in the Philippine-American War); Nemesio Ratia reorganized his zarzuela company (name unknown); and Yeyeng Fernández appeared in revivals of her favorite Spanish zarzuelas. This was the theatrical situation when the initial dramatic expressions of the revolutionary experience--i.e., anti-Spanish plays--appeared even before the termination of the Revolution in 1902.

In 1898, Tomas Remigio wrote the first known anti-Spanish play, Malaya (The Free One). The first production of an anti-Spanish play occurred in 1899 with Gabriel Beato Francisco's Ang Katipunan (The Katipunan). At least six others were produced between 1899 and 1902.

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[18]Bañas, Pilipino Music and Theater, p. 152.

[19]Bañas, p. 152.

Thematically and chronologically, these anti-colonialist plays fall under the period of the Revolution. As the earliest manifestations of modern Filipino drama, however, they constitute part of the subject matter of the succeeding chapter, which deals with "Early Modern Filipino Plays and Playwrights." For this reason, these and other plays written and produced during the last years of the Revolution will be discussed in Chapter V.

The Revolution was the culmination of political, social, and cultural processes which began in the 1850's, and which served as catalytic forces in the eventual birth of modern Filipino drama. Moreover, the Revolution provided the compelling experience of a bloody uprising which fed the imagination of early modern Filipino playwrights and their audiences. Finally, the Revolution enabled the native professional actors of the local Spanish theatre to bridge the transition from Spanish to vernacular plays. In 1902, the year the Revolution officially ended, Nemesio Ratia directed a Tagalog zarzuela, Sinukuan (They Retreated) by Aurelio Tolentino. The following year, he and Jose Carvajal co-starred in the same author's Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas (Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow), an anti-American play. Patring Tagaroma appeared in Severino Reyes's Walang Sugat (Without a Wound) and later in Tolentino's Sumpaan (Oath-taking). These actors eventually bowed out of the native modern theatre to let others take their places, but their experience contributed to the success of early modern Filipino drama for the first twelve years of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER V

EARLY MODERN FILIPINO PLAYS AND PLAYWRIGHTS

Radically different from the sentimental themes of the kumedyas and the non-Filipino themes of late nineteenth century Spanish plays, an anti-colonialist subject matter characterized the earliest manifestations of modern drama in the Philippines. The Revolution put an end to the literary proscriptions of the Spanish regime; native playwrights now had the freedom to assail Spanish tyranny, ridicule Spanish officials, and satirize the abusive friars. Under the American regime which immediately followed, drama and theatre became the strongest expression of resistance to American rule. Anti-American plays, or "seditious" plays, as the American authorities called them, superseded anti-Spanish plays. In essence, both anti-Spanish and anti-American plays were the dramatic expressions of the same nationalistic impulses which inspired the Propagandists in the 'eighties, motivated the Revolution in 1896, and sustained Filipino resistance to American sovereignty during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Nationalism in drama likewise manifested itself in domestic themes; centering on the Filipino middle-class family, these themes found concrete expression in both a musical--the zarzuela--and a non-musical genre. Using the vernacular, native characters, and local situations, early modern Filipino playwrights transformed the Spanish zarzuela into a native, "modern" genre. Similarly, they patterned their non-musical domestic plays on non-musical Spanish dramas. Ultimately, anti-colonialist plays, native zarzuelas, and domestic

non-musical plays in the vernacular shared a common modernity: a realism which employed the "now," the "we," and the "here," as opposed to the "long ago," the "they," and the "there," of the kumedyas (which despite the fact that they were written in the vernacular, contained exotic rather than familiar characters, and anachronistic rather than contemporary situations) and late nineteenth century Spanish plays (which had non-Filipino characters, locales, and language). The realism of early modern Filipino plays consists less of a dramatic style than of an attitude born of the Revolution. A sense of national identity motivated early modern Filipino playwrights to utilize dramatic elements which were recognizably Filipino: plots were set in the Philippines; they involved native characters; settings and costumes were distinctively local; the language of dialogue and song was the vernacular. Whether truly profound or merely superficial, this realism constituted the underlying modernity of anti-colonialist plays, native zarzuelas, and domestic, non-musical plays in the vernacular.

These three manifestations of modern Filipino drama do not constitute rigid and mutually exclusive compartments. Generically, anti-colonialist plays were either zarzuelas or non-musical plays; thematically, native zarzuelas and non-musical plays were either anti-colonialist or domestic. Thus, some overlapping inevitably occurs. For the sake of critical convenience, however, this chapter deals separately with anti-colonialist plays (first anti-Spanish, then anti-America), native zarzuelas, and native domestic, non-musical plays whose themes are not anti-colonialist. Since the distinctive modernity of the earliest manifestations of modern Filipino drama resides principally

in their anti-colonialist themes, anti-colonialist plays constitute the first section. For two important reasons, native zarzuelas constitute the second section: first, the native zarzuela is the representative genre of the early modern period in Filipino drama just as the kumedya is representative of the pre-modern period; and second, the genre does not restrict itself to anti-colonialist sentiments. The third section discusses vernacular plays which, unlike native zarzuelas, are not musical, and unlike anti-colonialist plays, contain domestic themes.

To complete the picture of the beginnings of modern Filipino drama, this chapter concludes with a discussion of the audience of anti-colonialist plays, native zarzuelas, and native domestic, non-musical plays. The same audience for all three forms, it determined the standards of dramatic excellence, and for more than a decade its patronage assured the popularity of early modern Filipino plays.

Anti-Colonialist Plays: Anti-Spanish

Remigio: Malaya

Although it was not staged until August 26, 1902 at the Dulaang Luzon (Luzon Theatre), Tomas Remigio's Malaya (The Free One), written in Spain in 1898,[1] is the earliest known example of anti-Spanish drama by a Filipino. Little is known about Remigio's life. In 1898, to escape arrest in Manila for his anti-Spanish writings, he fled to

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[1]Tomas Remigio, Malaya [The Free One], TS of the original Tagalog (Manila: n.p., 1938), second title page.

Spain.[2] Malaya made Remigio famous; a Malaya company was organized for the premier in August 1902; more than one hundred sixty performances were given in Manila and elsewhere in the Philippines from then until the following April.[3]

Malaya is an allegory of Spanish tyranny in the Philippines.[4] The heroine is Malaya (The Free One), daughter of Katwiran (Reason), wooed by Magtanggol (The Defender), and coveted by Manlupig (The Conqueror). Magtanggol is the son of Busilak (Immaculate) and brother of Nagbalik (He Who Returned). The other characters are Dalisay (Pure), Kalahi (Race-kin), Sugod (The Attacker), Tukmol (Turtledove), and Karugo (Blood-kin). A chorus of deer-hunters and townspeople complete the cast.

On the allegorical level, the play suggests that Spain, the conqueror (represented by Manlupig), unreasonably and through malicious trickery, prevents the Philippines (represented by Magtanggol), from being free (that is, "malaya"). On a realistic level, the play is a romantic melodrama wherein pure, unselfish love triumphs over lust, but not without the usual trials and tribulations attendant to noble lovers. Act I introduces Manlupig, a deer hunter, and his followers, half of whom are rich, the other half poor; the latter bewail their

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[2]Testimony of Remigio in Gomez trial reported in The Manila Cablenews, August 26, 1903, p. 4.

[3]Jose Ma. Rivera, "Mga Manunulat sa Wikang Tagalog," Publications of the Institute of National Language, 4, no. 10 (November 1938), p. 8.

[4]This analysis is based on the typescript. Subsequent quotations are taken from this source. (Unless otherwise specified, translations of Tagalog plays are mine.)

oppressed condition. The scene shifts to Katwiran's house where Magtanggol reveals the circumstances leading to his rescue by Malaya and her father. In highly metaphorical and at times elevated verses, Magtanggol recounts how he gradually awakened to his country's sufferings under the tyranny of Manlupig. Seeing that silver bought the silence of his countrymen, he became disillusioned: he "roamed the fields/ . . . threw [his] feelings to the wind/ So that [his] soul/ May discover the cure/ For the fierceness of greed" (Act I, Scene 6). One dark night, while exploring the forest close to Katwiran's house, he was treacherously struck down, and though badly wounded, he perceived the identity of his attackers: his own kin. Manlupig and his followers return; Nagbalik, who has been spying on Malaya and Magtanggol, reports that he has seen Malaya. Manlupig proceeds to Malaya's house and offers her his love. Rebuffed, Manlupig orders his men to tie Katwiran to a tree and forcibly takes Malaya away. A voice from heaven admonishes Nagbalik; he frees Katwiran, and a reconciliation between Magtanggol and Nagbalik ends the first act.

In Act II, Malaya again refuses Manlupig's proposal. Magtanggol, who has come to carry out an escape plan devised by Nagbalik, is unable to wait to see Malaya and calls her to the window. Unfortunately, Sugod, one of Manlupig's men, sees them. Informed of the intruder, Manlupig orders Sugod to bring the stranger before him. Magtanggol boldly asks for the release of Malaya. Manlupig not only consents, but also arranges her marriage to Magtanggol. Just before the wedding, Sugod rushes in and accuses Magtanggol of killing Linta, one of Manlupig's men, who has been found dead outside Malaya's window.

When the curtain rises on Act III, Magtanggol and Malaya are tied to a pillar. Manlupig attempts to rape Malaya, but Nagbalik, assisted by Karugo and Kalahi, prevents him. They bind Manlupig and take him away. On the street, Nagbalik meets his mother, Busilak, who intercedes in Manlupig's behalf. Unfortunately, vengeance rather than gratitude triumphs in Manlupig's heart; he returns to Katwiran's house and stabs the latter. Malaya, Magtanggol, and Nagbalik arrive as Katwiran expires. Manlupig escapes, and the curtain falls on Dalisay's warning: "O my countrymen!/ Katwiran is dead,/ Malaya has fallen;/ If Magtanggol is stricken too/ Slaves we shall all become" (Act III, Scene 26).

Although his play is anti-Spanish in that it regards Spain as the oppressor, Remigio does not lay the entire blame on the Spaniards. He echoes Jose Rizal's belief that there are no tyrants where there are no slaves, and adds his own conviction that slaves will forsake even God for some comfort. This might explain the absence of explict denunciations of the Spaniards. Instead, Remigio denounces those Filipinos who, in exchange for their honor, betray their countrymen.

In this light, Nagbalik emerges as the true hero of the play: he carries the hope of Malaya's escape; he directs the capture of Manlupig, and in obedience to his mother, he releases the tyrant. At the end, his vow to support Magtanggol's pledge of vengeance strongly suggests that he, not Magtanggol, will effectively realize this pledge. Taken further, this interpretation clarifies the function of Karugo and Kalahi. Together with Nagbalik, they symbolize the unity of the Filipinos against Spain. Manlupig himself realizes this: "True enough:

when a people unite/ No amount of force will make me win" (Act III, Scene 3). "True enough": this had already proved to be the case, for in 1896 (two years before the play was written), the masses rallied behind the Katipunan in an attempt to overthrow Spanish tyranny.

Whereas Remigio chose to write a symbolic dramatization of this theme as though the uprising had not yet occurred, Gabriel Beato Francisco wrote a dramatic "entertainment"[5] based on factual events of the Revolution. Titled Ang Katipunan (The Katipunan), it was given one performance at the Teatro Oriental in 1899.

Francisco: Ang Katipunan

Orphaned at an early age, Francisco (1850-1935) left school and worked in the printing presses of two Spanish newspapers, El Comercio (Commerce) and Revista Mercantil (Mercantile Review). In 1890, he became one of the associate editors of the first Tagalog newspaper, Ang Patnubay nang Catolico (The Catholic's Guide).

In three parts, Ang Katipunan attempts to dramatize the motives, activities, and effects of the secret society which initiated the uprising against Spain. Throughout the play, the Spaniards appear in a very bad light; Josefo, the hero, compares them to weeds that infest the entire countryside, and vows to uproot them, burn them into ashes, and throw them to hell. Seething with sarcasm, another character declaims: "Superior indeed and matchless/ Is the treachery which [the Spaniards] shelter in their hearts" (Act I, Scene 2). And with

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[5]Gabriel Beato Francisco, Ang Katipunan [The Katipunan] (Manila: Limbagan nang "La Democracia," 1889), title page. Subsequent quotations are taken from this edition.

morbid humor, Josefo compares the friars to mewing cats and beastly rodents, whose bladders and pot-bellies will be slashed on the day of reckoning (Act I, Scene 3).

Part One of Ang Katipunan opens with a council of war. Andres Bonifacio, the play's only historical character, presides. The others--Lusino, Ramon, and Kalintang--are fictitious. Later, the Spaniards appear: Padre Lucas, who represents the friar and the Church; Sr. Peña, who personifies the Spanish oppressors; and Sr. Fernandez, who represents the sympathizer of the Filipinos. The action proper begins in the final scene of Part One, Act I, when Sr. Peña takes leave of Padre Lucas to arrest an agitator named Macario. In Part One, Act II, Peña, accompanied by native volunteers in the Spanish army, arrests the farmer Josefo, the central character of the play, because he is unable to inform them of Macario's whereabouts.

Returning home from prison in Part Two, Act I, Josefo vows vengeance on the Spaniards, who practically maimed him during his imprisonment. He arms himself with a gulok (native sabre) and dons a Katipunan uniform. Other Katipuneros--led by Lusino, Nonato, and Kalintong--join him. Upon the arrival of Spanish soldiers, a battle ensues. With the hilarious and cowardly retreat of the Spaniards, the first act ends. In Act II, the Katipuneros occupy a town. The Spanish officers hold their ground by taking refuge in the convent and the belfry of the parish church. Among the guardia civiles are two native opportunists, Patyac and Asay, whose costumes, half-Katipunero and half-guardia civil, indicate their double-dealing character. In Act III, Josefo delivers a homilitic speech to the Katipuneros under his charge.

Here, he reminds them of their civic and moral duties. Led by his wife, Fortunato Rivera, a blind man, arrives at the scene, and in a long narration, he recounts the events which brought them to Josefo's camp. Josefo directs one of his aides, Victor, to take the couple to the head of the Katipunan. Victor recognizes the blind man as the abusive cabeza de barangay (headsman) of his town, but keeps this discovery to himself.

The first three scenes of Part Three, Act I, depict the lighthearted acceptance by the Katipuneros of their physical hardships. Warned of a Spanish attack, Josefo mobilizes his men and counsels them to pray to the angels and the saints for their protection. Sr. Peña leads the Spanish offensive in Act II. The Katipuneros repel them. To deprive the Katipuneros of their source of subsistence, Peña orders the farm of of Juan Hari looted and burned. Juan receives the report of his losses calmly. Pronouncing the inevitability of more bloodshed and the growth of the desire for national independence, he closes the act with a call to arms.

The play supposedly consists of three parts, but the sense of incompleteness of the dramatic action raises the possibility of a sequel, either actually written, or intended, by the author. At any rate, the extant three parts reveal the straightforward, narrative quality of the play, and the quality of news reportage which Francisco achieved despite his use of verse. The modernity of Ang Katipunan resides almost entirely in the anti-Spanish theme; in plot structure, language, and characterization, it closely resembles the kumedya. Like a kumedya, the plot consists of episodes marked by arbitrary entrances

and exits; without furthering the main line of action, several episodes follow sequentially. Characters speak in rhymed dodecasyllabic lines (the most popular meter for the kumedyas); moreover, like the heroes and villains of the kumedyas, these characters are stereotyped. Two significant differences, however, reside in the fact that their nationalities have changed, and that the situations in which they find themselves are recognizably contemporary and Filipino.

The hero, Josefo, is the innocent victim of Spanish cruelty. Apparently, personal revenge is his sole motive in joining the Katipunan, but it becomes evident in the course of the play that he has a nobler, more unselfish aim. Likened by the author unto Christ who took the sins of the world upon his shoulders, Josefo unashamedly vows to avenge the sufferings of the entire nation as his sacred duty, and welcomes death in behalf of his country. In the third act, he reasserts the moral tenets of the Katipunan and justifies the Revolution as the occasion for wrongdoers (that is, the Spaniards) to repent.

Like the other female characters in the play, Kulasa, Josefo's wife, is less a character than a prop who lends local color and realism to the stage picture. Act I shows her breast-feeding an infant, sighing, and sympathizing with her husband's suffering. She is the faithful wife who follows her husband even to the mountains to share his fate. Inexplicably, she does not reappear in the remainder of the play.

The one-dimensionality of the Spanish characters as spineless, cowardly creatures who flee at the first cry of "¡Avance!" by the Filipinos provides much of the low comedy in the play. Francisco

completes the microcosmic picture of Pnilippine society at the outbreak of the Revolution with the sketchy characters of the kind-hearted but ineffectual Señor Fernandez and the clownish sycophants Asay and Patyac.

Ang Katipunan is an episodic play about the Revolution. Adverse criticism of its structural and characterizational shortcomings might be tempered by the consideration that Francisco wrote the play in 1899, only a year after the Revolution began, and one year is not long enough to provide a clear perspective of events, especially of upheavals with such far-reaching consequences as the Philippine Revolution. At the cost of losing perspective, however, Francisco gained an immediacy which must have given his audience an experience of a vital presence they had not had from the kumedya. Such immediacy is precisely what Manuel Xeres Burgos failed to achieve in Con la cruz y la espada (With the Cross and the Sword).

Burgos: Con la cruz y la espada

Little information is available on the life of Manuel Xeres Burgos, but the fact that he wrote his play (apparently his only one) in Spanish, wrote an anti-friar novel also in Spanish (its title has been lost), founded and edited a Spanish paper, El Filipino Libre (The Free Filipino) strongly suggests that he was an ilustrado of the upper class. In 1898, he was a member of the Reception Committee of the Malolos Congress, with ilustrados Antonio Luna, Pardo de Tavera, Felipe Buencamino, and others.[6]

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[6]Teodoro Agoncillo, Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1960), p. 284.

Consisting of a prologue and three acts, his Spanish drama, Con la cruz y la espada, premiered in Manila on January 1, 1900 "with extraordinary success."[7] In his dedicatory letter to President William McKinley, dated July 31, 1901, the author describes his work as "a true picture of only a part of the injustices and crimes committed in [the Philippines] by the fatal institutions of the passed [sic] Spanish Dominion."[8] Xeres-Burgos chose to set his action ten years before the Revolution. Certainly, this gives the play a greater perspective than Ang Katipunan has. Of itself, such perspective does not necessarily rob a play of its immediacy. In Con la cruz, however, the ending issues a warning which, by the time the play was staged, had already been unheeded.

In the prologue, the author presents the protagonist-victims, the family of Martin, "a prosperous farmer of Imus [a town in Cavite province]": his wife Petrona, his son Paco, and his daughters Pia and Fausta. An impending evil hangs over the family, and soon enough its perpetrators arrive--Friar Tomás and Lt. Gonzales. They openly declare their desire for Martin's daughters. In contempt, Martin drives them away with his bolo. This sets the action in motion, and to underscore the gravity of the imminent consequences, the author ends the prologue with the family on their knees in prayer.

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[7]Manuel Xeres-Burgos, Con la cruz y la espada [With the Cross and the Sword], trans. Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio, in The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights by Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio (Manila: Zarzuela Foundation of the Philippines, Inc., 1972), second title page. Complete text on pp. 68-87. Subsequent quotations are taken from this translation.

[8]Xeres-Burgos, second title page.

Act I opens two years later. Martin's family has moved to Batangas, a neighboring province. Martin's schoolmate, Memong, the barrio captain, has taken the entire family into his household. In return, Martin has worked assiduously on Memong's farm. The first complication occurs when Memong sends Martin and Paco to collect from a debtor in another town. After father and son leave, guardias civiles forcibly take Fausta and Pia away. Petrona attempts to save her daughters, but the guards stab her and leave her half-dead.

In Act II, guardias civiles have taken Martin and Paco to the guardhouse for routine interrogation. As they are about to leave, Lt. Gonzales, who turns out to be the commander of that particular guardhouse, recognizes them. Gonzales orders two hundred lashes for Martin and sends Paco to the stockade. Relishing the unexpected turn of events, Friar Tomás and the lieutenant lecherously envision their pleasures with Fausta and Pia. The playwright then springs another surprise: a Spanish friend of Martin's, Sgt. Montalvo, comes to rescue Paco and helps him escape through a secret passage. Alone, Sgt. Montalvo ends the act with an ambiguous soliloquy that foretells the end of Spanish tyranny.

Act III opens eight days later. Back at Memong's house, another new character, Dr. Menendez, relates the sad news that Petrona has lost her sanity. Paco arrives with Cabesang Andong, who recounts how he discovered the wounded Martin and nursed him until Martin died. A highly emotional scene follows: Petrona recognizes Paco, and for a brief moment, she regains her sanity before she too dies. Dr. Menendez subsequently ends the play in an address to the audience: "Spain!!!

If the Philippines be lost it will be through the crimes committed by the 'Cross and the Sword!!'"

While in Malaya and Ang Katipunan the implicit goal of the action is the end of Spanish rule, in Con la cruz y la espada, it is the creation of a just and honest Spanish colonial government. In the final act, Paco resolves to avenge the crimes of Friar Tomás and Lt. Gonzales, but he does not advocate separation from Spain. "No," says Paco, "I only wish to uphold the fact that we are men equally as much as [the Spaniards], and that we the Filipinos have the same right which God gave to all rational beings." The play then is not so much against Spanish rule, as against individual Spanish priests and soldiers who abuse their powers. Such a distinction reveals the ilustrado viewpoint of Xeres-Burgos. More revealingly still, the victims are not of the masses. Martin has Spanish blood; he and his family belong to the middle class, and their plight could symbolize that of the entire group. Like other members of the nascent bourgeoisie, he earned disfavor when he pursued a professional degree. In 1872 (the year of the Cavite Mutiny), he gave up the study of law because, as he says in Act I, "it was dangerous for a Filipino to be rich or well-educated in his own country, owing to the persecution of [sic] the Spanish authorities, who would always imprison such men in Manila as a danger to their despotism." But this did not prevent him from sending his children to school; Paco, in fact, obtained his B.A. in Manila. And like his father, Paco articulates middle-class values. In Act I, he echoes the Propagandists: "Oh, if I could realize my ambition and arouse this people to wake out of its stupor! Ah, to tolerate is to

connive [sic] at all the evils which, if we fail to oppose, we finally come to applaud!" Martin reinforces this ideal in a lengthy oration, which ends with a restatement of Rizal's thought that the slaves of today will be the tyrants of tomorrow, if the good, the true, and the noble are not inculcated in the hearts of the Filipino people.

None of this rhetoric, however, is embodied in dramatic action. After their spirited monologues, Martin and Paco leave on their errand. The antagonists seize them; Martin subsequently dies, and Paco returns only to grieve for his mother's death.

The significance of Malaya, Ang Katipunan, and to a lesser extent, Con la cruz y la espada to early modern Filipino drama undeniably resides in their anti-colonialist themes. None is a zarzuela, even though Ang Katipunan and Con la cruz contain incidental music. This clear distinction does not apply to Say Liman Ag Naketket, Pampinsiwan (The Hand That Cannot Be Cut Off Must Be Kissed) by Catalino Palisoc, and Walang Sugat (Without a Wound) by Severino Reyes, both of which are anti-colonialist zarzuelas. Because anti-colonialism is their preeminent trait, however, they are discussed in this section.

Palisoc: Say Liman Ag Naketket, Pampinsiwan

Catalino Palisoc (1865-1932) finished law at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. In this city, he frequented the theatre, and the zarzuelas he witnessed served as his models. In 1883, he began his career in government service (at the time, the Spanish government). Rizal's execution led him to join the Revolution which had broken out but a few months earlier, and during the shortlived Republic in 1898,

he was appointed governor of Pangasinan by President Aguinaldo. In 1901, the American colonial administration appointed him Presidente Municipal of Lingayen, his native town. Throughout his life he was motivated by the ideals of national progress and prosperity, and to achieve these he divided his time between politics and drama. Whenever a conflict arose, politics always took precedence. But in years of political defeat, he took to his pen to express his views and to try to influence public opinion. His zarzuelas particularly derived from political and patriotic ideas; he intended Say Liman to be a dramatic counterpart of Rizal's novel, Noli Me Tangere. The first draft of the zarzuela was supposedly finished in 1897, but fear of arrest caused Palisoc to postpone its premier in Lingayen until 1901.[9] He was a tireless writer. Although he never finished his last zarzuela, Principe Antipatro (Prince Antipatro, 1922), until two years before his death he continued to revise his former works: the last revision of Say Liman is dated 1930. Say Liman began the trend in Pangasinan not only of the zarzuela genre, but of anti-friar themes. It also established Palisoc as the major zarzuelista of his province. Because of the great demand for zarzuelas especially during town fiestas, Palisoc formed his own troupe complete with a twelve-man orchestra.

The plot of Say Liman revolves around the romance between Luis, a law student, and Filipinas, daughter of Carlos, who under a threat of

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[9]Iluminada Magno, "A Critical Study of the Zarzuelas in Pangasinan of Catalino Palisoc," M.A. Thesis, University of the Philippines, 1954, p. 31. The analysis of Say Liman is based on the synopsis of the zarzuela in this thesis.

imprisonment and exile, has promised his daughter to marry the Spanish curate's servant. This is the gist of the expository first act. The second act, which depicts the native government in action, shows how native officials themselves exploit the masses. Foregoing the possibility of developing this exploitation into a strong sub-plot, Palisoc devotes the remainder of the play to the romantic conflict of Filipinas, Luis, and Fr. Matulay. In Act III, Luis calls on Fr. Matulay to inform him of his relation with Filipinas. He greets the friar in Spanish, but the latter mocks him, and a heated argument on the effects of education on the indios ensues. After he rudely dismisses Luis, the priest orders the arrest of Luis and his father.

In the final act, Filipinas requests Fr. Matulay to release the prisoners. Lecherously admitting that he wants Filipinas for himself, not for his servant, the priest grants her request. When Luis and his father arrive from prison, the priest haughtily declares that the Church is unassailable. As a representative of that Church, a priest deserves utmost respect, and in acknowledgment of this respect, the indios have been taught to kiss the priest's hand. Since the Church is indestructible, the priest's hand cannot be cut off, as it were, and thus must be kissed.

To thwart the priest's plans, Luis and Filipinas elope to Manila, where he will join the Katipunan, and later return to save their families from the friar's revenge. Here the play ends; Palisoc clumsily dodges the conflict by literally running away from it. The facile ending eliminates dramatic alternatives, decisions, and their consequences. As a result, the conflict between the educated indio,

represented by Luis and his father, and the Spanish friar, represented by Fr. Matulay, appears trivial and the anti-Spanish thrust of Say Liman loses its point. In Severino Reyes' Walang Sugat (Without a Wound), the point makes its mark early in the play, and then the play proceeds in another direction.

Reyes: Walang Sugat

Although it is essentially a melodrama, Walang Sugat, which enjoyed tremendous popularity when it first opened on June 14, 1902, makes one of the most direct and strongest attacks against the Spanish friars.

Severino Reyes (1861-1942) was born and educated in Manila. He was a product of Dominican schools; he finished high school at Letran, and his Bachelor of Philosophy at the University of Santo Tomas. When the Revolution broke out, he was arrested for being a Mason, but according to a relative his witty replies to the friar's questions won him immediate release.[10] His playwriting career began with his two plays, R.I.P. (Requiescat in Pace), a satire, and Ang Kalupi (The Wallet), a one-act zarzuela, which premiered together on April 3, 1902. Subsequently, he gathered former kumedyantes, trained them in voice and in a realistic style of delivery, and brought them together with experienced zarzuela performers in the Gran Compañía de Zarzuela Tagala. Of fifty-seven works, eighteen were zarzuelas. For

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[10]Quintana Daria, "A Study of Severino Reyes as a Dramatist based on a critical analysis, with an English translation, of his zarzuela, Walang Sugat!," M.A. Thesis, University of the Philippines, 1954, p. 34.

his models, he studied works of Echegaray, Benavente, the Quinteros, Linares Rivas, and others, works which his brother Modesto sent him from Spain.[11]

In three acts, and with music by Fulgencio Tolentino, Walang Sugat[12] opens with Julia, the heroine, and her friends in a chorus which establishes the romantic commitment between Julia and the hero, Tenyong. Upon Tenyong's arrival, Julia teases him about the handkerchief on which she has embroidered his initials--a gift for his forthcoming birthday. Julia coyly tells him that the initials are those of the Spanish parish priest. To her surprise, and reacting less from jealousy than from hatred, Tenyong tries to burn the handkerchief and bursts into a song which denounces the Spanish friar. As early as this second scene, the romantic and anti-colonialist themes dramatically interweave: at the same time, the handkerchief becomes symbolic of Tenyong's and Julia's mutual love, and of the corruption personified by the Spanish friar. In the next scene, the author renders an immediate dramatic justification of such an early anti-friar outburst: the servant Lukas announces the arrest of Tenyong's father, Capitan Inggo. Singing of mass arrests on the way to prison, the chorus provides a historical background to the dramatic situation.

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[11] Daria, p. 41.

[12] Complete text of Walang Sugat in the original Tagalog can be found in Daria, pp. 194-303; Simplicio Flores and Jacobo Enriques, ed., Sampung Dula na Tig-iisang Yugto (Manila: Philippine Book Co., 1973), pp. 145-90; Lapeña-Bonifacio, pp. 89-120; and Sebastian, Dulang Tagalog, pp. 27-96.

When the party led by Tenyong and his mother arrive at the prison, the Spanish friars hypocritically assure them that Inggo will be treated kindly. Soon after he is brought in to see Tenyong and his wife, Inggo dies. Tenyong calls the men to arms; Julia detains him, but he asserts the priority of country over personal concerns. After a tearful separation, Tenyong leads the attack on the friars at Guiguinto train station. With this act of rebellion, the first act ends.

In Act II, a new state of affairs has developed in Tenyong's town. Miguel, son of the wealthy Don Tadeo, is now courting Julia. In a letter delivered by Lukas, Julia asks Tenyong to save her from this predicament. Before Tenyong is able to reply, a skirmish ensues, and with a rousing song amid gunfire, the second act closes.

A series of comic courtships opens Act III: first, between Lukas and Monica, Julia's maid; then beteen Miguel and Julia; and finally between the doddering Tadeo and Juana, Julia's mother. As the wedding draws near, Julia becomes more desperate; she has received no word from Tenyong. On Julia's wedding day, a dying Tenyong arrives in a cot and asks for the hand of Julia in marriage. When this is done, Tenyong "resurrects," and with the amazed cries of "Walang sugat!" ([He is] without a wound!) the play ends.

Quite aptly, a serious, pathetic tone prevails in the first act, where the political theme predominates. In Act II, where the romantic theme begins to supersede the nationalistic, the comic characters Lukas and Miguel appear in greater relief. The town, and in a broader sense the country, has undergone the worst. Now is the time for the

people to rise from the rubble of war and begin to work for the progress of the nation: thus sings the chorus in Act II, Scene 5. Comedic situations in Act III almost disrupt the balance of the play: five of its eight scenes are farcical.

Nothing in Tenyong's previous actions dramatically justifies the ending. A serious patriot at the beginning of the play, Tenyong suddenly becomes a prankster at the end. But might the "resurrection" of Tenyong be symbolic of the ultimate triumph of the Filipinos over Spanish tyranny and oppression? If this was the author's intention, it is not effectively realized, because nowhere in the play does the possible death of Tenyong symbolize the defeat of the Filipinos, or their oppressed condition.

Reyes authored at least four other anti-Spanish zarzuelas. Premiered at the Zorrilla on October 14, 1902, Ang Pag-aasawa ni San Pedro (The Marriage of St. Peter), a three-act Tagalog zarzuela with music by Gabino Carluen, attacks religious fanaticism, which hinders the nation's progress.[13] In 1903, Reyes wrote a four-act lyric drama, with music by Fulgencio Tolentino, entitled Los martires de la patria o Ang Mga Pinagpala (The Nation's Martyrs or The Blessed). Its central character, Don Francisco Borja, a wealthy Filipino, is suspected of being a subversive by the Spanish friars.[14] On April 23, 1904, another three-act Tagalog zarzuela, Luksó ng Dugô (A Gush of Blood), with music by Juan S. Hernandez, successfully premiered at an undetermined theatre.[15] Its title strongly suggests a revolutionary theme, but neither script nor description is available.

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[13]Bañas, p. 225. [14]Sebastian, p. 97. [15]Bañas, pp. 225-26.

In 1907, Reyes wrote a three-act Tagalog zarzuela in which the Spanish friars are the culprits. Based on an actual incident in 1907, Gloria o Habeas Corpus (Gloria [proper name] or Habeas Corpus), with music by Teodoro Araullo, tells the story of Gloria, a girl whose aunt, Doña Mameng (who donates generously to the priests while her blind brother starves), forces her to enter the convent. Fortunately, Angelito, Gloria's cousin, secures a writ of habeas corpus for the release of Gloria. At the end, the cousins marry.[16]

Other Anti-Spanish Plays

Many more anti-Spanish plays emerged after the Revolution. Unfortunately, most of them were never published, and the information about them derives from mere titles, or from vague recollections recorded by authors or by their contemporaries. For example, only the title Ang Nagahigugma sa iya Duta (He Who Loves His Country, 1899 [staged 1906]) by Salvador Ciocon, Sigalut (Uprising, 1900) by Juan Crisostomo Soto, and Pag-ibig sa Tinubuang Lupa (Love for the Native Land, 1900) by Pascual Poblete, suggest anti-Spanish subjects. Ang Kataksilang Lihim (Secret Treachery, 1900) by Ambrosio de Guzman is a non-musical play in three acts inspired by the writings of Rizal.[17] Tolentino's Sinukuan (They Retreated, 1902?) deals with the failure of the Revolution.[18] Soto's Ing Anac ning Katipunan (The Daughter of the Katipunan, n.d.), a one-act zarzuela, is the story of the daughter of a Katipunero who becomes the victim of a Spanish

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[16]Synopsis found in Daria, pp. 340-45.

[17]Manuel, Dictionary, I, p. 223. [18]Manuel, Dictionary, II, p. 374.

friar's lechery.[19] Patricio Mariano's Luha't Dugo (Blood and Tears, n.d.) depicts the abuses of the friars at the end of the nineteenth century. In the same author's Silanganan (The East, 1902), a woman in chains symbolizes the Philippines under Spanish rule.[20] From the Ilokos region, A. G. Teodulo's Drama Ilokana (Ilokano Drama, 1908), deals with friar cruelty,[21] while Mena Pecson Crisologo's Neneng (proper name, n.d.) is a series of "episodes of the Revolution against Spain,"[22] from just before the outbreak, to the arrival of the Americans. In the latter play, the rape of Neneng by a Spaniard symbolizes the rape of the Philippines by a colonial power.[23]

Anti-Colonialist Plays: Anti-American

The tide of nationalism which gave birth to early modern drama in the Philippines and initially expressed itself against the Spaniards evolved into anti-American feeling after the Americans had made clear that they intended to stay and to impose their sovereignty. Resistance to American rule manifested itself in various ways. Armed resistance

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[19]Manuel, I, p. 434.

[20]Concepcion Javier, "Ang mga Dula ni Patricio Mariano," Publications of the Institute of National Language, 4, no. 20 (October 1939), p. 14.

[21]Leopoldo Yabes, A Brief Survey of Iloko Literature (Manila: The Author, 1936), p. 14.

[22]Alejandrino Hufana, Mena Pecson Crisologo and Iloko Drama (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1963), p. 61.

[23]Hufana, p. 68.

was most strongly and concretely expressed by the Insurrection, and even after general amnesty was declared on July 4, 1902, sporadic guerrilla warfare continued. Officially, these nationalist "remnants" were stripped of their patriotic intents and branded as brigands and terrorists. Less active resistance came in the form of self-proclaimed messiahs who promised to save the masses from oppression, which now came under the guise of American "benevolence." At times these religious movements erupted into bloody uprisings, but they were all minor and easily suppressed by the American authorities.[24] Among the upper stratum of society, the ilustrados and die-hard revolutionaries waged a resistance of a literary nature. Nationalist newspapers kept the revolutionary spirit alive by espousing independence. A number of newspapermen carried their cause beyond the limited reading audience and fashioned propagandistic plays, designed less to arouse the people to take up arms and crush the imperialist Americans, than to give vent to their frustrations. Just as the local native audiences, most of whom were the audiences of the kumedya, derived pleasure from anti-Spanish zarzuelas which ridiculed and caricatured the Spaniards, so the same audiences were equally pleased to witness plays that slandered and insulted the Americans. Thus, the so-called "seditious" plays which so irritated the American authorities who brought to trial three native playwrights, were simply a natural extension of the anti-Spanish plays which emerged immediately after the first phase of the Revolution.

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[24]See David R. Sturtevant, Agrarian Unrest in the Philippines (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1969), pp. 12-17.

Little essential difference exists between the anti-Spanish plays and the anti-American seditious dramas. The main characters and symbolic referents are ultimately the same or similar: the oppressed= the Filipinos-good men; the oppressor-Spaniards=Americans=evil men. In fact, it was the American newspaper, The Manila Times, which classified Malaya and Walang Sugat as "seditious."[25]

The reason for this classification is evident in the testimony of an American who saw a performance of Walang Sugat in September, 1903.[26] At some point in the performance, Uncle Sam, dressed in a comic book version of his traditional habiliments, enters, and claiming ownership over all Philippine lands, he demands taxes from the people. With sword drawn, a Filipino insurgent office pins Uncle Sam to the floor, and exclaims, "So perish all our enemies!" Quite conceivably, the same kind of improvisation accounted for the popularity of other anti-Spanish plays like Malaya: proof that Spaniard or American, whomever the audience regarded as their oppressor, became objects of ridicule, scorn, and vilification.

Some plays, however, were specifically anti-American. Of the half-dozen known plays of this nature, three--Cruz's Hindi Aco Patay (I Am Not Dead), Abad's Tanikalang Guinto (The Golden Chain), and Tolentino's Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas (Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow) --gained prominence because the American authorities arrested all three

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[25]Editorial, The Manila Times, May 16, 1903, p. 4.

[26]The Manila Times, December 18, 1903, p. 1; also cited in Lapeña-Bonifacio, pp. 31, 35.

playwrights for sedition and banned their plays from the stage. The authorities obviously recognized the potent political influence of these plays, and ironically, the publicity they gave these plays and their playwrights attracted the native audience, who flocked to the theatres and received its dose of anti-American propaganda.

Cruz: Hindi Aco Patay

It is not certain when this play was written or first produced, but its performance on the night of May 8, 1903, at the Teatro Nueva Luna in Malabon, Rizal province, precipitated a riot which resulted in the arrest of the theatre manager. The riot started when the red sun of the Katipunan flag rose behind the stage. An inebriated American soldier in the audience pitched an empty beer bottle through the sun, following which action, he and some others climbed the stage and tore the scenery apart. The American authorities subsequently banned the play. The arresting officer confiscated the "seditious" props of the production, among which were flags of the Katipunan and other revolutionary emblems. According to a newspaper report, the "main feature [sic] of the play was that the insurrection lived, that it had been resurrected, and that it would overthrow the present government."[27] Two months later, on July 5, the author, Juan Matapang Cruz, was arrested by the secret service during "a big Americano fiesta."[28] Ten of the actors--seven men and three women--had been arrested a month earlier, but Cruz had been in hiding since the riot in May. Cruz allegedly denied authorship of the play; he testified in court that

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[27]The Manila Cablenews, May 10, 1903, p. 3.

[28]The Manila Times, July 6, 1903, p. 1.

his wife actually wrote it. Later, however, it was discovered that his wife could not even write her own name.

No copy of the play seems to have survived. Fortunately, the thorough (though biased) coverage given by the American newspapers indicates what the play was about. One newspaper called it an allegory "constructed along the lines of the old plays which the Spaniards brought with them to the islands, and shows considerable constructive ability."[29] The same newspaper listed the characters (with their English meanings as follows:

> Pinagsakitan (pains, labors)--Mother of [the] country (Philippines)
> K[a]rangalan (dignity)--Philippine islands
> Walang-hinayang (cruel)--Filipinos loyal to America
> Katuiran (justice)--Rights of Filipinos
> Tanggulan (defender or lawyer)--Patriotic Filipinos
> Kauri (same blood)--Filipino compatriots
> Kakulay (same color)--Filipino compatriots
> Mainbot (covetous)--America
> Macamcam (ambitious)--American government in the Philippines[30]

Karangalan and Tanggulan are in love. However, Mainbot wants Karangalan for his own son, Macamcam (represented as a drunken soldier in a khaki uniform). Mainbot, aided by Walang-hinayang, bribes Karangalan's mother, Pinagsakitan. Karangalan elopes with Tanggulan; Macamcam pursues them, and in a duel, kills Tanggulan. All these events occur in the first two acts. The last act opens with preparations for the wedding of Karangalan and Macamcam. A triangular, tri-colored flag appears. The blue represents Macamcam; the white, Pinagsakitan; and the red, Karangalan. Someone then demands that the corpse of Tanggulan

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[29] The Manila Cablenews, July 12, 1904, p. 5.

[30] The Manila Cablenews, p. 5.

be brought in. As the coffin is carried across the stage, Tanggulan rises to the accompaniment of the revolutionary march, and shouts, "Hindi aco patay!" (I am not dead!). How the play ends is not clear.[31]

In February, 1904, Cruz was sentenced to two years imprisonment and fined US$2000, plus costs of prosecution. The Manila Court of First Instance rejected the author's claim that he wrote the drama for money and that he got the story, set in Legazpi's time, from an old man who came into his barber shop one day. Cruz's affiliations with Ricarte, former general in Aguinaldo's army who was at this time planning another uprising, must have discredited Cruz's plea of innocence.

On the night of May 10, 1903, two days after the riot caused by Hindi Aco Patay, the Constabulary arrested Juan Abad during the performance of his allegorical drama, Tanikalang Guinto (The Golden Chain), in Batangas, some seventy miles south of Manila.

Juan Abad: Tanikalang Guinto

Juan Abad (1872-1932) began his literary career as a poet at the age of sixteen. Of his numerous plays, only one, Tanikalang Guinto, is extant. His first play was a nine-act Tagalog moro-moro with the

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[31] In the version of Arthur Riggs, "Seditious Drama in the Philippines," Current History, 20 (April 1951), p. 207, the Americans are defeated at the end, Mainbot gives up his claim to the Philippines, and Tanggulan releases Macamcam. The newspaper version (The Manila Cablenews, July 12, 1904, p. 5) is as follows: "At the end is same [sic] something corresponding to the old Greek chorus. Mainbot (America) exclaims: 'Our power is ended.' Katuiran (Justice): 'Liberty has been born again!' Kauri (Filipinos): 'The people shall improve,' and so on [to] the last speech: 'Hindi aco patay.' 'He [sic] is not dead.'"

Spanish title, Sueños de Mala Fortuna (Dreams of Misfortune, 1892), which was successfully staged by the Dulaang Arevalo in 1895.[32] At the outbreak of the Revolution in 1896, he was working in a Jesuit press, and in 1898 he joined the printing staff of La Independencia. During the Insurrection he served in the Tagalog army.[33] Afterwards, he wrote for several newspapers: La Republica Filipinas in Pampanga province; Ang Kapatid ng Bayan and Laong-Laan in Manila. For his association with the latter, which was a pro-independence publication, he was arrested, released, and required to report regularly to the provost officer. Undaunted, he again joined a radical paper, Dimas-alang wherein he used the pseudonym K'Ulayaw (the hero of Tanikalang Guinto).[34] He then formed La Juventud Filipina (The Filipino Youth), a writers' group one of whose aims was to discourage moro-moro plays. Toward this aim he wrote Mabuhay ang Pilipinas! (Long Live the Philippines), which premiered at the Teatro Nacional on May 17, 1900. Peeved, the moro-moristas reported him to the police, who began to keep him under surveillance. On September 3, Ang Mapanglaw na Pagka-alaala (A Sorrowful Recollection) opened at the Teatro Universal. For reasons unknown, the authorities arrested him; for his refusal to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, they imprisoned him in Olongapo, Zambales province. This experience led him to write a three-act zarzuela, De Manila a Olongapo (From Manila to Olongapo), which

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[32] Rivera, p. 30.

[33] Rivera, p. 30.

[34] Manuel, I, p. 3.

opened at the Zorrilla in June, 1901. After his release, he wrote a one-act play, the prize-winning Bulaklak ng Sampalok (The Flower of the Sampalok Tree), which premiered at the Teatro Oriental on February 2, 1902. Tankalang Guinto followed on July 7 at Teatro Libertad in Manila. Nine months later, Abad was arrested in Batangas during a performance of this play. While he was on trial for sedition, he wrote his last play, Isang Punlo ng Kaaway (An Enemy Bullet), performed at the Teatro Rizal in Malabon on May 8, 1904. Again, he was arrested, but apparently no charges were made. After the Supreme Court acquitted him in 1907, he published Tanikalang Guinto.

Abad managed the Silanganan company, a compañía volante (itinerant troupe) whose members came from the working class, personal friends, and relatives. Abad himself appeared as the hero in some of the productions, and although he had no formal experience, he directed the company during weekend rehearsals either at the house of his cousin-in-law, Cayetano Jacobo, or at the Teatro Sampaleño. Also in the company were a few moro-moristas and two other playwrights, Faustino Tallado (who also acted as prompter and scene drop painter) and Faustino Salomon. Male actors received from ₱5 to ₱10 (71 cents to $1.42), and female performers (because they were more difficult to recruit, since beauty was the primary qualification) received ₱8 to ₱15 ($1.14 to $2.14). It is uncertain whether they were paid these amounts per production or per performance, nor is it certain whether the ₱10 to ₱20 ($1.42 to $2.85) royalty was paid at one time or for each performance.

The last years of Abad's life are clouded in obscurity; presumably, he left for Amoy and died there in 1932.

Tanikalang Guinto[35] bears a number of similarities to Remigio's Malaya. Both are attempts at symbolic drama; both deal with the love of a hero and a heroine; both have a villain who tries all means at his command to have the heroine for himself; and in both, the brother of the hero plays a major part in resolving the conflict; though not quite in the same way. Abad's play, however, is more tightly constructed; it has fewer characters, and it has a single, concentrated action.

In the monologue that opens the first scene, Liwanag (Light), the heroine of the play, reveals her affection for K'Ulayaw (Suitor) and her gratitude to her uncle, Maimbot (Avaricious), who has been like a father to her, and who unhappily disapproves of K'Ulayaw. In the course of the act, Maimbot, K'Ulayaw, and Nagtapon (Renegade), K'Ulayaw's brother, appear. Dalita (Grief) enters and accuses her son K'Ulayaw of neglecting her, and persuades her other son, Nagtapon, to reform his ways. Nagtapon renounces her; she faints, and Maimbot drives her and K'Ulayaw away.

In Act II, Maimbot gives Liwanag a golden chain which he locks around her wrist, and orders her to forget K'Ulayaw. K'Ulayaw enters, and in mellifluent verses professes his love. Liwanag's mediation prevents him from killing Nagtapon, who has been witness to their illicit liaison. K'Ulayaw escapes through the bedroom window when

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[35]This analysis is based on a complete text in the original Tagalog found in Lapeña-Bonifacio, pp. 141-72.

Maimbot returns. Presently, K'Ulayaw returns to tell Liwanag that his dying mother wants to see her. Noticing the golden chain, K'Ulayaw denounces Liwanag and violently resists Maimbot and Nagtapon who have come to seize him. Liwanag begs Maimbot for forgiveness; rebuffed, she breaks the chain from her wrist.[36]

In the final act, Maimbot and Nagtapon tie Liwanag to a tree in the middle of the stage. Imploring the sun to rise, K'Ulayaw enters and delivers a supplication for light (liwanag) to shine on his path once again. He hears the grieving Liwanag, and in response to his plea, a lighted flower shines on her head and reveals her pathetic figure to him. Nagtapon rushes in and shoots at the intruder. K'Ulayaw falls, and after receiving Liwanag's kiss, dies. Blaming herself for her lover's death, Liwanag breaks the golden chain and casts it away. She tries to kill herself (the script fails to say how) but Diwa, the Spirit of the Sea, stops her, and takes her away. After a deafening trumpet call, Diwa and Liwanag reappear on a cloud, and the play ends with a tableau representing the universe: Dalita's soul addresses the audience with an eulogy to the heroes of the country, then she bestows a floral crown on K'Ulayaw, while demons harass Nagtapon, and Death holds his scythe over Maimbot.

Because there was nothing overtly seditious about the production, the performance of Tanikalang Guinto did not receive extensive news coverage. There were no displays of any flag; neither were there

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[36]Although there is no indication in the script, Maimbot must have locked the chain around Liwanag's wrist a second time after the second act.

direct verbal attacks on characters representing the Americans, or even the Spaniards, for that matter. The political implications take place on an abstract level, and the personal conflicts all refer to the romantic plot. Tanikalang Guinto can claim little in originality of plot or in the introduction of symbolism to Tagalog drama. Its merits lie in its fluid verse and melodious prose. Abad's Tagalog is highly archaic, but it suits the melodramatic nature of the action and the baroque quality of his characters.

The Batangas Court of First Instance indicted Abad for sedition, but the Supreme Court, on August 9, 1906, reversed that decision and acquitted him. The Supreme Court denied the contention of the prosecution that the mere alleged symbolism of the characters' names was sufficient to make the play seditious. "In the play itself," the Court decided, "there are but few passages which in any way indicate that the play is anything more than it purports to be upon its face."[37] The Court noted the occurrence of the word "independent" in the text, but always apropos the marriage of Liwanag and K'Ulayaw. Furthermore, the government's own witnesses admitted the esotericism of the play's symbolism and the fact that the play's appeal resided primarily on the "eloquent and poetical phrases used"[38] rather than on the supposed representation of the political relations between the United States and the Philippines. The Court further noted that the play had been performed more than twenty times in various theatres both in Manila

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[37]Philippine Reports (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1907), V, p. 361.

[38]Reports, p. 362.

and in the provinces since October, 1902,[39] that Abad had submitted his play for examination by the police in compliance with an order published in the newspapers, and that the play was subsequently approved. All these counted in favor of Abad.

Less fortunate in his appeal to the Supreme Court was Aurelio Tolentino, whose three-act drama, Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas (Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow) was the most publicized of the seditious plays because of the sensational riot which broke out during its initial performance on May 14, 1903 at the Teatro Libertad in Manila.

Tolentino: Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas

Aurelio Tolentino (1867?-1915) was born in Pampanga province. The son of an amateur moro-moro playwright, Tolentino finished his B.A. at Letran, and continued law at the University of Santo Tomas, but his father's illness prevented him from finishing his degree. While working as a court clerk in Tondo, he met Andres Bonifacio and became involved in the Propaganda Movement by distributing copies of La Solidaridad. He became a Mason, joined the Liga Filipina, and after its dissolution joined the Katipunan, where he supposedly helped in the printing of membership forms and certificates. On April 10, 1895, Tolentino joined Bonifacio and other Katipuneros at Pamitinan Cave in Montalban, and there participated in the first cry for independence, symbolized by an inscription of "Viva la independencia!" on one of the walls.[40] After living with the Bonifacios for a while, Tolentino

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[39] This is an example of the disparity of data regarding early twentieth century Filipino drama. Either the Court was misinformed, or Manuel (Dictionary, I, p. 2) gives the wrong date.

[40] Manuel, II, p. 373.

moved to Bulakan province and worked as a court secretary until 1896. Two weeks after the outbreak of the Revolution, he was arrested and remained in prison for nine months, during which time he suffered countless tortures. In 1898 he was one of the signatories in the declaration of independence read at Kawit, Cavite, and during the second phase of the Revolution he served under General Lukban in the Bikol region. In January, 1899, he wrote two signed editorials for La Independencia; one predicted armed resistance to American rule, the other urged a definition of American policy in the Philippines.[41] This marked the beginning of his literary career.

In November, he was briefly imprisoned for his anti-American activities. In August the following year (1900) he formed a short-lived secret society called Junta de Amigos (Committee of Friends), composed of former Katipuneros, which attacked Americans and Filipino collaborators, and had "the authority from Aguinaldo to form and organize guerrillas."[42] In the Nacionalista Party of 1901,[43] he was among the eighteen secretaries under the presidency of Pascual Poblete and Santiago Alvarez, a revolutionary general. In May 1903, Tolentino was arrested for his Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas; he was convicted the

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[41]Manuel, p. 373.

[42]Teodoro Kalaw, The Philippine Revolution ([Manila]: Jorge B. Vargas Filipiniana Foundation Rpt. Series I, 1969), p. 248; also quoted in Manuel, II, p. 374.

[43]Founded by Pascual Poblete to oppose the Partido Federal (Federal Party) which fostered the assimilation of the Philippines into the United States. The aim of the Nacionalista Party was independence from America.

following August, and sentenced to the maximum penalty of two years, fined US$2000 plus costs of litigation. The Court found him guilty of trying "to stir up treason among those now favorably disposed toward the [American] government."[44] While awaiting appeal to the Supreme Court, he conspired with the former revolutionary, Artemio Ricarte, who had returned to the country to revive the revolution against the Americans. Soon it became evident that theirs was a lost cause, and in the face of possibly grave charges, Tolentino sent a virulent letter to the American governor-general, which demanded amnesty for themselves as an alternative to a bloody revolution.[45] It was a desperate and fruitless attempt. A Filipino spy betrayed Ricarte in May 1904, and the following month Tolentino was captured in his own house. In July he was sent to prison for conspiracy, and he apparently remained there as late as April, 1905.[46]

The theatrical career of Tolentino began with La Venganza de Robdeil (Robdeil's Vengeance, 1891), a moro-moro in Pampango, possibly adapted from a Spanish work.[47] His next two plays bear titles strongly suggestive of anti-colonialist themes, but as in the case of Juan Abad's works, no extant copies exist. Reportedly finished in 1898, Filipinas at España (The Philippines and Spain), a melodrama (probably

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[44] The Manila Cablenews, August 2, 1903, p. 2.

[45] The Manila Times, March 2, 1904, p. 1.

[46] The Cablenews, April 19, 1905, p. 5.

[47] Manuel, II, p. 390. The language of Pampanga province is variously called Capampangan, Pampangan, or Pampango.

a zarzuela) with music by Camilo Dizon, had a Tagalog and Pampangan version, the latter dated November 9, 1901.[48] Next came a three-act verse zarzuela entitled Sinukuan (They Retreated), with music by Fortunato Pineda, which deals with the downfall of the Revolution. This also had a Pampangan version. A drama in three acts which first appeared in Spanish, then was translated into Tagalog and later into Pampango, Luhang Tagalog (Tagalog Tears) symbolically depicts the struggle of the Filipinos for emancipation. The play was suppressed by the American authorities because it tended to emulate war and treason. In it, the invasion of an independent Philippines by a foreign power causes dissension among the Filipinos. One group fosters independence; the other, autonomy under colonial rule. The play ends with the victory of the invaders and the complete subjugation of the Philippines.[49]

The chronology of Tolentino's dramatic works remains undetermined, but after Kahapon, which was a sequel to Luhang Tagalog, he apparently turned his attention from political to domestic themes. This might have been, at least in part, the result of the requirement imposed by the city police that he submit every drama he wrote for approval prior to staging.[50]

Tolentino wrote in three languages--Spanish, Tagalog, and his native Pampangan. However, he advocated the adoption of Tagalog as a national language, and in 1908, he founded a school for the study of

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[48]Manuel, pp. 385, 391.

[49]Cited in Isabel Yumol, "A Critical Study of Aurelio Tolentino's novel, Ang Buhok ni Ester," M.A. Thesis, University of the Philippines, 1955, pp. 11-12.

[50]Manuel, II, p. 379.

Tagalog letters, the Parnaso Filipino (Philippine Parnassus). One of its purposes was to produce plays written by its members. Apparently, the school had only one production (on February 8, 1908 at the Zorrilla) before it ceased to function in 1910.[51]

The fame of Tolentino rests primarily on his three-act seditious play, Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas (Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow). Composed in Tagalog verse, Kahapon dramatizes "the life of the past, the present, and the future of the Filipino nation."[52] The dramatis personae are Inang-bayan (Mother Country--Philippines), Dilat-na-bulag (Open-eyed Blind--Spain), Bagongsibol (Newborn--America), Masunurin (Obedient--Filipino Woman), Tagailog (River-dweller--Tagalog people), Matanglawin (Eagle-eyed--Spanish government in the Philippines), Malaynatin (We do not know--American government in the Philippines), Asalhayop (Brutish--Treacherous Tagalog), Dahunpalay (Snake--Treacherous Tagalog), Haring Bata (King Bata--Chinese king), Halimaw (Monster--Spanish friar), and Walang-tutol (Non-objector--Filipino Man).

The plot of the play follows the division indicated by the title: the first act deals with the remote past, from the period before the Spaniards came to their arrival; the second act depicts the present (actually, the recent past), which comprises the Spanish regime until the arrival of the Americans; and the third act, the future (actually, the present, although the play ends with a fictitious future).

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[51] Manuel, p. 380.

[52] Aurelio Tolentino, Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas, in Lapeña-Bonifacio, p. 177 (title page). Full text in the original Tagalog on pp. 177-206. Also found in Manuel, II, pp. 395-431.

A sacrilegious festivity, led by Asalhayop, on the day commemorative of Chinese conquest, opens the play. Inangbayan rebukes the crowd, but unheeding, Asalhayop mocks and slaps her. The tombs of the country's fallen heroes appear and everyone except Asalhayop kneels repentantly. Tagailog calls the men to arms against the Chinese king to regain their independence. Asalhayop betrays them to King Bata in return for gold. Inangbayan witnesses this betrayal, and exposes Asalhayop. On Tagailog's order, Asalhayop is burned alive. In the ensuing battle, Tagailog kills King Bata. Two foreigners--Dilat-na-bulag and Matanglawin--arrive and warn Tagailog of other native armies threatening to attack. They pledge their support, and seal the agreement with a blood pact.

In the second act, Tagailog refuses to kneel before the new tyrants, Dilat-na-bulag and Matanglawin. Upon Dahunpalay's urging, the rulers send Tagailog to prison. Entreating in behalf of her son, Inangbayan falls prey to extortion, first by Matanglawin, and later, Halimaw. By a clever ruse, Tagailog kills Dahunpalay, and to confuse the rulers he exchanges clothes with the bloodied corpse. He rejoins his people and orders them to prepare for attack. Summoned by Dilat-na-bulag for questioning regarding rumors of an uprising, Inangbayan is unable to return to her children: Halimaw orders her to be buried alive. Tagailog's army wins the revolution; Inangbayan rises from her grave, and to the accompaniment of <u>The Star-Spangled Banner</u>, Bagongsibol and Malaynatin enter with the American flag. With their vow to protect the people's freedom, the second act ends.

In the last act, a chorus of women sew a blue flag with stars and a crescent in the center, symbolic of a free nation which they all expect to be born "in the very near future," that is, when the new moon rises. In response to Tagailog's demand for independence, Malaynatin questions the capacity of the people for self-government. Walangtutol assures Tagailog that the troops are ready to attack at the rise of the new moon. A dream sequence follows, wherein Malaynatin sees Inangbayan shoot Bagongsibol's eagle. The latter attempts to grab Inangbayan, but a row of tombstones suddenly blocks her way, and Inangbayan disappears into the earth. Led by Tagailog, a group of children kneel before Bagongsibol, but she sends them away. The Figure of Death appears, and as it approaches Malaynatin, the latter wakes up. Later, at the forest, to the tune of the Philippine National Anthem, Inangbayan raises the finished flag, and Tagailog lights the warning signal for an attack. Bagongsibol and Malaynatin arrive; Tagailog delivers a series of appeals for independence, followed by an emotional entreaty by Inangbayan. Adamant, Bagongsibol rejects their pleas even after Tagailog's soldiers appear. Finally, a group of children kneel before Bagonsibol; the latter relents, and the play ends in jubilation.

Within the framework of a panoramic plot, Tolentino has compressed time and space, juxtaposed historical fact and imaginative fiction, and endowed characters and events with a political symbolism reminiscent of Hindi Aco Patay and Malaya. All the centuries of tribal wars and foreign invasions prior to the coming of the Spaniards are dramatized in Act I; the initial arrival of the Spaniards in Mactan island in 1521

and the later occupation of Manila in 1571 occur in a single moment; three centuries of Spanish rule transpire within a few hours; and the countless abuses of the Spanish friars over half a century are condensed into three events which follow each other in quick succession.

Historical fact is exemplified by the blood pact between Tagailog and Matanglawin: in 1571 Legazpi and Rajah Soliman, a ruler of Manila, sealed a similar pact, but with mutual misgivings about each other's real intentions. The extortion of money and jewels from Inangbayan and her children is a dramatization of the widespread exploitation of the masses by the Spanish friars and government officials. The refusal of Bagonsibol to grant independence is based on the same grounds that the American government in 1903 withheld it from the Filipinos--that the latter are not ready to govern themselves. The final scene goes beyond historical fact: it is a wishful suggestion that were America to grant independence, it would be a noble act on her part, because it would insure the happiness of the new generation of Filipinos (represented by the children). Moreover, this ending enabled the audience to realize vicariously its national aspiration for independence.

All of Tolentino's characters in Kahapon are more abstract than real; they are not rounded personalities, but personified ideas which clash with each other. Necessarily, the relationships of characters on the human level are ambiguous; for example, it is not clear whether Tagailog is really Inangbayan's son, or what personal ties bind Dilat-na-bulag and Matanglawin, or Bagongsibol and Malaynatin. Moreover, a number of characters lack background. Dahunpalay's origin is undetermined; Halimaw appears out of nowhere; the children are nobody's

particular children. Purely functional, these characters serve as convenient and readily understandable symbols of the more complex ideas they represent. For instance, because Asalhayop and Dahunpalay symbolize the foreign oppressors' native servants who have betrayed their own countrymen for wealth and comfort, their origins are less important than the severe punishment they get for their treachery. The chorus remains undefined, and become whatever characters the situation may dictate.

The sensational reports in American newspapers of the performance of May 14, 1903, reveal details of the staging of Kahapon. According to one account, at some point in the last act, the actress Feliza Roxas (as Inangbayan) tears the American flag, raises a large Katipunan flag, and bursts into a passionate tirade against the United States[53] (the act of tearing the American flag could have been either an improvisation or a deliberate omission from the script which had to pass censorship). The Americans in the audience then leaped onstage and started a riot. After the preliminary investigation, it was reported that when the American spectators reached the stage, one of the principal actors was vigorously trampling on the American flag. One American seized the actor and sent him tearing through several pieces of scenery "representing the happy life Filipinos could live without the oppressor."[54] Another American threw a native likeness of the Statue of Liberty, which was on one side of the stage, down a staircase leading to the backstage; out

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[53]The Manila Times, May 15, 1903, p. 1.

[54]The Manila Times, May 16, 1903, p. 1.

of the shattered pieces "there rolled a fat Filipina screeching like a wild cat."[55] When the riot broke out, the actress was inside the statue awaiting a cue to speak in favor of independence (this episode is not in the script).

According to another eyewitness, neither the American flag nor the Katipunan flag was displayed[56] (the script calls for a display of the American flag, but not that of the Katipunan). At the rise of the curtain in Act III (the witness probably referred to a drop which opens a new setting in Act III, Scene 9), an actor dressed as an American general stood opposite an actor in the uniform of a Filipino general. The Filipino asked the American to grant the Filipinos their independence. The American refused because he doubted the capability of the Filipinos. At this juncture, several Filipino children entered, knelt, and gave the American a book, which "opened as if by magic and [from it] a flag appeared." The witness' description of the flag agrees with that given in the script. Then, he continued, the Secret Police leaped onstage with their revolvers drawn, and began to terrorize the audience.

Another report tells of the dream sequence, where the eagle's head is cut off "by some mechanical device" and the "American flags disappear from the stage while blue flags with stars were hoisted diagonally across the stage."[57] The trial of Tolentino's brother, Jacinto, who was prompter at the performance, revealed that only the author (who played Tagailog) had memorized his lines. Consequently,

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[55] Manila Times, p. 1. [56] The Manila Times, May 19, 1903, p. 1.

[57] The Manila Cablenews, July 26, 1903, p. 4.

Jacinto had to dictate practically all the lines of the play, an act which, according to the prosecution, constituted libel.[58]

The audience on the night of May 14 was receptive and responsive.[59] They cheered the enumeration of revolutionary martyrs' names (not in the script, but they could have easily been inserted during one of the many eulogies delivered in the play). They applauded whenever Tolentino and "the woman accompanying him" spoke, and they kept silent or hissed every time the actors playing America and the American government delivered their pieces.[60] In the course of the performance, they frequently called for Tolentino, who stepped out of character to take a bow of acknowledgment. "The audience displayed its greatest pleasure during that part of the play which showed the Filipino people up in arms against the Government,"[61] says another report. Perhaps more than any other seditious play, Tolentino's Kahapon elicited the most obvious inflammatory response from a native audience, a fact which the Supreme Court pointed out in its decision.

On March 6, 1906, confirming the decision of the Court of First Instance, the Supreme Court rejected the plea of Tolentino that his play was "in itself, a purely literary and artistic production where the legendary history of these islands and their future, as imagined by the author, are presented merely for the instruction and

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[58] The Manila Cablenews, August 21, 1904, p. 6.

[59] The Manila Times, May 15, 1903, p. 1.

[60] The Manila Cablenews, July 26, 1903, p. 4.

[61] The Manila Cablenews, August 2, 1903.

entertainment of the public."[62] It ruled that "the manifest, unmistakable tendency of the play, in view of the time, place, and manner of its presentation, was to inculcate a spirit of hatred and enmity against the American people and the Government of the United States in the Philippines, and . . . that the principal object and intent of its author was to incite the people of the Philippine Islands to open and armed resistance to the constituted authorities, and to induce them to conspire together for the secret organization of armed forces, to be used when the opportunity presented itself, for the purpose of overthrowing the present Government and setting up another in its stead."[63] Tolentino was sentenced to life imprisonment and fined a total of US$7000. In February 1908, the American Governor-General granted him parole, and in 1912 he obtained complete pardon.[64]

Other Anti-American Plays

There were other seditious dramas whose popularity, according to a scathing editorial entitled "The Theatre as a Sedition Breeder," rested on "incendiary speeches and scenes."[65] Such is the case, for instance, with respect to Ang Kalayaan Hindi Natupad (Independence Was Unattained) by an anonymous playwright in Obando, Bulakan, where cast and crew were arrested for sedition because of such speeches as: "My brothers, don't go against us. Stay with us for we are all

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[62] Philippine Reports, p. 686.

[63] Reports, p. 686.

[64] Felipe Fernando, "Aurelio Tolentino: Playwright, Poet, and Patroit," Philippine Studies, 12 (January 1964), p. 87.

[65] Editorial, The Manila Times, May 16, 1903, p. 4.

Filipinos and defend your country that we may gain our independence. If you are traitors we will bury you alive."[66]

In January, 1904, an "elaborate" play which "taught insurrection from start to finish" was "suppressed" by the American authorities.[67] Raided in Navotas, Rizal, on the night of January 23, the production of the play Pulong Pinaglahuan (The Eclipsed Island), was reportedly more seditious than Hindi Aco Patay. The following is a translated excerpt from the play:

> Another nation came who also called us brothers, and offered us good positions. But who received good positions but traitors to our own country? Fellow countrymen! How can you bear to be in this employ here when your fellow countrymen are out in the mountains fighting for our liberty? We will not allow any other government to dominate us here, because if we do we will only continue to be slaves.[68]

Twenty performers and the author, Mariano Martinez, were arrested, over the latter's protests that the play was only anti-Spanish. According to the news item, the second act showed newly-arrived foreigners other than Spaniards, who drank their own blood to seal the pledge of brotherhood with the Filipinos, and who promised that all government positions would be given to Filipinos. Earlier in the first act, the natives were dressed "as in the days of Magellan, akin to Moros, hair coiled over a silver ring." A ship sailed in (perhaps onstage) with two strangers, one dressed like an American, according

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[66]The Manila Times, May 25, 1903, p. 1.

[67]The Manila Cablenews, January 26, 1904, p. 3.

[68]Manila Cablenews, p. 3.

to the newspaper account (which does not describe the clothes of the other). They disembarked and swore friendship with the natives. A second voyage brought the friars, who proceeded to rob two female characters, named Glory and Wealth. Toward the end of Act III, an angel sat on a cloud and took Jose Rizal to heaven, while a huge sun rose behind a cloud to throw "a roseate light upon the truly faithful." After the arrest, the elaborate cloud machine was confiscated. It was "a big cloud, painted in gorgeous colors, with a seat in the middle. . . . The cloud sail[ed] up on a pair of slanting wires, and [was] propelled by a wire in the hands of a stout native or two up in the flies."[69]

Five months later, on May 1st, eleven actors, including the author and the manager, were arrested during a performance of Maximino de los Reyes' Dahas ng Pilak (The Force of Silver) at the Teatro Nueva Luna in Malabon, Rizal.[70] The Captain of the Constabulary witnessed the spirited reaction of the audience to such declarations as "a great bird" from a "land across the sea" had flown "to eat up all the Filipinos." Advised of the presence of the Constabulary, the author himself allegedly took the prompter's place and conveyed the situation to his actors while he cut away abusive lines. However, in the middle of the third act, a climactic passage brought down the house with vocal approval by the audience: "My countrymen! Do not trust any persons whose hearts you do not know, or we shall never get out of

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[69] Cablenews, p. 3; also cited in Lapeña-Bonifacio, p. 40.

[70] The Manila Cablenews, May 3, 1904, p. 6.

this slavery. We will try to drive them out for our own welfare."[71] At this point, the officers stopped the performance and hauled the entire company to jail.

The theatrical manifestations of anti-Americanism were apparently better organized than those which expressed anti-Spanish sentiments--understandably, since Spanish rule had already ended by the time anti-Spanish plays emerged. The reality of American oppression demanded a more immediate response, and the theatre became the most active instrument. Seditious theatre caused much concern among the American authorities, and the publicity generated by the local American press sensationalized the phenomenon. But it was not easy for the authorities to track down all the makeshift bamboo theatres in the outlying districts of Manila and neighboring provinces, especially when the native local officials were in cahoots with the authors.

What brought the impact of American might on theatrical productions was their suspicion that dissident elements were using the theatre to rouse the uneducated masses to revive the revolution. When in 1903 the former revolutionary general, Artemio Ricarte, arrived in Manila to win supporters for a resumption of the insurrection, the newspapers blamed the theatres for exalting Ricarte as liberator and hero, since he allegedly used the stage as a personal platform. Proof of this allegation was the occasion Ricarte addressed an audience in a theatre in Singalong. The case against Dr. Dominador Gomez, the labor leader, was also materially related to the widespread incidence of seditious

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[71] Cablenews, p. 6; also cited in Lapeña-Bonifacio, pp. 35-36.

plays. In the latter part of May, 1903, Gomez was arrested for having illegally founded the La Union Obrera Democratica de las Islas Filipinas (The Democracic Labor Union of the Philippine Islands) to enlist the sympathy and assistance of laborers for "ladrones" (robbers) who posed as revolutionaries. The prosecution singled out the presentation of plays as a means Gomez employed toward this end, and even suspected that Gomez was the real author of Hindi Aco Patay. Moreover, the prosecution called Aurelio Tolentino to the stand, because of his signed statement that he gave Gomez several hundred tickets for a theatrical performance. While Tolentino could not recall the title of the play that was performed, he declared that any interest and intervention of Gomez was "purely philanthropic."[72] The move to call Tolentino as a witness was obviously intended to implicate Gomez in the seditious activities of which Tolentino had earlier been charged, and to establish proof of an organized effort to overthrow the American government. The introduction of speeches from Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas as exhibits in the Gomez trial further attests to this motive.[73] Later, two other literary figures were called: Tomas Remigio, whose works appeared in the organ of the Union, El Defensor de los Obreros (The Defender of the Laborers), and playwright Patricio Mariano, in his capacity as editor of the Tagalog section of that organ.

On May 11, 1904, Gomez was acquitted of the charges against him in connection with the Union Obrera.

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[72]The Manila Cablenews, August 26, 1903, p. 4.

[73]Cablenews, p. 4.

One curiosity about the seditious affair is that the first arrests for seditious playwriting occurred in May 1903 (all within two weeks), eighteen months after the enactment of the Sedition Law. According to the provisions of the law, it was unlawful to espouse independence "until it has been officially proclaimed that a state of war or insurrection against the authority or sovereignty of the United States no longer exists in the Philippine Islands."[74] President Theodore Roosevelt had made such a proclamation on July 4, 1902. Less than a year later, seditious plays appeared; the American authorities cracked down on native playhouses and hauled entire theatre companies to prison. From roughly May 1903 to May 1904, the seditious theatre was active. The numerous arrests and convictions, however, clearly discouraged native playwrights, performers, and producers from presenting any more anti-American plays. Juan Matapang Cruz was sentenced to two years imprisonment which he apparently served in full. Juan Abad wrote only one other play after Tanikalang Guinto, and after the Supreme Court acquitted him in 1907, the only endeavor he undertook was the publication of that play. One does not find it difficult to infer that the three arrests that Abad experienced (the first in 1900 in connection with his anti-moro-moro play and his failure to take the oath of allegiance to the United States; the third, while he was still on trial for sedition, in connection with his last play, which did not, however, result in any conviction) demoralized him to the extent of creative apathy. Aurelio Tolentino suffered the greatest number of arrests, tortures, and interrogations,

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[74]Guevara, ed., Public Laws, II, p. 149.

both under the Spanish and the American regimes (he was active in the Katipunan as well), but he displayed great resiliency. In 1907, he obtained parole under most rigid conditions, which required him to report regularly to the police and to submit all his written works for prior approval. Understandably, Tolentino devoted his energies to matters less political in nature. Still, in 1908, he wrote a one-act Tagalog zarzuela with a thinly-veiled anti-colonialist theme. Titled Germinal,[75] with music by Francisco Buencamino, this play is the first known anti-colonialist work since 1904. In this zarzuela, commissioned by the Germinal Cigar Factory in Manila, Tolentino used the central character, named Germinal, to symbolize the protector of the country's youth, the latter represented by a young cigar plant. Bayan (Nation), her sweetheart, comes close to death because an absent character, Gat Araw (Sun) has neglected him. A potion from the cigar plant brings him back to health. Mainggit (Envy) is the fair-skinned alien suitor of Germinal who hires a native go-between, Sumulsol (Extortionist). Mainggit gives up his suit in favor of Bayan, but Sumulsol refuses to acknowledge defeat. He sets a trap to kill Germinal and Bayan at their wedding, but Ligaya (Happiness), Bayan's mother, outwits him: Sumulsol dies in his own trap.

The three themes that Tolentino cleverly dramatizes under the guise of a simple love story are first, the rivalry between the brown-skinned native (Bayan) and the fair-complexioned foreigner (obviously an American); second, the desire of the foreigner to possess Germinal's

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[75]Complete Tagalog text in Flores, ed., Sampung Dula, pp. 70-92.

treasure--the youth (represented by the cigar plant); and third, the deviousness of the greedy opportunists--the native sycophants--represented by Sumulsol. These themes are essentially anti-colonialist, though mellowed by a decade of American good will.

The following year, Pantaleon Lopez, a Tagalog playwright, wrote a two-act fantastic-lyrical zarzuela based on the celebrated Renacimiento-Worcester libel case. In its October 30, 1908 issue, the newspaper El Renacimiento published an editorial titled "Aves de Rapiña" ("Birds of Prey") which described a man with the characteristics of "an eagle, who surprises first and then later devours, a vulture who gorges himself on dead and putrid meats, an owl who affects a petulant omniscience, [and] a vampire who silently sucks his victim bloodless."[76] The then Secretary of the Interior in the Philippines, Dean C. Worcester, felt alluded to and sued Teodoro Kalaw, the editor, and Martin Ocampo, the publisher, for libel. The two Filipinos were sentenced by both the lower court and the Supreme Court to a ₱60,000 fine and a prison term. Titled Ave de Rapiña o Ibong Manlulupig (Bird of Prey or Predatory Bird), Lopez's play was successfully produced at the Teatro Angel under police surveillance. Had it come six years earlier, the play might have put Lopez in prison for sedition because of the nationalistic implications dramatized by the triumph of the small birds over the large bird. Lopez was brought to the police station for interrogation, but was released. The ending of the play,

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[76]Editorial, El Renacimiento, October 30, 1908, in Teodoro Agoncillo, Filipino Nationalism, 1872-1970 (Quezon City: R. P. Garcia Publishing Co., 1974), p. 248. Translation of full Spanish text by Maria Katigbak, pp. 245-48.

wherein the large bird declares that the country's future is in its hands, apparently saved Lopez from a charge of sedition.

The furor caused by the eruption of seditious plays eventually died down. After 1909, no further arrests for seditious playwriting are recorded.

The Staging of Anti-Colonialist Plays

The discussion of anti-colonialist plays would be incomplete without a consideration of their actual staging, or where records are unavailable (as the case is with a majority of the plays discussed), a description of the stage directions. In Malaya, Remigio's scenic requirements fail to create an environment; rather, they constitute a mere background for the action of the play. In Act I, the stage directions suggest a single backdrop: a rocky landscape in the middle of which is a hill covered with bamboos and other trees, and hidden, on one side, the house of Katwiran. Act II shows an inclination for a detailed setting: on one side of the stage is the living room of a house "resplendently bejewelled"; on the other side is a well-appointed bedroom hung with various weapons; the moonlight shines through the bedroom window. The latter setting remains for the first nine scenes of the third act; then it changes to a street or quite possibly the same drop as in Act I (since no change is indicated till the end of the play).

Nothing in the stage directions of Ang Katipunan requires a realistic mise-en-scene. Act I calls for the house of Josefo on one side and that of Señor Fernandez on the other, with the mountain in

the background. Act II calls for an open stage, where interior scenes merge with exterior scenes, and the indications for either one are implicit in the action and the dialogue. The first scene shows a couple inside their house--the wife at the sewing machine and the husband at the writing desk. What immediately follows is the entrance of a band of musicians, followed by Katipuneros with their flag. The next scene is the interior of a Spanish guardhouse. In Act III, as in Act I, a backdrop shows a mountain, a small chapel, and a few houses.

Much of the modernism of Con la cruz y la espada resides in the detailed stage directions. The prologue calls for the facade of a well-built farmhouse, fenced by tropical trees, and backed by a rural landscape, which shows the church of Imus in the distance. To the audience's right is a wooden house, with a thatched roof, and a verandah connected to the stage by a staircase. Below the verandah is machinery for preparing hemp. To the audience's left is an orchard, at the back of which is a bamboo fence with a gate. The curtain rises on a domestic scene--Petrona is arranging hemp, Pia is weaving, Fausta is on the verandah cleaning a bird cage, Martin is making a bucket from a kerosene can, and Paco is reading his books in the garden. Even while more importance is given to stage areas other than down-center, it is difficult to ascertain whether the scenery was still a painted backdrop and little else. Act I and Act III call for the same setting: "Philippine landscape," with a river at the back and a practical banca (native canoe). On the left is a large nipa house, with a door, stairs, and windows. At the foot of the stairs is a pounding mortar

and other implements. Upstage is a bamboo pavilion with tables, chairs, and food. The scene begins with a fiesta in progress; the barrio lasses wear their gala dresses, and sing and dance with the lads. Act II calls for the most complicated setting. The curtain opens on the station house, which is divided into three apartments. On the right is the officers' quarters, with a door at the back, a door to the center room, and a window on each side. The center room is the guardroom lighted by an oil lamp; it has five doors. The room on the left is the stockade; on one of its walls is a movable stone, through which Paco later escapes.

The absence of a script of Say Liman Ag Naketket precludes a description of its scenic requirements. In Walang Sugat, Severino Reyes gives no detailed directions for mise-en-scene; he merely indicates the nature of the setting for the particular scene: the receiving room of Julia's house (Act I, Scene 1); a patio at the prison in Bulakan showing prisoners tied to the bars (Act I, Scene 5); the plaza in front of the church (Act III, Scene 8). The stage directions for the massacre at the Guinguinto train station (Act I, Scene 10), based on an actual incident, offers an insight into Reyes' sense of theatricality:

Scene 10

(Music which expresses emotion. When the joyful portion is played, shouting is heard inside. Friars, Tenyong, and his men)

Within: You of Lucifer's race! Repent for your time has come! You killed my father! -- Pardon! -- No debt is left unpaid!

(Running and catching [onstage]; the friars are killed. One hangs on to the departing train).

Curtain[77]

Here, the onstage action indicated by the final stage direction does more theatrically than the offstage cries.

A more obvious attempt at realism occurs in Act II, Scenes 6 and 7, where the author shows a detachment of soldiers playing cards. The purpose of these scenes, it seems, is not to characterize, but to show a slice of the soldiers' lives.

All of Reyes' scenic directions indicate a set of backdrops and a "short curtain" which apparently depicted a street (telon corto, or telon de calle). The script contains two places where the use of such a curtain is explicitly indicated: Act I, Scene 4 presumably allowed a change of drops from Julia's house to the prison in Bulakan; Act II, Scene 5 again allowed a scene change from Julia's house to the headquarters of Tenyong in the mountains.

Photographs of the original production of Tanikalang Guinto provide an invaluable record of production style circa 1902.[78] A photograph of Act I, Scene 3 (see Figure 1) shows Liwanag and Maimbot against a backdrop with a river, on whose stage right bank stands a two-story stone house, with two windows on the second floor, the upstage window

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[77]My translation of this scene is based on the text in Sebastian, p. 49. Texts in Flores and Lapeña-Bonifacio do not have the stage direction for the onstage action.

[78]Photographs reproduced in Lapeña-Bonifacio, pp. 38, 39, 140, and 149. Those of Act I, Scene 4 and Act I, Scene 12 are also reproduced in Manuel, I, facing p. 1.

Figure 1. Act I, Scene 3. Maimbot accepts a flower from Liwanag.

Figure 2. Act I, Scene 12. Nagtapon in white camiso chino, K'Ulayaw in dark suit and derby hat.

in perspective. Another Act I photograph (Act I, Scene 12; see Figure 2) shows K'Ulayaw wearing his black derby hat, holding up a purse to Nagtapon, in an apparent act of bribery.

A third photograph (Act I, Scene 16; see Figure 3) captures the composition of the actors in the final scene of Act I. Against the same backdrop as in Act I, Scene 3, K'Ulayaw supports an unconscious Dalita as he chides Nagtapon. Liwanag watches from behind the archway, while Maimbot motions her to retire into the house. Dalita is dressed in the costume of a country woman and Nagtapon in what looks like a white camisa chino. A room in a wealthy man's house is the setting for Act II, as indicated in a photograph of Scene 19 (see Figure 4). The backdrop shows a painted arch parallel to the footlights, and a portion of the stage right wall in perspective. Standing upstage right, Maimbot gulps down a bottle of wine, while Nagtapon points to him in apparent glee. Upstage left, Liwanag stands at a distance from the men while she delivers her monologue which makes up the entire scene.

A photograph of Act II, Scene 30 (see Figure 5) shows a kneeling Liwanag dressed in the national costume, while K'Ulayaw, in a dark European suit and tieless shirt, seems to be deeply disappointed: his right arm raised and his palm touching the back of his head. Liwanag holds his left arm, which he holds in an apparent gesture of rejecting her. The backdrop is the same as Act II, Scene 19.

The last photograph (Act III, Scene 47; see Figure 6) depicts the final tableau. It shows the Act I backdrop, not the universe called for in the script. On stage right, a demon holds Nagtapon by the waist. All the photograph shows of this demon is a bare right foot,

Figure 3. Act I, Scene 16. First Act Tableau shows from left to right Liwanag, Maimbot, Nagtapon, Dalita, and K'Ulayaw.

Figure 4. Act II, Scene 19. From left to right, Nagtapon, Maimbot, and Liwanag.

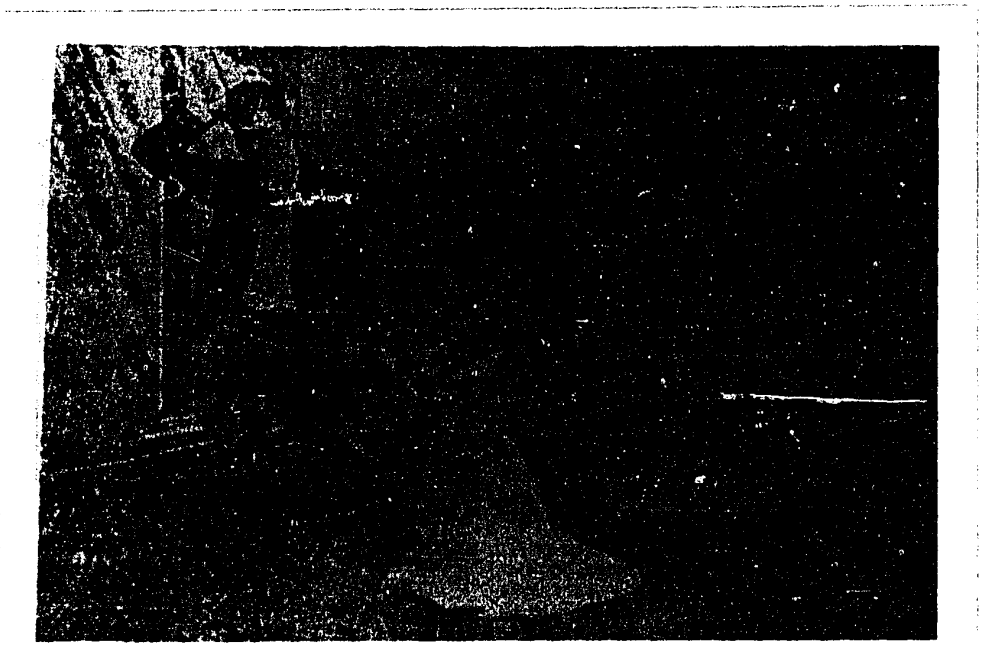

Figure 5. Act II, Scene 30. K'Ulayaw and Liwanag in a melodramatic pose.

Figure 6. Act III, Scene 47. Final Tableau shows from left to right a devil holding Nagtapon, Liwanag on her knees, Maimbot held back by Death, and the Spirit Bat attending to a wounded K'Ulayaw.

what looks like a dark robe wrapped around its body, and a horned headcap. Liwanag is on her knees (not aloft in a cloud); Death's scythe prevents a coatless Maimbot from reaching Liwanag. Death is dressed in a tight-fitting black suit, with a head and face mask painted to look like a skull. Below the tree which is on the right hand edge of the photograph lies K'Ulayaw. Attended by a nondescript figure (which must be the Spirit Bat) whose upper body is shrouded in white, K'Ulayaw clutches his breast. A bullet-shaped life-sized figure, completely covered in white, occupies center stage beside Liwanag.

The realistic staging of Tolentino's Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas has been made sufficiently evident by the newspaper accounts of the riot which broke out during its performance on May 10, 1903. In addition to these reports, the script clearly indicates the use of several backdrops and a trap (in Act II, Scene 19 where Inangbayan is buried alive in a grave, and in Act III, Scene 6 where she disappears into the earth). Unfortunately, the newspaper account of Hindi Aco Patay does not provide any idea of this play's scenic requirements.

Generally, the stage directions and initial staging of the plays previously analyzed do not create an environment for the characters. Painted backdrops are the principal scenic device, complemented by technical effects of obvious theatricality, which in the Philippines date back to the comedias de magia of Escosura (see page 54). The conventional use of the telon corto (brief curtain) or telon de calle (street drop) in native zarzuelas shows the latter's indebtedness to

Spanish models. It is doubtful that the use of these illusionistic devices contributed to believable stage compositions; all indications in the scripts suggest a concentration of stage action downstage center, with the painted scenery as a picturesque background. Compared to the bare platforms of the kumedya, and the foreign settings of Spanish plays, however, the scenery for these plays was more representative of Philippine locales. Furthermore, the frequent displays of revolutionary emblems, flags, and other symbols of nationhood, not to mention the native costumes, constitute a modernity which the kumedyas and the Spanish genres did not possess.

Native Domestic Zarzuelas

The earliest recorded production of a vernacular zarzuela--Ing Managpe (The Patcher), by Mariano Proceso Pabalan--occurred on September 13, 1900 at the Teatro Sabina in Bacolor, Pampanga province. In one act and with music by Amado David Gutierrez, Ing Managpe proved, as Pabalan had intended, that Pampango was just as valid and effective a language as Spanish for the zarzuela.[79]

Considered the Father of Modern Pampango Drama,[80] Pabalan was born in Bacolor, Pampanga in 1862 or 1863, and died in 1904. After he obtained his B.A., he taught in the primera and segunda enseñanza. Like the other literary men of his province (Soto and Tolentino, among

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[79]Ely Javillonar, "The Significance of Mariano Proceso Pabalan in Capampangan Dramatic Literature," M.A. Thesis, University of the Philippines, 1961, p. 19.

[80]Manuel, I, p. 298.

others), he joined the Katipunan, and in his play Ing Apat ing Junio (The Fourth of June, n.d.) he recounts the events of June 4, 1898, when he threw flaming coconut husks at the Spanish garrison in Bacolor and butchered the Spanish soldiers stationed there.[81]

The subject of Ing Managpe,[82] Pabalan's only published play, is of itself trivial: a quarrel between a jealous, nagging wife and an exasperated husband; at the end, they are reconciled through the machinations of their servant, who acts as the "patcher." But in view of the fact that this zarzuela established the Filipino family as the dominant subject of the native zarzuela for the next two decades, the subject of Ing Managpe assumes greater significance. The Filipino family serves as the framework of the play's action; Filipino characters interact within the setting of early twentieth century Philippine society and replace Spanish characters in foreign locales. In this zarzuela, one finds the earmarks of the native zarzuela which justify its validity as a genre of early modern Filipino drama: the dramatization of everyday experiences, conflicts, and sentiments of Filipinos confronted by and confronting the new century, with an attitude born of the recent abortive Revolution and of the uncertain future under the new American rule. But at the same time, one finds in it and in Pabalan's other plays the native zarzuela's weakest points: borrowed plots and adapted music. Adua Tata (The Son of Two Fathers, 1902?) depicts, within the conventional device of mistaken identities, the authority of Filipino

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[81] Javillonar, p. 51.

[82] Translation of complete text in original Pampango is found in Javillonar, Appendix, pp. 1-37.

parents;[83] Oita Pa, Eh! (Here's More!, n.d.) is a light comedy which shows the impecunious life of actors and actresses of the day, with one scene and all its music adapted from Verdi's opera, Il Trovatore, by Pabalan himself;[84] and Ing Apat ing Junio borrows arias from Verdi's La Traviata, Un Ballo in Maschera, and Ernani.[85]

The modernity of the native zarzuela is most distinctive and its weaknesses least evident in anti-colonialist zarzuelas like Reyes' Walang Sugat and Palisoc's Say Liman. In zarzuelas with domestic themes, the affinity of the genre to the kumedya is most apparent. At any rate, regardless of themes, the vernacular zarzuela became the most popular genre of the early modern period, due mainly to the combined appeal of song, dance, prosaic dialogue, and recognizably native characters. Apart from the musical appeal, the modernity of domestic native zarzuelas resides in the local color of their plots, characters, and situations.

After Pabalan, two other Pampango authors wrote zarzuelas: Aurelio Tolentino, author of the anti-American play, Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas, and Juan Crisostomo Soto. Tolentino wrote approximately a dozen original zarzuelas in Pampango, Tagalog, and Spanish versions of the same plays. The absence of scripts because of three fires which gutted Tolentino's personal library and friends who never returned manuscripts, have left critics and historians with a list of mere titles which indicate little about Tolentino's plays.

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[83] Javillonar, p. 91.

[84] Javillonar, p. 86.

[85] Javillonar, Appendix, p. 38. Translation of complete Pampango text on pp. 38-80.

Juan Crisostomo Soto (1867-1918) has been more fortunate. Not only in his most successful zarzuela, Alang Dios! (There is no God!), extant, but the activities of the company he directed have been recorded. Born in Bacolor, Pampanga province, Soto, or Crissot as he has been called, began his dramatic career at the age of eleven or twelve, when he wrote religious plays. Five years later, he was engaged as a loante (reciter of loas) for the flores de Mayo (literally, May flowers; a socio-religious fiesta celebrated in May) and Santacruzan (a procession which features Queen Helena and her son-consort, Prince Constantine). Inspired by the performance of Praxedes Fernandez's company when it toured San Fernando (where Soto was then studying), Soto became a serious student of Spanish plays. His initial attempt at secular drama was an adaptation of Romeo and Juliet which he entitled Ing Pamaquiasaua ning Mete (The Marriage of the Dead). In 1884 without having finished his studies, he returned to Bacolor, where he worked as a clerk in a government office. Translations of Goethe's Faust, Harsenbuch's Dos amantes de Teruel, and La Mascota followed, before his first zarzuela, Ing Paninap nang Don Roque (The Vision of Don Roque), with music by Amado Gutierrez David, premiered at the Teatro Sabina in 1901. Just before the outbreak of the Revolution, he joined the Katipunan and enlisted with other revolutionaries in the Spanish volunteer army, Voluntarios Mobilizados, for the purpose of securing arms for the Filipino army. In 1899, Soto fought the Americans. Summoned by his father whom the Americans had captured, Soto surrendered and was imprisoned at a convent in Guagua. Refusing to divulge President Aguinaldo's whereabouts, Soto was sentenced to die before a firing squad,

but on the day of the execution he was released in exchange for four American prisoners. It was during this imprisonment that he wrote Sigalut. After his release, he became correspondent for La Independencia and later edited Ing Balen (The Town) and Ing Emangabiran (The Impartial). He spent the last five years of his life as a deputy assessor of Pampanga.

Soto wrote a total of forty-nine plays (twenty-eight are zarzuelas),[86] a novel, some short stories and poems. With Mariano Proceso Pabalan and Felix Galura Napao, Soto was part of a triumvirate of Pampanga's literary golden age (1900-1910) in the town of Bacolor, while in Guagua were Aurelio Tolentino, his brother Jacinto, and Felino Simpao, and in the town of Sexmoan, Monico Mercado.[87] Soto's only published work is Lidia (1907), a novel. Alang Dios! (There is No God!), the most successful of his zarzuelas, was prompted by the death of his daughter Maria Luz, whose name he used for the heroine of his play. The popularity of the zarzuela, premiered at the Teatro Sabina on November 6, 1902, brought it to the Zorrilla, where the audience gave it a standing ovation and called for Soto's appearance on stage.

With music by Precioso Palma, Alang Dios! is in three acts.[88] Act I opens with an exposition of the central action: the forthcoming

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[86] Cruz, Short History, pp. 300-302.

[87] Javillonar, p. 19.

[88] This analysis is based on a translation of the text in the original Pampango by Juan Aguas, in Juan Crisostomo Soto and Pampangan Drama by Juan Aguas (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1963), pp. 65-138. The vernacular of Pampanga province is variously called Pampangan, Pampango, or Capampangan.

marriage of Don Andres' daughter, Maria Luz, to the wealthy landowner, Ramon. Enrique, the former fiancé of Maria Luz, has just been released from prison, where he served a year for the theft of a diamond cross owned by his friend, Ramon. Maria asks her father to release her from her commitment to Ramon, and unable to contain her grievances, she recriminates against her stepmother, Doña Cucang, who faints as the curtain falls.

A chorus sung by laborers preparing for the wedding reception opens the second act. Clara, Maria's personal maid, reveals her unfortunate past to Don Monico, Andres' childhood friend; she gives him her mother's letter addressed to her lost father. Later, Monico reveals that Cucang is Ramon's real mother, and that Ramon and Enrique are half-brothers. Enrique finally confronts Maria, who, in an emotional duet, begs his forgiveness. Unrelenting, Enrique exclaims, "There is no God!" and rushes out.

Act III: the day of Maria's wedding. Clara confesses that she stole Ramon's cross; Monico reveals that Clara is Don Andres' daughter by a housemaid; Ramon challenges Enrique to a duel; and Maria falls gravely ill. She dies before the doctor arrives. The half-brothers shout, "There is no God!" but Enrique instantly regains his faith. Thus ends the zarzuela.

Soto has written an extremely protracted zarzuela on a threadbare theme, the evils that result from a loveless marriage. The profusion of melodramatic moments accounts for the zarzuela's immense popularity, but the real merits of the play reside in the delineation of the lower class characters--the farmers, laborers, washerwomen, and other

houseservants--who are admirably true-to-life; they speak realistically, and their actions are more believable than those of the upper class characters. Although Soto intended a modern morality play (an intention made evident by the dedication to the play),[89] it is his characterization of the lower class that gives the zarzuela its distinct modernity.

In Pangasian, Catalino Palisoc remained the leading zarzuelista for the twenty years following Say Liman Ag Naketket. His eleven zarzuelas (six written between 1905 and 1913) after Say Liman retain a didacticism and a preoccupation with the political problems of the country.[90] Maligsan na Balo o Sakit na Baley (The Merry Widow, or The Disease of the Country, 1905), dwells on the theme of good citizenship. It is a self-conscious play: Arturo, the mouthpiece of the author, is writing a play with the same title as the play's subtitle, Sakit na Baley. Palisoc loses no opportunity to attack, through Arturo, the widespread indifference to native culture, the cult of imitation, and the plague of opportunism, prevalent during the early years of American sovereignty. The conjunction of the two titles really indicates two almost unrelated themes. The theme of disease is never dramatized but is conveyed through discussion. Although the theme of the merry widow

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[89]The dedication reads:

"Apang!

When you died I unknowingly shouted the horrible exclamation, 'There is no God!' because the Almighty took you away from us very early. However, I realize now that God's wisdom is incomparable because although he plucked you away from outside, He moved you to His own Kingdom of happiness and glory." Aguas, p. 65.

[90]Synopses of these zarzuelas can be found in Magno, pp. 58 ff.

contributes to the comedic quality of the play, it is unoriginal, and the implicit cirticism of the widow's preference to marry a Manileño (a total surprise in the third act) rather than a provinciano must strike one as an extremely trivial symbol of "the disease of the country."

Say Mañgasi Singa Kinalab na Balite (He Who Shows Charity Is Like a Tree Smothered by the Blight, 1906 or 1907) is essentially a play about children who disobey their parents' wishes regarding their sweethearts. Here, the conflict which arises between Filipino parental authority and personal freedom becomes the background for social commentary. Written in three acts, this zarzuela features an exploited laborer, Damian. Through him, Palisoc criticizes Filipino employers who prefer Chinese and European workmanship to native craftsmanship and who thereby discourage native artisans and stifle their initiative. Don Ventura, Damian's creditor, is one such employer. The romantic story and the social commentary reach a simultaneous climax: the former, when in defiance of Don Ventura's command his two adopted children, Rosa and Rafael, elope and marry; and the latter, when Damian's wife files a legal complaint against Don Ventura for illegal detention of Damian. Doña Quilita, Don Ventura's wife, compares the three characters to the balite which kills the tree that gives it shelter. At the end, however, the children and Damian are forgiven.

What makes Palisoc significant as an early modern playwright, apart from his immense contributions in popularizing the zarzuela in Pangasinan, is the underlying theme, which, despite the dramaturgical flaws (which are obvious and numerous) filter through his works: "Let us all be good citizens placing our country's welfare foremost in our

thoughts, that she may prosper and progress, and ultimately win freedom."[91]

The full flowering of the native zarzuela occurred in Manila with the Tagalog zarzuelas. The earliest recorded production is that of Ambrosio de Guzman's Manga Caraniuang Ugali (Ordinary Customs) in 1900 (month and theatre unknown). Apart from the information that it was staged successfully, nothing is known about it. Of the early modern Tagalog zarzuelistas, Severino Reyes, Pantaleon Lopez, Patricio Mariano, and Maximino de los Reyes have left more than titles of their works.

In Severino Reyes (1861-1942), one finds the connecting link between the dissatisfaction with the kumedya and the adoption of the zarzuela to replace it. Reyes was not the first early modern playwright to express an anti-kumedya sentiment. In 1900, three playwrights--Juan Abad (author of Tanikalang Guinto), Honorio Lopez, and Mariano Sequera--founded the La Juventud Filipina (The Filipino Youth) with the avowed purpose of discouraging kumedyas or moro-moros. To them, the kumedya was a relic of Spanish colonialism; it catered to the naiveté of the masses, whose ignorance was perpetuated by the colonial policies of Spain. In this sense, the anti-moro-moro movement in 1900 was a manifestation of anti-colonialism. To stifle the popularity of the kumedya, Abad staged his play Mabuhay ang Filipinas! (Long Live the Philippines!) at the Teatro Nacional on May 17, 1900. But Abad was not a zarzuela writer, and after his imprisonment in Olongapo (see page 116), he turned his attention to anti-American plays. The zarzuela as an

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[91]Magno, p. 39.

alternative to moro-moro found its most avid exponent in Severino Reyes, who in 1902 wrote a one-act "comic-satirical absurdity"[92] in Tagalog which dramatized the death of the moro-moro. He aptly titled it R.I.P.

In a speech delivered more than thirty years after the production of R.I.P., Reyes explained his objections to moro-moro.[93] According to him, the moro-moro perpetuated the backwardness and the intellectual atrophy which characterized the three centuries of Spanish rule. Since the Revolution had given native writers the freedom to deal with secular themes, Reyes decided it was time to replace the moro-moro (which celebrated the triumph of Christians over Muslims) with "modern plays which could teach a lot."[94] Of these modern plays, the zarzuela was his personal favorite since it might combine good scenery, good singing, beautiful music, melodious verses, and coherent dialogue; for these reasons, too, he considered it the most modern theatrical art. Other playwrights--Roman Reyes, Ambrosio de Guzman, Roman Dimayuga, Pedro Paterno, and Hermogenes Ilagan--had written native zarzuelas before him, but he thought that although their zarzuelas were good plays, they were too subjective to constitute a "revolution against moro-moro."[95] To remedy the situation, Reyes wrote R.I.P.

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[92] Severino Reyes, R.I.P., TS, n.d.

[93] Severino Reyes, "Ang Dulang Tagalog," Publications of the Institute of National Language, 4, no. 2 (July 1938), pp. 5-19.

[94] Reyes, p. 15.

[95] Reyes, p. 17.

R.I.P. was not the first anti-moro-moro play. In its parody of the moro-moro, it was the veritable reincarnation of Entrala's Cuadros Filipinos (1882). But Reyes had the advantage of race, language, and an audience that had already been exposed to, and was ready for, the Tagalog zarzuela. Moreover, Reyes attacked the moro-moro from an insider's point of view. He showed a moro-moro director, Colas, and his company, during a rehearsal. Entrala tried to make the audience perceive the absurdity of the genre; Reyes also made the director and the actors themselves arrive at this realization. Their decision to abandon the moro-moro is prompted by two practical reasons: first, the prominent actors of the day (in the edited typescript the soprano Estanislawa San Miguel is mentioned; a crossed-out section includes Ratia, Carvajal, and Titay Molina) refused to degrade themselves by appearing in a moro-moro; and second, the audience had begun to like Tagalog zarzuelas. Having decided to learn the art of zarzuela singing and acting, the moro-moristas, in the most pointed and theatrically symbolic action in the play, lock their costumes in a chest, on which Colas paints the letters "R.I.P." They proceed to stage a mock funeral procession, and in a final speech Colas tells his actors where they should "bury" this "cadaver": "There in the graveyard of the ancient fury where the enemies of light--those who turned their backs on our nation's progress--have been buried; bury it deep in the hole into which fell the former magnanimity of the friars-turned-traitors, and cover it with healthy forgetfulness." As the curtain falls, everyone intones, "Requiescat in pace."

The production of R.I.P. greatly antagonized the moro-moristas, who stoned every theatre which staged it. Accompanied by a band of musicians, and dressed in their colorful costumes, the moro-moristas paraded on horseback in front of Reyes' house and shouted, "We cannot possibly die!" A dramatic reply came in the form of a play, Kailan ma'y Buhay (Alive Forever) by a kumedya playwright, Juan Bartolome.[96] No copy of this play is extant, but the title alone indicates an outright refutation of Reyes' anti-kumedya play. There is no information on the extent of the controversy between kumedyantes and zarzuelistas at this time, but two years later, in 1904, Isabelo de los Reyes, an avid exponent of Philippine culture, published an essay titled "Ang Comediang Tagalog."[97] Prompted by the dismissal from Severino Reyes' company of actors who reappeared in moro-moro after their training in the zarzuela, Isabelo de los Reyes wrote his essay in defense of the kumedya as the true native drama.

In his essay, de los Reyes argues that although the Spaniards introduced the comedia to the Philippines, it had become the true Tagalog drama, because it now contained the old Filipino ways of life. Drawing upon his personal travels, de los Reyes defended the archaic conventions of the moro-moro: the official march of kings and queens which he had seen in real life; the magical effects which were the

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[96] Isagani R. Cruz, "The Zarzuela in the Philippines," Solidarity, 7, no. 4 (April 1972), p. 77.

[97] Isabelo de los Reyes, Ang Comediang Tagalog ([Manila]: n.p., [1904]). First appeared in the newspaper El Defensor de los Obreros, the official organ of Dr. Dominador Gomez's La Union Obrera Democratica de las Filipinas (see pp. 138-40), issue of August 9, 1904.

current trend in Wagnerian operas and in productions at the Teatro Español in Madrid; and the choreographed battles which were reminiscent of the dances of primitive Filipino tribes. The fantastic occurrences, de los Reyes contends, which are found in mythology and folklore, belong to a specific genre of literature, and those who ridicule these conventions are ignorant. While complimenting the local zarzuela authors for their efforts to create a Filipino zarzuela, de los Reyes believes that the Tagalog zarzuela had departed considerably from its Spanish models. He doubts if these departures were not, in fact, defects: the appearance of a comic character in the middle of a sad scene; the mixture of elevated language and coarse humor; the mixture of operatic and pedestrian music, often stolen from other sources; the use of strange weapons, the recourse to a chorus of nymphs, and other such anachronisms which are more germane to opera and moro-moro than to the zarzuela. The controversy was apparently not resolved; the dismissed actors, upon the advice of Isabelo de los Reyes, filed suit against Severino Reyes, but there is no information on the legal proceedings. Nonetheless, the controversy brought to light the peculiar nature of the native zarzuela: in many ways, it is a version of the kumedya or moro-moro, but at the same time, it is a realistic depiction of domestic Philippine life. This essential combination is exemplified in the zarzuelas of Severino Reyes, Patricio Mariano, Pantaleon Lopez, and Maximino de los Reyes. Severino Reyes' first of eighteen zarzuelas (thirteen written between 1902 and 1912) was a one-act domestic comedy titled Ang Kalupi (The Wallet),[98]

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[98]This analysis is based on undated TS of the original Tagalog text.

with music by Fulgencio Tolentino, performed in 1902 with the anti-moro-moro R.I.P. Scene 1 opens in the living room of a well-to-do household; it is close to midnight. Remedios has been waiting for her husband, Eduardo, who, the maid Kolasa reveals, has been habitually coming home late. Her friend Rosario arrives. For the last three nights, her husband Nicolas has not come home either. Eduardo finally arrives, inebriated. Nonsensical prattle, mixed with snide remarks against in-laws, culminates in a musical quartet sung by Eduardo, Remedios, her mother Juana, and the maid Kolasa.

The following day, Eduardo and his friends, Antonio and Nicolas, return to the house of Kaysha, Kiri-Waysha, and Tiri-Shay--three pretty Japanese geishas. Broken English provides much of the comedy in this scene, which reveals the author's attitude toward the new colonizer's language. After a long drinking bout, they all dance. Juana, Remedios' mother, who has witnessed the end of this spectacle, returns with Remedios and Rosario. They find the three men unconscious on the floor beside the Japanese girls. Remedios takes Eduardo's wallet from a geisha's hand and discovers a pawn ticket for a ring lent to Eduardo by a former mistress, Juanita Sibatin, a friend of Remedios'. With the help of two calesa drivers, Juana takes the three men home. When the men awaken, they discover Remedios, Rosario, and Juana dressed as geishas. Remedios returns Eduardo's wallet, and tells him that she has sent back Juanita's ring. Both husbands beg their wives' forgiveness, and with a Terentian plaudite delivered by Remedios, the play ends.

Ang Kalupi reflects the prevailing mores of Reyes' time, especially the traditional Filipino values in regard to marital duties and

responsibilities. Moreover, the characters provide a realistic picture of a Filipino middle-class family. Remedios, the wronged wife who seeks consolation from the Blessed Virgin and who in the end welcomes her unfaithful husband with open arms, typifies the patient, devout, and forgiving wife. Juana, Remedios' mother, exemplifies the overbearing Filipino mother-in-law, who, with characteristically Filipino humor, engages in harmless flirtation. In a peculiarly Filipino way, Eduardo vindicates his masculinity through the combination of stoic endurance of his mother-in-law, rowdy liaisons with the geishas, genuine concern for his children, and the willingness to admit his faults and to ask his wife's forgiveness. An indispensable member of the Filipino middle-class family, the domestic maid--in this play represented by Kolasa--provides additional humor with the Filipino penchant for slapstick. In these ways, Ang Kalupi manifests the characteristic traits of the native zarzuela found in Ing Managpe. Furthermore, Reyes comments on contemporary situations: the comical use of broken English is an implied attack on the American colonizer and an admonition toward the Filipinos who attempt to speak the language; the unflattering characterization of the geishas reflects the negative attitude of the Filipino middle class toward the Japanese who migrated in great numbers at this time.[99]

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[99]Japanese migrants resided in the Philippines before the Spanish occupation. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, some three thousand Japanese were employed as laborers in the construction of the Walled City (Intramuros) in Manila, and by the end of the Spanish regime, there were an estimated four thousand Japanese residents. The subsequent American occupation encouraged Japanese migration with the construction of the zigzag road to Baguio (the summer capital of the Philippines) in the early 1900s. See Teodoro Agoncillo, The Fateful Years: Japan's Adventure in the Philippines, 1941-1945 (Quezon City: R. P. Garcia Publishing Co., 1965), I, pp. 43-44. Cecil E. Cody, "The

Along with these Filipino features, the preoccupation with marriage and its many tribulations recur in Reyes' subsequent zarzuelas. For example, in Ang Bagong Fausto (The New Faust),[100] a Tagalog zarzuela with music by Crispino Reyes, premiered on November 7, 1904, Reyes domesticizes and Filipinizes the metaphysical dilemma of the Faust story. In this play, Toning, Margarita's mother, becomes an intolerable mother-in-law and prompts Fausto to beg for a speedy passage to hell. To Reyes, it seems, the mother-in-law is a greater evil than the devil; she not only nags Fausto, she drags her daughter to gambling soirees. Typically Filipino reactions and situations constitute the theme and plot of the three-act zarzuela, Huling Pati o Luha ng Puso (The Last Will, or Heart's Tears, 1904)[101] with music by Gabino Carluen. Soledad, the eldest daughter of Antonio and Marta, falls terribly ill when she discovers her mother's illicit affair; Antonio banishes Marta after a delirious Soledad unintentionally reveals her mother's secret; the scandal causes Don Severo to call off Soledad's marriage to Emilio, his son; this motivates Antonio to kill his wife's lover; Antonio as a

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Consolidation of the Japanese in Davao," Comment, Third Quarter (1958), p. 23, gives a much lower estimate of the number of Japanese residents in 1898: less than a hundred. In the first five years of the American occupation, he gives the figure nine hundred twenty-one (four hundred seventy-five men and four hundred sixty-six women ["Amazon laborers"]). He states that the five hundred Filipinos and two hundred Caucasians (in addition to five hundred Chinese) laborers on the zigzag road vehemently protested the importation of Japanese laborers.

[100] Synopsis found in Daria, pp. 326-27. Bañas, p. 226, classifies Ang Bagong Fausto and the next five works discussed on pp. 165 ff. as zarzuelas, and provides the composers' names and dates of production.

[101] Synopsis in Daria, pp. 337-38.

consequence serves a long prison term after a protracted and expensive trial which leaves his children to starve; Emilio marries Soledad after Antonio's release; and finally, as an example of the early modern Filipino playwright's tendency to moralize, the zarzuela closes with an exhortation on wifely fidelity. In Minda Mora, o Minda y Felix (Minda, the Moro Girl, or Minda and Felix, 1904),[102] a three-act zarzuela with music by Juan Hernandez, Reyes dramatizes the Filipino concept of a man's moral responsibility to marry the girl he has impregnated. Current events and the theme of marriage become the basis of a two-act zarzuela titled Filipinas para los filipinos (Filipino Women for Filipino Men, 1905)[103] with music by Jose Estella. Prompted by a bill in the U.S. Congress to prohibit marriage between American women and Filipino men, this zarzuela opposes the reverse: marriage between Filipino women and American men. Furthermore, it manifests a subtle anti-American sentiment in its representation of an American man who reneges on his promise to marry a Filipino woman when his American fiancée confronts him.

Reyes' awareness of actual conditions finds further dramatic expression in two zarzuelas which deal with the then current problems of the theatre in Manila. The two-act Ang Operang Italiana (The Italian Opera, 1906)[104] exposes the common practices of dishonest impressarios, exemplified by Nicanor, who finds himself in a dilemma when the Italian

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[102]Synopsis in Daria, p. 347.

[103]Synopsis in Daria, pp. 332-33.

[104]Synopsis in Daria, pp. 335-36.

opera troupe he has engaged refuses to come to Manila because of a reported cholera epidemic. To save face, he quickly gathers a group of Filipino singers and dressing them up as newly-arrived Italians, presents them to his benefactors, who delight in the "Italian" artists. Clearly, Reyes satirizes not only the impressario, but the patrons as well, who are blinded by their preference for imported culture. A San Lazaro (To Saint Lazarus, 1902 or 1904)[105] is a one-act Tagalog zarzuela with music by Crispino Reyes which parodies contemporary theatre managers, performers, and spectators. Here, Reyes depicts the numerous problems which beset contemporary theatre in Manila: the difficulties in leasing theatres because of unreasonable privileges demanded by theatre owners; theatregoers who refuse to pay the admission prices; theatre agents who cannot distinguish between corridos and dramas; sanitation inspectors who confiscate food sold outside the theatre because they want to eat the food themselves; over-concerned parents who suspect their daughters' profession as actresses; untrained upstarts who demand major roles; and insects which infest local playhouses. In a more serious vein, Reyes satirizes the rampant plagiarism of texts and stage business by rival directors, and their penchant for sermonizing.

Pantaleon Lopez (1872-1912) began his theatrical career as a chorus member of Compañía Fernandez, a position he acquired by bribing the chorus master. His first play was a three-act zarzuela titled Masamang Kaugalian (Bad Habits), with music by a certain Remigio of

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[105]Synopsis in Daria, pp. 327-29.

Pandakan. Supposedly Lopez began to write it in 1895, but the zarzuela did not premiere until January 31, 1901.[106] After Maling Pagsasam-palataya (False Worship, 1901?), he wrote the three-act zarzuela, Ang Infierno (Hell) with music by Hipolito Rivera (first act) and Leon Ignacio (second and third acts), which was first performed on March 7, 1903 at Teatro Libertad. Of twenty plays, fourteen of which are zarzuelas,[107] Ang Infierno became his most popular and most financially successful work.

Ang Infierno[108] deals with the life of Juan, a blacksmith, who works for Don Ricardo. Berated for his poverty by his wife Tarcila, he decides to join a group of thieves. One day Juan returns home and discovers his wife gone, his mother dead, and his baby daughter Juanita uncared for. He leaves his daughter under the care of a thief, and finding his wife at Don Ricardo's house, kills the latter and his mother-in-law. Juan spares his wife, but she dies of shame and remorse. After eighteen years Juan joins his former partners: reformed, they take up farming. Juan falls in love with a neighbor's daughter, who, unbeknown to him, is his own daughter. The night after the wedding, Juan recognizes the scapular he had given his baby daughter. After an apparition of a repentant Tarcila in hell, Juan closes the play with a soliloquy on the sanctity of marriage.

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[106]Manuel, I, p. 255.

[107]Cruz, Short History, pp. 285-86.

[108]Synopsis in Manuel, pp. 255-56.

By implying that the economic inequality between the working class (represented by Juan) and the wealthy upper class (represented by Don Ricardo) causes marital infidelity, theft, murder, the dissolution of a family, and later the anguish that accompanies the reunion of father and daughter, Lopez comments on the social malaise of his time. This social commentary bestows on Ang Infierno a modernity, which, unfortunately, the melodramatic literalness of the hell scene and the obvious moralizing of the ending undercut.[109] Unabated sentimentality and implausible situations characterize the four-act Rosa (proper name, 1902), with music by Leon Ignacio, which received more than a hundred performances in Manila and neighboring Tagalog provinces because of its "husky humor and tragic ending."[110] Among the twenty-odd plays Lopez wrote, at least three depict the social conditions of the time. Tindang Tagalog (Tagalog Products, 1906) advocates the protection and patronage of local stores and products;[111] Asamblea (Assembly, 1907) comments on the inauguration of the First Philippine Assembly: Lopez

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[109] A New York Times reporter, who witnessed a four and a half hour performance of Ang Infierno at the Teatro Angelo in 1903, interpreted the play--perhaps due to a language barrier--as a love triangle involving Juan, Juanita, and her half-sister. In this production, the sister goes insane when Juan chooses Juanita for his wife, and at this juncture, a character (the reporter does not specify who) expounds on the evils of interracial marriage, and declares that foreigners (Americans, to be sure) are all bound for hell. In the third Act, an American minister performs the wedding, and the bride, groom, and minister all wear contemporary American clothes. (New York Times, May 17, 1903, p. 3; also cited in Lapeña-Bonifacio, p. 36.)

[110] Synopsis in Manuel, I, p. 256.

[111] Manuel, p. 257.

reminds the newly-elected legislators that actions speak louder than words;[112] and Ave de Rapiña (Predatory Bird, 1909), which led to Lopez's arrest, is based on a contemporary political event (see pp. 139-140).

Regarded as the "dean of Tagalog playwrights" in his own time,[113] Patricio Mariano (1877-1935)--poet, painter, violinist, revolutionary, and dramatist--served as lieutenant in the cannon brigade of the Philippine army in the latter part of May 1898. After the Revolution, he turned to journalism: he managed the Tagalog section of El Defensor de los Obreros, and later joined the staff of La Vanguardia and Taliba. Mariano introduced contemporary city life as a valid subject matter of early modern Filipino drama; Manila, in fact, was the setting for most of his plays.[114] He proved that drama was possible without the glib people of Bulakan (who are traditionally known to be gifted Tagalog versifiers and orators), or the pithy pronouncements of people from Laguna and Quezon provinces. Mariano's Tagalog was completely idiomatic, and this made Manila a more truthful setting for his plays, which, according to his contemporary, Lope K. Santos, "possess the soul of delicacy, of beauty, and a form bejewelled by art."[115]

Premiered at the Zorrilla on November 17, 1901, Mariano's first play, Ang Sampaguita (name of the national flower) with music by

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[112]Manuel, p. 257.

[113]Javier, p. 4.

[114]Javier, p. 34.

[115]Quoted in Javier, p. 34.

Bonifacio Abdon, presents a distinctly Filipino view of love. The sampaguita flower which Isabel gave her sweetheart Luciano (who has kept it in his wallet) brings them together after circumstances had forced their separation.[116] In the one-act Declaracion de Amor (Declaration of Love) with music by Bonifacio Abdon, staged at the Cine Visayas on May 4, 1903, the realistic characterization of Petra, a Caviteña, who speaks the dialect called Chabacano (a mixture of Tagalog and Spanish), is the source of comedy.[117] Huwag Lang Lugi sa Puhunan (To Break Even; literally, as long as one recovers one's initial investment) is another one-act comic zarzuela with music by Abdon. Premiered at the Rizal Theatre on June 2, 1903, the zarzuela shows the Chinese suitor of Miguela, Sinangko, who lends money to her aunt, Pascuala. Miguela elopes with another man; in order to break even, that is, regain his investment, Sinangko marries the aunt.[118] In Ako'y Iyo Rin (I'm Yours As Well, 1904)[119] with music by Abdon, Mariano interweaves the traditional conflicts between the rich and the poor, pure and impure love, and filial piety and patriotism within a standard romantic plot, which exemplifies the distinctive pathos of the Filipino

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[116] Sebastian, p. 105. I am assuming this to be a zarzuela because Bonifacio Abdon composed the music.

[117] Javier, p. 24.

[118] Synopsis found in Sebastian, p. 107. He gives September 5, 1905 as the date of first production.

[119] Synopsis culled from Nenita Escasa, "Si Patricio Mariano at ang Kasiningan ng Kanyang mga Dula," Philippine Studies, 19, no. 2 (April 1971), 322-23.

sensibility. Having decided to join the Revolution, Alfredo leaves his aging parents in the care of his betrothed, Enriqueta, who was brought up by them. Out of loyalty to Alfredo's parents, Enriqueta consents to marry Manuel, to whom the old couple are heavily indebted financially. The wedding over, Enriqueta prepares to stab herself, whereupon a mortally-wounded Alfredo returns. Despising her at first, Alfredo realizes Enriqueta's unselfish love, and subsequently dies in her bosom. Plunging the knife in her breast, Enriqueta ends the zarzuela. Mariano presents the lighter side of filial loyalty in conflict with the heart's desire in Lihim at Pag-ibig (Secret Loves, 1905?).[120] The secret vow of fidelity between Pepe and Atang, and the unexpressed love of Carlos, Pepe's friend, for Trining, Atang's cousin, lead to a chain of comic events. The complications proceed initially and principally from fear of parental authority, in this zarzuela personified by Mang Rosendo, Atang's father. The basic situation reflects an everyday reality of city life: two boarders from the province, Pepe, a medical student, and Carlos, a law student, fall in love with the daughter and the niece of their landlord. The appearance of a nitwit suitor from the province, Juan Bontottatyaw (literally, John the Cock's Tail), brings the hilarious events to a boisterous climax, and provides occasions for the low and broad humor characteristic of Filipino comedy.

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[120]Synopsis culled from Escasa, pp. 323-24. Literally, the title means "Secrecy and Love," but the plot warrants the looser translation of "Secret Loves." Bañas, p. 235, gives the title as "Lihim ng Pag-ibig" (Love's Secret) and date of first performance as February 9, 1907.

In addition to those already discussed, Mariano wrote seven other zarzuelas between 1904 and 1907.[121] Their titles alone suggest the domestic nature of their subject matter: Marcela (proper name, January 3, 1904), Pangakong Hindi Natupad (Unfulfilled Promise, May 15, 1905), Tio Selo (Uncle Selo, June 5, 1905), Luha't Dugo (Blood and Tears, August 20, 1905), Yayang (proper name, September 5, 1905), Ang Tulisan (The Bandit, February 9, 1907), and Carnaval No. 1 (Carnival No. 1, October 9, 1907).

In his zarzuelas, Mariano draws a picture of early twentieth century Philippine society, particularly that of urban Manila. Authoritarian fathers, obedient sons and daughters, jealous wives, foolish lovers, wealthy masters and impertinent servants (who in their reliance on broad farce are the modern counterparts of the kumedya's graciosos, dressed in modern clothes and speaking in idiomatic Tagalog) --all of these character-types in Mariano's plays are recognizably truer-to-life, i.e., to early twentieth century Philippine life, than the characters of the kumedya or the Spanish genres. Herein lies Patricio Mariano's importance to early modern Filipino drama.

The son of a Tagalog duplero (an author of duplo) and versifier from Bataan province, Maximino de los Reyes (1887-1928) first wrote a moro-moro titled Dorotea (proper name) staged in his hometown in 1900. A three-act Tagalog zarzuela, Pawis ng Dukha (Poor Man's Sweat, n.d.) with music by Gaspar de Arpa was then staged in Manila. After his release from prison for Dahas ng Pilak (Force of Silver, 1904, see

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[121] This number is based on Bañas' list. Javier, "Ang mga Dula ni Patricio Mariano," does not classify Mariano's works discussed in this section as zarzuelas.

page 134), he wrote two one-act Tagalog zarzuelas with music by Bonifacio Abdon. Ang Mag-anak (The Family, n.d.)[122] is a touching story about a boy whose mother misunderstands her son's affection for her father-in-law. Sensing that he is unwelcome, the old man decides to leave. Before he goes, his daughter-in-law hands him a peso. The boy asks to talk to his grandfather; he explains to his mother that he would ask the old man for a peso so that he too would be able to give her something when he sends her away. Realizing her mistake, the woman calls her father-in-law back. The zarzuela is an unpretentious vignette on the close ties of affection that exist within a Filipino family.

In Kundangan (Serves Him Right, n.d.),[123] de los Reyes dramatizes a farcical situation which involves a jealous husband and his quick-thinking servant. The unfounded suspicions of the husband lead him to spy on his wife from a casket which he orders his servant to lock. Unexpectedly, a gang of thieves breaks into the house and runs off with the casket. Pursued by the police (whom the servant apparently summoned), the thieves throw the casket into the river. Fortunately, the servant retrieves the casket before his master drowns. While the latter regretfully mutters in-between his sneezes, the servant brings the curtain down as he says, "Kundangan . . ." (that is to say, serves him right for being so foolishly jealous). The exaggeratedness of the situation gives a distinctly Filipino quality to the humor of this play,

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[122]Synopsis in Manuel, I, p. 387.

[123]Synopsis in Manuel, I, p. 387.

just as the childlike moralism of Ang Mag-anak lends a native touch to the poignancy of the play. In both these zarzuelas, de los Reyes adopts a simplicity of approach which gives his plays a realistic hue.

The Staging of Native Zarzuelas

It is unfortunate that there are no records of actual performances of native zarzuelas, but the stage directions clearly indicate an indoor auditorium, as opposed to the outdoor platform of the kumedya. Significantly, the living room of a middle-class family has become a typical locus for the domestic situations of early modern native zarzuelas. Furthermore, early modern zarzuelistas show a greater concern than pre-modern playwrights, and even some anti-colonialist playwrights, to create a distinctive environment for their characters. Particularity of time is evident, for example, in the opening of Ang Kalupi, where Reyes requires candlelight for the midnight scene, while the description of the setting for Scene 5--"living room of a house inhabited by wayward Japanese women" (underscoring mine)--suggests a concern for a particular atmosphere. Greater still is Soto's concern for specificity of locale in Alang Dios!, which calls for thirteen different "settings." The first and third settings indicate social differentiation. Setting I is a "group of houses on the bank of the Parulug [river]. To the left is a small house of miserable appearance." This is a farmer's humble abode. Setting III is a "richly furnished sala": this is Don Andres' house. A street (most likely achieved with a telon de calle) constitutes four settings. Setting IV displays a sense of realistic localization: "the garden of Don Andres' house.

Laborers are seen busy preparing a pergola for the outdoor entertainment after the wedding. The main staircase of the house leads to the garden." Again in Setting VIII, spatial logic is evident: "door at center leads to the sala, another at the left leads to the room of Ramon and at the right is the door to the stairs of the house." The final setting best exemplifies Soto's penchant for realistic scenic detail: "The room of Maria Luz. The corpse of Maria Luz is seen in a well adorned bed. At the head of a bed is a table with a crucifix illuminated by two lighted candles. Close to the bed is Don Andres, Leonor and Clara. From some distance the doctor looks at the corpse." Apparently aware of the possible adverse effect on the audience of this setting, Soto indicates in the script that this final scene may be omitted at the director's discretion. The absence of scripts or detailed descriptions of the zarzuelas of Lopez, Mariano, Palisoc, and de los Reyes precludes any specific discussion of their stage requirements, but the synopses of their plots reveal the need for a greater particularity of time and place in staging than what the staging of the kumedya demanded.

The Continuity Between the Kumedya and the Native Zarzuela

From the foregoing discussions, it is evident that the modernity of early modern native zarzuelas lies in the distinctive localisms of situation, character, setting, costume, and speech, as opposed to the exotic anachronisms of the kumedyas. Native zarzuelistas retained the looseness of structure characteristic of their Spanish models. Entrances and exits marked the beginning and end of individual scenes, and songs highlighted the emotional peaks. Native playwrights found

this structure convenient; however, convenience often degenerated into contrivance. Without any motivation, characters entered simply to resolve the action or to illustrate a moral lesson. In Soto's Alang Dios! Enrique vehemently renounces his faith, and then just as vehemently reasserts it within the span of three lines. In Reyes' Ang Kalupi, the arrival of Juana at the geisha house is propitious, and as it were, providential, for it paves the way for the reconciliation in the end. In Mariano's Ako'y Iyo Rin, not only does Alfredo return in time to prevent Enriqueta's suicide, he lives just long enough to die in her arms.

The same apparent unconcern for psychological realism has been evident in the discussion of anti-colonialist plays. This quality can perhaps be attributed to the persistence in early modern Filipino drama of the oral tradition, or at least its underlying attitudes, which governed the kumedya. As in the kumedya, the immediate theatrical impact is more important than the internal logic of the play. The aim of the performance is to move, amuse, entertain, and at best, impress the audience with the concrete results, rather than the intellectual implications, of an abstract theme. Maria dies in Alang Dios!: it matters less that her death is unmotivated, than that it is God's punishment. In this distinctively Filipino sense of theatricality, early modern native zarzuelas form a continuity with the indigenous theatrical traditions embodied in the kumedyas.

This continuity is further exemplified in the inherent sensibility reflected by native zarzuelas. The sentiments expressed by the zarzuela characters are as exuberantly romantic as those manifested by the

Christian and Muslim lovers of the kumedyas. Although the zarzuela lovers confront complications that arise from contemporary Philippine circumstances, they are still the suffering lovers of the kumedya. Religion is no longer the principal hindrance to their love's fulfillment, but obstacles remain in the guise of traditional values and social mores, such as the sanction of parental authority, or the moral strictures of folk Catholicism. In place of the mellifluent dodecasyllabic quatrains which became the favored medium of the kumedya, songs and florid prose enabled zarzuela heroes and heroines to express their longings, frustrations, and ecstasies, with the same abandon, as the lovers of the kumedya did.

The synthesis of the indigenous theatrical traditions and the immediacy of early twentieth century living conditions--the former in the theatricality of emotion, song, and spectacle; the latter in the realism of native characters, the vernacular, and external appearances--accounts for the widespread popularity of the early modern native zarzuela, not only in Pampanga, Pangasinan, and the Tagalog provinces, but in other linguistic regions as well. In the Bikol region, Asisclo Tarega Jimenez wrote some two dozen zarzuelas in Bikolano, between the years 1906 and 1910 alone.[124] In the Ilokos region, Mena Pecson Crisologo introduced the genre with the productions of two one-act zarzuelas, Maysa a Candidato (The Candidate) and Codigo Municipal (The Municipal Code) on January 24 and 25, 1908, respectively.[125]

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[124]Cruz, Short History, Appendix D, "A Checklist of Philippine Plays from 1900-1946," p. 282.

[125]Hufana, Pecson and Iloko Drama, p. xx.

in the Bisayan region, the Sugbuhanon zarzuela (Sugbuhanon is the vernacular of Cebu province) became an established form with the works of Vicente Sotto and Piux Kabahar.[126]

Native Zarzuela Companies

The success of early native zarzuelas in Manila and neighboring provinces was in no small measure due to local zarzuela companies and native orchestras. At least three orchestras existed between 1900 and 1913. The Orquesta Molina was organized around 1896, later reorganized in 1904. It played especially for the zarzuelas of Leon Ignacio under the baton of Epimaco Molina. The competitors of the Orquesta Molina were the Orquesta Ilaya founded in 1912, and the Orquesta Oriental, also founded in 1912. The latter was established by Roman Tayag, and directed by Bonifacio Abdon, brother-in-law of Patricio Mariano and composer of the majority of the latter's zarzuelas.

Although the first vernacular zarzuela, Pabalan's Ing Managpe, was performed in 1901 in Pampanga province, the earliest native zarzuela company, the Compañía Geronimo-Ilagan (also known as Samahang Geronimo-Ilagan), was founded in 1900 in Manila. A joint venture by the actress-manager Fabiana Geronimo and playwright-actor-director Hermogenes Ilagan, its first endeavor was Patricio Mariano's play, Ang Sampaguita. Two years later, the company produced Severino Reyes' first two plays, R.I.P. and Ang Kalupi, Juan Abad's Tanikalang Guinto, and in 1903 Aurelio Tolentino's Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas. At some undetermined

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[126]Cruz, "Zarzuela in the Philippines," p. 73.

time before 1903, the partnership dissolved, and the company became Ilagan's sole property.

The Ilagan company reportedly grossed ₱1000 (approximately $142) per performance.[127] Ticket prices were ₱9 ($1.30) for a regular box, ₱18 ($2.57) for a special box, 80 centavos (11 cents) for orchestra seats, and 50 centavos (7 cents) for the gallery. An actor usually received from ₱30 ($4) to ₱50 ($7) a performance; a bit player got from ₱6 (85 cents) to ₱10 ($1.42) a performance; an orchestra of twelve players received ₱45 ($6.42) among them, and the prompter was paid ₱8 ($1.14). Backdrops were rented at ₱60 ($8.59) a night; the theatre cost from ₱80 ($11.42) to ₱100 ($14.28) a night; the composer's royalty was ₱50 ($7.14) a night. The theatres which the Compañía Ilagan patronized were the Zorrilla, the Manila Grand Opera House (at one time called the National Theatre), and the Teatro Royal. In the early years of its existence, Ilagan's company had its own printing press which handled tickets, programs, and handbills. The company died with Ilagan in 1942.

When Severino Reyes decided to combat the popularity of the moro-moro, Ilagan's company was apparently the only zarzuela company in Manila. The fact that only one zarzuela company existed was one reason, Reyes believed, why the kumedya persisted. He therefore organized the Gran Compañía de Zarzuela Tagala; significantly, he employed some moro-moristas whom he had trained in singing and "natural" speech and gesture. From Reyes' company emerged three renowned Tagalog

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[127] Data culled from Rodrigo Perez III, "Hermogenes Ilagan and the Zarzuela," Sunday [Manila] Times Magazine (April 22, 1962), pp. 18-20, 22. The dollar equivalents are based on the current rate of approximately ₱7 to $1.

zarzuela actor-singers: soprano Maria Carpena, a native of Biñan, Laguna, who sang the role of Julia in the original production of Walang Sugat and of Minda in Minda Mora; soprano Estanislawa San Miguel (nicknamed Awang), a native of Baliwag, Bulakan; and the first tenor of the company, Victorino Carrion, who sang the role of Tenyong in Walang Sugat, and co-starred with Carpena in several other zarzuelas, such as Ang Kalupi, Minda Mora, and Filipinas para los filipinos. Little else has been written about this company.

A third Tagalog zarzuela company was the Molina-Benito Company (also called Samahang Zarzuela Molina-Benito), founded in 1903 by "Titay" Molina and Julian Benito, aided by composer Alejo Carluen. Titay herself was the first soprano and stage director of the company, and Julian Benito, acclaimed as a comic-singer-actor, was the first tenor and comic actor. Alejo Carluen was musical director and treasurer. Molina's company was frequently invited to perform during provincial fiestas. For these performances, she charged from ₱200 to ₱300 ($28.57 to $42.85) a performance, plus transportation of cast and orchestra. Molina received ₱10 ($1.42) a performance.

Molina's company could not match the growing popularity of Severino Reyes' company, which proved to be overwhelming competition. She turned her attention to the silent movies, but finally returned to the stage for her last appearance in 1917, in a Tagalog adaptation of the operetta La Mascota.

During the early part of his career, Pantaleon Lopez organized his own dramatic company which featured, among other members, playwrights

Hermogenes Ilagan and Florentino Ballecer.[128] The lead performers received from ₱10 to ₱20 ($1.42 to $2.85) a performance in Lopez's popular works, and from ₱8 to ₱10 ($1.14 to $1.42) in less popular ones. Lopez also rented his zarzuelas to other producers for an honorarium of ₱15 to ₱20 ($2.14 to $2.85) per performance. The net proceeds from gate receipts per performance were ₱200 to ₱300 ($28.57 to $42.85). His wife, Priscila Ignacio, manned the box office. When Ilagan gained prominence, Lopez named his company Ilagan-Lopez; a few years after Ilagan formed his own troupe, Lopez reorganized his company into the Compañía Zarzuela Tagala Makiling. Leon Ignacio, who was sole composer of Lopez's zarzuelas and conductor of the orchestra, joined Ilagan's company. Subsequently, Bonifacio Abdon, Hipolito Rivera, and Alejo Carluen took over the musical direction.

In Pangasinan, Catalino Palisoc had his own company and orchestra, but there is no information on its operations. In Pampanga, Juan Crisostomo Soto headed the Compañía Sabina and its theatre, the Teatro Sabina. In 1901,[129] the then governor of Pampanga province, Ceferino Joven, gathered a group of aficionados (avid amateurs) of the theatrical art and built them a theatre. In this theatre, and with this company, Juan Crisostomo Soto's plays had their first productions. Furthermore, Joven supported a local orchestra, the Orquesta Palma, so-called because all the members came from the Palma family. The Compañía Sabina was an example of a successful community theatre group: the members came from all social classes. The comic actress Maria Gozun

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[128] Manuel, I, p. 258.

[129] Culled from Manuel, pp. 424 ff.

was a tendera (food seller); the Alfaro sisters came from a wealthy family; the son and daughter of the patron sang supporting roles, while a poor girl from San Fernando, Petra Pili, sang heroine parts; Pedro Punsalan, church cantor and painter, and Carlos Peres, a landowner, both played leading roles; Tirso Manubat, a teacher, sang in the chorus, while Soilo Molina, a butcher, played old men's roles. Other members included a dressmaker, a puto (rice cake seller), and a baker.

Food and refreshments were provided during rehearsals, which were usually held at the Teatro Sabina. The theatre, built with adobe stone and sawali (woven split bamboo strips), galvanized iron roofing, and wooden floors, seated one thousand people.[130] It had two sections for general admission, a butaca (orchestra), an orchestra pit, and two proscenium balconies on either side of the raised platform. A special feature of the stage was a deep well dug under center stage for acoustical purposes.[131] Tickets for opening night sold for ₱2 (28 cents) for orchestra seats, ₱15 to ₱20 ($2.14 to $2.85) for balcony boxes, and ₱1 (14 cents) for general admission. Prices were reduced for second night performances.

Wages depended upon box office receipts and the roles played, but on the average, the playwright received ₱100 ($14.28) per production, supporting roles were paid ₱4 (57 cents) a performance, leads received ₱15 ($2.14), and chorus members got ₱3 (42 cents). The actors paid for their own costumes.

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[130]Manuel, p. 426. Manuel believes a thousand is an overestimation.

[131]Javillonar, p. 47.

The season began in October and ended in March, at which time cenaculos (Passion plays) occupied the stage. After Lent, productions continued until June, when the rainy season began.

Early Modern Domestic, Non-musical Plays

The plays of this genre possess little that has not already been discussed under anti-colonialist plays and domestic zarzuelas. In style, they resemble non-musical anti-Spanish or anti-American plays; in subject matter and in their distinct modernity, they are akin to the native zarzuelas which realistically depict the Filipino family, traditional values, sentiments, attitudes, and behavioral patterns. These domestic, non-musical plays were less popular than the zarzuelas; the audience wanted the musical element, and where there was no political diatribe, the realism of domestic situations was not sufficient to draw crowds. Severino Reyes and Patricio Mariano wrote plays of this genre, but the scarce information about them shows little that could add to what has already been said about their zarzuelas. One play merits some discussion because of the social consciousness that the playwright exhibits: Soto's Delia (proper name, n.d.).

A sentimental melodrama in one act, Delia[132] is about two suitors, an adamant father, and an unfortunate daughter who dies at the end. Soto's sympathy for the working class manifests itself more strongly in this one-act play than in his full-length zarzuela, Alang Dios!

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[132]Translation of the original Pampango text is found in Juan Aguas, "A Study of the Life of Juan Crisostomo Soto with special reference to Alang Dios!" M.A. thesis, University of the Philippines, 1955, Appendix C, pp. 1-25.

previously discussed. The first two scenes, in fact, contain propaganda for the working class. Don Claro's daughter, Delia, speaks against class distinction in Scene 2: ". . . while there is class distinction among citizens of the country, they will never unite and work together." In Scene 11, through the servants, Laura and Juan, Soto expresses what appears to be his own social philosophy. Laura defines the problem of the lower classes: "The trouble is that among us poor there are many who don't know just where to fit in." Among the poor, backbiting reigns rather than outright confrontation with the rich. "Too bad," says Juan, because "through such practices, the rich and the poor, the wise and the ignorant, are gradually being separated from each other. The moment they are divided, the people become powerless." Asked where he had learned all this, Juan tells Laura he heard it from the Dominador Gomez's Labor Union meetings. This is the final excursion of the playwright into socialist ideas; the remainder of the play dramatizes Delia's predicament: she wants to locate her mother, whom Don Claro had banished. Manrique, Delia's childhood sweetheart, locates Delia's dying mother, who, in a letter reveals that she was a poor seamstress; for this reason, Claro's parents rejected her. Delia, who had already taken poison (even before she hears Manrique's account) dies. As everyone sighs "Ay!" in unison, the curtain falls.

Was Soto attempting to make his social ideas more palatable to his audience by expressing them within the standard structure of a melodramatic structure? Was he gradually trying to change the dramatic expectations of his audience by giving more substance to a worn-out

love plot, or was he merely indecisive as to the subject matter of his play? Unfortunately, on the basis of one play, whose date of composition or production (if it was staged at all) is unknown, it is difficult to answer these questions.

More unfortunate is the absence of a script or plot synopsis of Aurelio Tolentino's social drama, Bagong Cristo (A New Christ), for which prominent labor leaders at the time awarded him a golden pen after the play's premiere in 1907. Written in three acts and in both a Tagalog and Pampango version, the play depicts the current problems connected with capital and labor relations.[133]

Who were the audiences of anti-colonialist plays, native zarzuelas, and domestic, non-musical plays in the vernacular? To a significant extent, the audience of the plays that have been analyzed determined the nature and shaped the course of early modern Filipino drama. The next section will examine the circumstances which brought the change in values, attitudes, needs, and aspirations of the Filipino audience, insofar as this change gave Filipino drama a new outlook and direction.

The Audience of Early Modern Filipino Drama

During the first decade of the twentieth century, which coincided with the early years of American occupation in the Philippines, there still existed two theatres and two audiences: the elitist theatre with an audience of Americans and their native sympathizers, and the native, "modern" theatre with an audience that, unlike the audience for

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[133]Yumol, "A Critical Study," p. 12.

Spanish zarzuelas in the previous two decades, was not exclusively upper and middle class, and, unlike the audience for the kumedya or moro-moro, was not exclusively of the masses.

The "new" native elite (ilustrados who had cooperated with the Spaniards, and who now shifted their loyalties to the American colonizers) formed the audience for the remnants of Spanish theatre and Italian opera. Together with the local American community, they constituted the audience for English vaudevilles and musical plays. All of these types of theatre flourished concurrently with early modern Filipino plays. The Teatro Zorrilla, formerly the home of Spanish zarzuelas, which ushered in the careers of Yeyeng Fernandez, Jose Carvajal, Nemesio Ratia, Patring Tagaroma, and others in the 'eighties and 'nineties, was now a variety playhouse which presented a wide range of theatrical fare: Spanish zarzuelas and dramas, Italian operas, hypnotists and mesmerists, American potboilers, "Freears's Frivolities,"[134] and plays of Patricio Mariano. One of the biggest theatres built during the early American regime was the National Theatre, converted from a race track in 1900. Here, a professional group, Pollard's Lilliputian Opera Company, which offered musical comedies ranging from Gilbert and Sullivan to mediocrities such as My Friend from India, shared the stage with amateur groups like the Wisconsin Dramatic Club of the U.S. Battleship Wisconsin, which a reviewer hailed as ". . . the

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[134]Advertisement of Teatro Zorrilla, The Manila Cablenews, July 2, 1904, p. 6.

only group of sailors in the world that has ever produced a legitimate play."[135] It was in this theatre, after it had been renamed the Manila Grand Opera House, that in 1907 the First Philippine Assembly was inaugurated. The cultural barrier of pre-modern theatre in the Philippines had not been broken down; it merely changed its identity. An elitist theatre still existed, and it bore the same pretensions to urbanity that three centuries of Spanish colonization had engendered.

Of varied social status and artistic taste, the audience of early modern Filipino drama was part "middle class" and part lower class. Paradoxically, the triumph of the native zarzuela marked the triumph of the artistic values of the native bourgeoisie (that is, the educated class) over those of the uneducated masses, even while the patronage that the masses gave these genres testified to the essential affinities they bore with the kumedya or moro-moro. Nonetheless, the native audience for early modern Filipino drama was responsive to the emotional and intellectual temper of the times. The lower classes saw a vicarious vindication of their sufferings under the Spanish regime, and a release of their frustrations which derived from the American refusal to grant Philippine independence--an act which they considered both as an act of treachery and a continuation of their oppressed social and economic condition. More dramatically significant, they found the portrayal of true-to-life situations and characters appealing--perhaps as appealing as, if not more appealing than, the exotic fantasies of the

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[135]Advertisement of the Manila Grand Opera House, The Manila Cablenews, December 8, 1904, p. 9.

kumedya or moro-moro. The middle-class members, for their part, found satisfaction in the modernity of the zarzuela and non-musical plays and in the progress implied by their realistic, as opposed to the escapist, situations and characters of the kumedya. To them, the kumedya stood for Spanish repression and the ignorance of the Filipinos; it had to be replaced to achieve cultural progress and to deliver the masses from their artistic naiveté. The Spanish origin of the zarzuela did not seem to bother them as much as the implicit colonialism of the kumedya; it was enough that the language, characters, situations, and themes were Filipinized.

With the entry in 1912 of Tagalog films based on zarzuelas and other native literary works, a less demanding form of entertainment enticed the audience who had just become familiar with the new conventions introduced by the native zarzuelas and non-musical plays.[136]

Without the compelling nationalistic outbursts of anti-colonialist plays, which faded after 1904, early modern Filipino drama could not compete, on the basis of the realistic presentation of native characters in native locales, with the silent film, which photographed these people and places. Furthermore, the serialized novel, which had grown in popularity since 1906, offered the native audience a more effortless

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[136]Bañas gives 1897 as the year of the first film showing in the Philippines. However, it was not until 1912 that a native subject matter was used. There is a consensus on this year among Bañas, p. 209; Manuel, II, p. 286; Sebastian, p. 139; and Teodoro Virrey, "Ang Pelikulang Tagalog" ["The Tagalog Cinema"], Publications of the Institute of National Language, 4, no. 11 (December 1938), p. 22.

form of pleasure: instead of going to the theatre, they could read published stories in the comfort of their own homes. Equally unfortunate for the drama, theatre companies produced exclusively the plays of their resident playwrights. With little promise of remuneration for playwriting and little chance of getting their plays produced, native writers understandably wrote more novels and fewer plays, or else wrote bad plays which in turn few people cared to see. Thus, 1912 conveniently marks a new phase in the history of modern Filipino drama. During the subsequent two decades, early modern Filipino plays, specifically native zarzuelas, would become, together with the kumedya, the traditional drama of the Philippines.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has described the factors which contributed to the emergence of modern Filipino drama and the characteristics of its early manifestations. It has also discussed how the impetus of the Revolution helped shape early modern Filipino plays, and how these plays embody the dramatic and theatrical traditions, both indigenous and foreign, which flourished before the Revolution.

The factors which led to the emergence of modern Filipino drama were political, social, cultural, and both dramatic and theatrical. Politically, the growth of Philippine nationalism in the latter half of the nineteenth century influenced the birth of modern Filipino drama. More specifically, the literature of the Propaganda Movement--an organization established by a handful of ilustrados, a group of disaffected native intellectuals who attempted to obtain reforms in the Spanish colonial government--initiated a nationalistic tradition in Philippine literature. The entire literary output of the Propagandists strove to articulate a national identity, while at the same time it expressed a criticism of Spanish colonial policy, a demand for legal equality, and a defense of native culture. To this tradition belonged the earliest manifestations of modern drama in the Philippines: anti-colonialist plays. Socially and culturally, the birth of modern Filipino drama was influenced by the native bourgeoisie, who with the hereditary upper class or principalía, made up the native elite. The

desire of this elite to attain urbanity in the Spanish manner, along with their economic prosperity, led them to look down upon the native theatre, specifically the kumedya, and caused them to patronize imported Spanish plays and other foreign entertainments. Dramatically and theatrically, the bourgeois theatre in Manila contributed most directly to the emergence of modern Filipino drama. Literary societies, founded as early as 1844, sought to maintain theatrical activity in Manila, either by introducing late nineteenth century Spanish dramas or by providing incentives to local playwrights to write in the Spanish manner. The continual construction of indoor theatres equipped to mount illusionistic scenery, which was the mode at the time, not only made possible the productions of nineteenth century Spanish and other foreign genres in the representational style such genres required, these theatres also created a concrete theatrical alternative to the presentational style of the kumedya. The arrival of Spanish and other foreign theatrical artists not only provided professional expertise, these artists were also instrumental in introducing the current trends, styles, staging techniques, and dramatic genres, notably the Spanish zarzuela. With the imported Spanish zarzuelas, romantic dramas, bourgeois comedies, and Italian operas, Spanish plays written and staged in the Philippines in the latter half of the nineteenth century comprise the corpus of Western-style drama which in the twentieth century, early modern Filipino playwrights would consider "modern." Equally important, native actors who were born in the 1880's and were trained in the nineteenth century representational style of performance infused elements of the native sensibility into their performances of Spanish

plays and thereby provided a transition from the Spanish zarzuela to the native zarzuela.

These factors achieved their maximal impact during the Revolution against Spain in 1896 and the subsequent American occupation in 1898. Engendered by the ilustrados who belonged to the middle class, nationalism culminated in a bloody uprishing by the masses. Almost immediately, nationalism was once again stifled, this time by the imposition of American sovereignty. Physical devastation, social demoralization, and cultural disorientation accompanied the first phase of Revolution (1896-1897), the Philippine repercussions of the Spanish-American War (1898), the Philippine-American War (or Insurrection, 1899), and the prolonged guerrilla warfare which lasted beyond the declaration of amnesty in 1902 until 1906. These conditions were aggravated by the atmosphere of racism, the suppression of nationalistic expression, and the imposition of American values and of English as the medium of instruction. Within this social, political, and cultural milieu, modern Filipino drama developed.

The early manifestations of this drama included anti-colonialist plays, native domestic zarzuelas, and domestic, non-musical plays--all in the vernacular. Initially anti-Spanish, and then anti-American, anti-colonialist plays expressed dramatically the same nationalistic impulses which had inspired the Propagandists in the 1880's, had motivated the Revolution in 1896, and had sustained Filipino resistance to American sovereignty during the first decade of the twentieth century. Of the anti-colonialist plays examined, three resort to allegory in their dramatization of colonial subjugation and the eventual liberation of

the colonized people: Malaya (The Free One), Tanikalang Guinto (The Golden Chain), and Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas (Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow). All three use versified dialogue, and are non-musical. The other plays, both non-musical and musical (zarzuelas), employ prose vernacular, and they depict on a literal rather than allegorical level the conflict between the colonizer and the colonized. All of the anti-colonialist plays, however, contain native characters and suggest, in their stage directions and in their actual staging, illusionistic scenery representative of Philippine locales.

Whereas theme constitutes the distinctive modernity of anti-colonialist plays, the distinctive modernity of native, domestic zarzuelas resides in the dramatization of everyday experiences, conflicts, and sentiments of Filipinos confronted by and confronting local problems, problems which are especially relevant to a new nation. In domestic zarzuelas, the Filipino family provides the framework of the action. Within the setting of early twentieth century Philippine society, Filipino characters interact and replace Spanish characters in foreign locales. Despite borrowed plots, borrowed music, and unvarying complications, domestic zarzuelas dramatize situations and depict characters, locales, and costumes which are distinct from the exotic anachronisms of the kumedyas. Apart from the music, of course, the same characteristics constitute the modernity of domestic, non-musical plays.

The examination of early modern plays leads to two major conclusions: first, the impetus of the Revolution contributed largely to the emergence of modern Filipino drama; second, the early manifestations of this drama embody both indigenous and foreign dramatic and theatrical

traditions which flourished before the Revolution. As to the former, the Revolution contributed a nationalistic subject matter which took two forms. One was decidedly political in nature: anti-colonialist. The other was domestic in nature: themes which dealt with such problems of a newly-born nation as national progress, the Filipinization of trade, the evils of intermarriage with foreigners, and the persistent tribulations of young lovers. By ending Spanish restrictions, the Revolution enabled native writers, playwrights in particular, to deal with other than the religious subjects. Thus, the earliest manifestations of modern Filipino drama were anti-Spanish plays. Nationalism also motivated early modern native playwrights to Filipinize the native drama by using native characters in native dress, Philippine settings, and local situations. Likewise, the Revolution contributed to the creation of a native, modern genre: the vernacular zarzuela. The first example of a native zarzuela, Ing Managpe (The Patcher, written in Capampangan) was intended to elevate the vernacular to the prestige of the Spanish language. The fact that the zarzuela was a Spanish genre obviously did not bother the playwrights: in fact, their conception of modern drama included song and dance as well as prose dialogue. Finally, the Revolution helped to create new audiences. It broke down the elitist barrier which prevented the masses, because of their lack of education, from gaining access to the Spanish dramas. After the Revolution, the segment of the native middle class who were partisan to the revolutionary cause--among them the native playwrights--formed, with the native masses, who heretofore had only the kumedya within their reach, a new audience, part middle class and part lower class, for early modern plays in the vernacular.

Furthermore, the analyses of anti-colonialist plays, native domestic zarzuelas, and domestic, non-musical plays attest to the persistence of prerevolutionary dramatic and theatrical traditions. The indigenous traditions are found in a serio-comic treatment of subject matter, a tendency toward melodramatic and farcical devices, an exaggerated emotional elocution, a florid prose style, a primacy of emotion over theme, a lack of concern for motivation of character, and a looseness of construction. All these characteristics exemplify the continuity of indigenous traditions embodied in the kumedya. Although the costumes, settings, speech--no longer exotic and alien--have all become native and "realistic," early modern Filipino plays are still characterized by didacticism, naive symbolism, luxuriant emotionalism, and melodious dialogue; by a combination of song, dance, and gaudy spectacle; and by a juxtaposition of serious and comic, sublime and vulgar. The foreign traditions include the use of prose, particularly in the rhetorical anti-colonialist plays, whose central feature is the incendiary speeches directed against the Spaniards or the Americans. Native zarzuelas retain the structure characteristic of their Spanish models: the entrance or exit of a character determine the beginning or end of scenes, and songs highlight the emotional climaxes. Moreover, the staging conventions derive from foreign sources: unlike the outdoor, bare platform of the kumedya, the stage of early modern Filipino plays utilize the wing-and-drop scenery characteristic of representational stages of the nineteenth century.

Despite these derivations, however, early modern Filipino plays were synthetic and unified. Like the interaction of indigenous elements

(from pre-Hispanic rituals) and Spanish elements (from comedias, entremeses, and loas written by the Spanish missionaries), which culminated in the kumedya, the combination of indigenous and foreign dramatic and theatrical traditions in early modern Filipino drama was an acculturative process. In the final analysis, the resultant dramatic form expressed the language, situations, ideals, aspirations, sentiments, class conflicts, moral and social values, artistic tastes, and nationalistic pride of the Filipinos. Despite their dramaturgical shortcomings, early modern Filipino plays offered their audiences an alternative to the fantastic, escapist, and thoroughly romantic outlook of the kumedya: that of a realistic, though perhaps feeble, confrontation with the actualities of Philippines society at the turn of the twentieth century.

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