PASYON AND REVOLUTION
Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840–1910
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CHAPTER 3

Tradition and Revolt: The Katipunan

The armed uprising against Spain in 1896 was initiated by a secret society called Kataastaasan Kagalanggalang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan (The Highest and Most Honorable Society of the Sons of the Country). The flame of rebellion that began in the outskirts of Manila spread quickly throughout the countryside of central and southern Luzon, as Katipunan chapters and other groups concertedely turned against the symbols and representatives of Spanish rule. It was during this time that the Cofradia based at Mount San Cristobal underwent a tremendous expansion. It attracted many, predominantly peasants, who had fled to the mountains and forests of southern Luzon in order to escape the bloody reprisals being inflicted by the Spanish army upon the populace at large. The Colorum Society, as the brotherhood came to be called, soon became involved in the revolution largely through the efforts of a pastor (pator) named Sebastian Canoe, a native of Taal, Batangas, who later settled in San Pablo, Laguna. He was primarily responsible for interpreting separation from Spain as a sign that the world was about to undergo a substantive change, for which his brotherhood must prepare through prayer and participation in the struggle.

1. The word "colorum" seems to have been derived from the phrase "per omnia saecula saeculorum," with which the Cofradia ended its prayers. "Colorum" also means, in contemporary Philippine usage, any unlicensed property or business. This reflects to a certain extent today's popular image of these religious groups. (See Milagros Guerrero, "The Colorum Uprisings: 1924-1931," Asian Studies 3 (April 1967): 65.)
According to Santiago Alvarez, a prominent Katipunan leader who provides us with the bulk of information about the Colorum participation in the revolt, the prominence of Caneo resulted from a miracle that occurred in the hills of eastern Cavite. It was then a time of drought when, all of a sudden, a spring of water began to flow from a crack on a dry mountain top. Caneo first saw it as he was walking, and out of surprise or fear fell on his knees and prayed. The people who happened to be nearby all knelt with awe at the miracle. Soon the word spread around that Caneo was a prophet whose devoutness and concern for his fellowmen in thirst caused God to respond with the miracle. From that time on people began to gather about Caneo, not only because of the sign but also because of his "gentle and good manners." He instructed them on the ways of leading a pure and devout life, and informed them of the cult center at Banahaw where the sage prophet, Agripino Lontok, lived as a hermit.

Caneo perceived that the Katipunan revolt against Spain was a sign of an approaching cataclysm that would bring about the fulfillment of the faithful’s hopes. But the brotherhood was not going to stand aside while the divine plan for the world unfolded itself. Man had to participate in the process. For Caneo this meant that the kapatid (brothers) must strengthen themselves through prayer and join the revolt against Spain. Thus, he called upon his assistants, Juan Magdalo and Eligio Dius-Diusan, to gather as many of the brethren as possible in preparation for the struggle for kalayaan (liberty). He told them that according to the Santong Bocos (Holy Voice), with whom he communicated in the caves of Banahaw, the Spaniards would be forced to surrender without a fight by means of the following strategy: They would all march to the Spanish garrison at Tayabas, the provincial capital, each of them bearing a piece of rope, about a yard long, tied around their waists. As they approached the cuartel of the guardia civil, they would throw these pieces of rope at the Spaniards, who would be miraculously tied up. Their real weapon would be intense prayer. Caneo announced his plan to the sage, Agripino Lontok, who gave his blessing to Caneo saying that, indeed, everything should be done for the defense of the country’s kalayaan, and that through prayer their victory would be assured by God.

Caneo’s assistant, Juan Magdalo, wrote to all the pastors in the vicinity, asking them to gather all the brethren, men and women alike, at the foot of Banahaw. Before about five thousand people who were immediately assembled, Juan Magdalo announced that they had been commanded by the Santong Bocos to fight for their country’s kalayaan and that their strongest weapon would be prayer. He then outlined their battle plan, particularly the manner in which the ropes were to be thrown. Obviously it was to be a ritualistic movement, involving great bodily control.

At the dawn of 24 June 1897, a huge procession of men, women and children, all praying in unison and carrying lighted candles, entered the town of Tayabas. The older pilgrims wore long white robes, similar to the attire of Christ’s apostles. In the middle of the procession was a caña (a platform upon which a saint’s statue is borne during processions) on which stood Juan Magdalo dressed in the attire of John the Baptist. As they neared the soldiers’ quarters, the guardia civil opened fire upon seeing the devotees reach for the ropes around their waists. At the first volley, scores of men and women of all ages fell dead or wounded. The devotees broke from their ranks and fled in the direction their leader, Juan Magdalo, was running.

When Sebastian Caneo brought up the subject of the massacre before the Santong Bocos on the mountain, the reply was: “They did not have enough faith (lalang ng pagpapalataya) and during the time of battle those who died or sustained wounds had failed to utter my name.” When Caneo repeated these words to the kapatid, they regained their serenity. Alvarez notes that “this explanation was sufficient, and all were happy with the continuation of their devotions (sampalataya), without even feeling sadness and loss at the death of their brothers, spouses, children or parents.” They brought candles which they strung along the banks of a deep stream, on the slopes of the mountain, believing that the souls of the departed pass through there on their way to heaven.

The entry into Tayabas appears to have been the only occasion in which the Colorum fought as a group during the war against Spain. Nevertheless, as Alvarez and Artemio Ricarte point out, the brotherhood was always ready to aid Katipunan fighters who came for help and protection. The cult center at Mount San Cristobal had been transformed into a patriotic shrine by mid-1897, at the latest. Patriotic martyrs like Fr. Jose Burgos and Jose Rizal were said to be living there, apparently to render prophetic advice to pilgrims.

Agoncillo views the Colorum fiesta of 1897 as no more than “an interesting sidelight” to the real struggle going on elsewhere. He concludes that “this painful experience taught the Colorum a lesson: henceforth, they were not to

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4. See also chapter 2, p. 62, which describes the Cafadía of 1891 as going to battle “dancing.” Such control of external movement reflects the firm control of sibod that has been attained through prayer. This is consistent with the notion, expressed in various parts of this study, that no discontinuity exists between external appearance and internal states of being.


6. Telesforo Canseco, "Historia de la Insurrección Filipina en Cavite" (1897), Archivo de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario, p. 98 (page reference is to the typescript in the Ateneo de Manila’s Rizal Library).
concern themselves with the revolution but instead contribute in kind to the
rebels as their patriotic duty.7 Sturtevant surprisingly ignores this event
altogether, perhaps because it blurs the distinction he makes between the
revolution (a "Great Tradition" phenomenon) and messianic movements (a
"Little Tradition" phenomenon).8 Actually, the incident of 1897 is a manifesta-
tion of how the revolution, in its Katipunan phase, was perceived from
below. Santiago Alvarez, in his account, hardly regards the Colorum as a
curiosity. In fact, he notes that, with the exception of the brotherhood's unique
rituals and devotions, it was "just like the Katipunan of the Sons of the People
at the time brotherly love had not been dissolved.9 This is a key statement,
which not only connects the Cofradía and the Katipunan but almost makes a
distinction between two phases of the revolution characterized by the
presence and absence of brotherly love. By seeing the Katipunan as only one of
many types of brotherhoods that Filipinos from all walks of life were attracted
to join, and by asking ourselves what part these brotherhoods played in the
interpretation of everyday experience, we may begin to assess the real impact
of the revolution upon the masses.

Unfortunately, rather than attempt to describe the revolutionary experi-
ence, scholars have chosen to focus on the evolution of the struggle from its
Katipunan, or secret society, stage to various stages of revolutionary govern-
ment culminating, in 1898, in a constitutional republic. By positing, at the
outset, that the Filipino people had a common goal—indeed—scholars
have simplified the problems of the revolution, reducing them to personality
difference, regional differences, military weakness, corruption, and the like.
The execution of the Katipunan's founder, Andres Bonifacio by Emilio Agu-
naldlo and other prominent Cavite leaders, for instance, is "explained away" by
the argument that, although both Bonifacio and Aguinaldo sought the same
goal—independence—one or the other had to be cast aside for the sake of
revolutionary unity. Bonifacio's execution is taken as a sign that the "secret
society" phase of the revolution had given way to a more progressive "national"
movement led by a more capable military leader, Aguinaldo. But is it true that
progress had taken place simply because of the use of more sophisticated
political language and forms by a few men in power? Have we bothered to
investigate what those who joined the Katipunan or even the Cofradía de San
Jose and the Colorum, were trying to voice out regarding the shape of the
society they wanted to create? Perhaps there is more in Bonifacio than the
rabblerouser and frustrated leader.

A serious obstacle to a contemporary understanding of the Katipunan is the
established view that the rise of nationalism culminating in the revolution of
1896-1900 was purely a consequence of heightened Westernization in the
nineteenth century. The general argument is that the rise of liberalism in Spain
and the opening up of key Philippine cities to world trade encouraged the
formation of a well-to-do native and mestizo class that could afford to send its
son to Europe, Hongkong, Singapore, and Japan to study. It was only during
their stay abroad that these young, educated Filipinos, called "ilustrados,"
realized what freedom meant. To quote a respected scholar, "they learned
languages, read history, discussed politics and joined the lodges of freem-
asonry. Most important of all was their discovery that they, as Filipinos, were
not inferior to other peoples, certainly not to Spaniards.10 This heightened
consciousness led to the dissolution of the "aura of authority and the halo of
grace" that had bound Filipinos to the colonial order. Realizing such injustices
done to them, as forced labor, taxes, and inequality before the law, the
ilustrados began to wage a propaganda campaign aimed to make Filipinos and
Spaniards equal within the existing colonial framework; they wanted reforms,
not independence. In spite of their limited aims, however, the ilustrados are
credited with having first conceived of a Filipino national community.

Thus, the fact that a self-educated, lower-middle-class clerk named Andres
Bonifacio founded the Katipunan in 1892, is excessively attributed to the
influence of ilustrados like Del Pilar and Rizal. Furthermore, Bonifacio's
movement is placed in an evolutionary framework: since the ilustrado efforts
at reform were constantly frustrated, the time had come for a complete break
with Spain by means of armed revolution. It is emphasized that Bonifacio,
though not an ilustrado, was nevertheless well-read on Rizal's works, and on
such topics as the French revolution and the lives of United States presidents.
These things considered, however, no one has seriously asked why the
revolutionary impulse had to start "from below." Nor have the Tagalog
writings of Katipunan leaders and other documents of the period been viewed
beyond their obviously patriotic content, as the articulation of folk perceptions
of change. The acceptance of the independence ideal by the masses has been
interpreted in terms of the vertical patron-client ties that link the lower and
upper classes of society. Thus, a discontinuity exists, in our present under-
standing of the revolution, between "folk traditions" and the liberal ideas of
the nineteenth century that are said to have triggered aspirations for change.11

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7 Teodoro A. Agoncillo, The Revolt of the Masses (Quezon City: University of the Philippines,
1956), pp. 194-96.
8 David Sturtevant, "Guardia de Honor: Revitalization Within the Revolution," Asian Studies
collection of the best work on the ilustrados in Europe is John N. Schumacher, S.J., The Propa-
11 That the events of the revolution have not been interpreted in terms of traditional ideas can
perhaps be traced to the social and cultural background of Filipino scholars. Bred in the intellectual
milieu of Philippine universities, they have unconsciously inherited the nationalist and revolution-
fact, very rarely are folk traditions referred to except as political, manipulative
devices to gain mass support for the movement. Some even see the concept
of a secret society and the “bizarre” initiation rites of the Katipunan as
totally Masonic in origin. Little has been done to alter or amplify the observations of
a Spaniard in 1897 that the masses responded to the revolutionary call with
intense resolve because of their volatile character, their “propensity toward
the portentious,” their “blind obedience” to their patrons, their “stoicism in
the manner of the fakirs,” and their susceptibility to the rule of their superstitious
imagination. In other words, the majority of those who fought in the
revolution are regarded as essentially passive beings suddenly mobilized into
action by “blind obedience” to patrons or supernatural forces.

That the “poor and ignorant” masses who swelled the ranks of the Katipunan
had certain ideas about the world and their places in it, ideas quite
different from those of the “better classes” of society, is hinted at by Isobel de
los Reyes in statements based on interviews of hundreds of Katipuneros in
1898. “It would seem,” he says, “that the Katipunan was an association to be
feared, because it was composed of common ignorant people, yet although
the plebeian thinks little, for this little he will die before giving it up.” Later on,
De los Reyes says the same thing more emphatically:

I have said, and I will repeat a thousand times, that the Katipunan was a plebeian
society; that is certain. But never have I wished to say that it was insignificant; on
the contrary, the people speak little and perhaps think little, and I wish to say,
perhaps without the artificial complication of a cultivated intelligence, but the
little they think is intense, forms their second nature, and that which they believe
is their faith, is fanaticism in them and works miracles, moves mountains, creates
new worlds and other prodigies.

Unfortunately, De los Reyes does not elaborate upon what the intensely held
ideas of the masses were. But he does assert outright that “the limit of the
aspirations of the Katipunan was a communist republic,” and that the masses
had great faith in the Katipunan’s triumph which would bring about a
“community of property,” a “brilliant future . . . in an atmosphere of liberty and
general happiness, based on honourable work for all.” These are socialist
ideas, to be sure; and it might be argued that De los Reyes’s radical sympathies,
which he himself admits to, colored his interpretation of the Katipunan. But
he insists that his conclusions are based on what “the thousand and one”
Katipuneros confided to him. In the absence of De los Reyes’s original
interviews, is there a way of reconstructing the masses’ perceptions of the
Katipunan and their role in it?

If we cease, for the moment, to regard the Katipunan as a radically unique
phenomenon or as the mere creation of individuals like Bonifacio and Jacinto,
then we can begin to examine its roots in Philippine society and culture. We
can begin to discover continuities in the form and language of movements
before and after it. One perceptive Spanish observer of the Katipunan seemed
to find little difference in the behavior of leaders and followers of past and
present revolts:

If you put Diego Silang in Andres Bonifacio’s place, Juan de la Cruz Palarris in
Emilio Aguinaldo’s place, Juan Marañac in Mariano Llanera’s place, you would
find in them the same personalities, the same obscure caciques of old, using the
same methods to attract and sustain a following. Apolinario enrolled them in the
cofradia of St. Joseph; the present chiefs enroll the people in the Katipunan
brotherhood. Diego Silang called himself a petty chief (cabah) of Jesus Nazareno;
Emilio Aguinaldo appropriated the title of special agent of God for the liberty of
his brothers.

There was also a difference, of course. We have to examine carefully the sense
in which these movements are all the same or continuous, and where the
Katipunan strikes a new chord. There had been katipunans, or associations,
prior to the Katipunan, and many continued to flourish independently during
the revolution. There were friar-sponsored groups like the Katipunan nang
Sagrada Familia (Katipunan of the Holy Family), the Guardia de Honor de
Maria (Guards of Honor of Mary), and the Katipunan nang Laging Pase-
estación (Katipunan Devoted to the Stations of the Cross), not to mention the
countless sodalities in the towns. Others were purely native and antiestablishment,
like the Gabinista, the Colorum and remontado hill communities. In
order to mobilize large numbers of Filipinos, the revolutionary Katipunan had to
speak the common language of katipunans, tap the undercurrent of popular

14. Ibid.
15. Caro y Mora, La Situación, p. 13. Silang and Palarris were eighteenth-century rebels in the
Ilocos and Pangasinan regions. Llanera was a Katipunan leader from Nueva Ecija province.
16. The Guardia de Honor, Gabinista and remontado groups are examined in later chapters.
See B.P. Gregorio Azagra, Martial Casaypayan nga Katipunan nang laging Paseestación
(Manila, 1894), for an interesting use of payser language to define a conservative, religious
Katipunan.
expectations and hopes, and channel the people’s energies toward achieving independence from Spain.

Katipunan Manifesto

One way to understand the swift spread of the Katipunan society in 1896 is to examine the contents of the one and only issue of its organ, Kalayaan, that was disseminated among the populace of central and southern Luzon. Only about one thousand copies were printed, but these were passed from hand to hand. Pío Valenzuela, one of the organizers of the Katipunan, says that around the end of March 1896, when copies of Kalayaan had been distributed over a fairly wide area, “hundreds of people nightly joined the Katipunan in the municipalities of San Juan del Monte, San Felipe Neri, Pasig, Pateros, Marikina, Caloocan, Malabon, and other places.” Bonifacio himself was surprised at the rapid growth of the society. From the time he had founded it in 1892 to the appearance of Kalayaan in January 1896, it had only some three hundred members. But from the middle of March to the outbreak of hostilities against Spain in August 1896, its membership rose sharply to 30,000. Valenzuela attributes the sharp rise in membership to “the effect of the periodical on the people.”

The most important item in the Kalayaan issue is Bonifacio’s manifesto, “Ang Daapat Mahatid ng mga Tagalog” (What the Tagalogs Should Know). Its importance stems from the fact that it places the struggle for independence in a framework of meaning which is “traditional.” In the first three paragraphs, Bonifacio interprets the past, beginning with an account of the “Fall” of the Tagalog race:

Rizal, in his annotations to Morga’s Sucesos de les Islas Filipinas (1609), had pointed out that an indigenous civilization flourished in the archipelago before the arrival of the Spaniards, and it has rightly been assumed by historians of the revolution that Bonifacio’s manifesto was inspired by the writings of ilustrados like Rizal. What we are calling attention to is not the historical content of Bonifacio’s work but its form and language. Whether Bonifacio was a Mason or a Catholic is irrelevant here; to communicate what he regarded as a matter of sublime importance to each Filipino, he used the form that traditionally conveyed such matters—the pasyon form.

To begin with, Bonifacio uses the words kasaganaan (root word: segana) and kaginhawaan (root word: ginibaan), to describe the pre-Spanish situation. These are common attributes of paradise. The word ginibaan connotes, besides “prosperity,” a general ease of life, relief from pain, sickness or difficulties. Furthermore, the Tagalogs, he writes, could read and write, and thus had knowledge, just as Adam and Eve could name all the plants and animals in paradise. The mention of good relations and trade with the neighbors of Katagalugan further defines the condition of wholeness of the pre-Spanish past.

Then the Spaniards arrived, offering increased prosperity and knowledge if the Tagalogs would ally with them. Any reader of the manifesto would immediately think in terms of the pasyon story, particularly when Bonifacio says that the leaders of Katagalugan “became seduced by the sweetness of such enticing words.” For in the pasyon the delightful existence of Adam and
Eve begins to fall apart precisely when Eve, because of her “weak mind,” succumbs to the words of the serpent. The serpent’s words, however, are not a true reflection of his loób, which is “always in confusion and turmoil” because of envy (8:3). The serpent’s description matches that of the Spanish friars in Katipunan documents. The Tagalogs accepted the offer of union, of “genuine and wholehearted sincerity” symbolized by the blood compact between Sikatuna and Legaspi. Only later did they realize that the outward appearance of the Spaniards did not match their true intention. The mutual, or dyadic, relationship that had been established was false. Bonifacio dwells on its implications:

Buhat ng ito’y mangyari ay bumihilang na ngayon sa tatlong daang tao mahigpit na ang lahi ni Legaspi ay ating binubuhay sa lubos na kasaganaan, ating pinigatamasa at binubusog, kahit abotin natin ang kasalatan at kadayukanan; iguntingugol natin ang yaman dugo at sampu ng tumay na mga kabilayan na aayaw punmag na sa kani'n pasilip, at gayon din nanan naki-pagbaka tuyo sa mga Ynok at tuga Holanda ng nagulagang umagaw sa kanila nitong katagalunan.

Ngayon sa halat ng ito'y ano ang sa mga guinhawa nating paggugugol naki-tang kaguardahan ibinigay sa ating Bayan? Ano ang nakikita nating pagtapat sa kanilang kapangyarihan na sang naging dahil ng ating paggugugol? Walang di pwang katakasian ang ganti sa ating mga pagpapala at mga pagtapat sa kanilang ipinangakakong tayo’y lalung guingusining sa kagalingan ay bagkus tayong ibinuhay, inihawa tayo sa kanilang hamak na asil, pinilit na sinira ang mahal at magundang uali ng ating Bayan; Ynimulat tayo sa isang maling pagpumapataya at isanlak sa lubak ng kasasama ang kapuruan ng ating Bayan; at kung tayo’y mangahas humingi ng kahit gabahihing nag-lingap, nag-auguguan kasugatan ay ang tayo’y itapon at ilayo sa piling ng ating minamahal na anak, asawa at matandang magulang. Ang hawag isang himukot na pumulsa sa ating dibdib ay inuturing na isang malaking pagkakasala at karakarangal nitapatan ng sa hayop na kabangisan.

Since then, for three hundred years, we have been giving a most prosperous life to the race of Legaspi, we have let them enjoy abundance and fatten themselves, even if we ourselves were deprived and hungry. We have wasted our wealth and blood in defending them even against our own countrymen who refused to submit to their rule; and we have fought the Chinese and Hollanders who tried to take Katagalungan from them.

Now, after all this, what prosperity [binahawa] have they given to our land? Do we see them fulfilling their side of the contract which we ourselves fulfilled with sacrifices? We see nothing but treachery as a reward for our favors; as their fulfillment of the promise to awaken us to a better life, they have only blinded us more, contaminating us with their lowly behavior, forcibly destroying the good customs of our land. They have awakened us to false beliefs, and have cast into a mere the honor [puri] of our land. And if we beg for scraps of compassion, their reply is banishment and separation from our beloved children, spouses, and parents. Every sigh we utter is branded by them a great sin and punished with inhuman cruelty.

In the first place, the Tagalogs are said to have fulfilled their obligations to the Spaniards. But the Spaniards, declares Bonifacio, have refused to honor the pact; they have incurred a heavy debt (cutang) to the Filipinos which they “pay” in the form of treachery (katabasihan). In a society whose smooth functioning hinges a lot upon honor and reciprocity, such treachery on Spain’s part is disruptive; the world of the Tagalogs is disjointed and confused. The “fall” of the Tagalog is expressed in terms of increasing blindness or absence of liwanag. This condition precisely has enabled the people to accept for so long an inauthentic relationship that has reduced them to “lowly behavior” and dishonor. They have failed to respond to a sign of lingap (compassionate care), even when the Tagalogs in their suffering beg for it. Because there is no love, compassion and honor, the conditions are present for the breaking of the relationship.

The next paragraph begins with a continued description of the effects of Spain’s inability to have compassion and her increasing cruelty to the Tagalogs. There is much weeping and wailing in the land from orphans, widows, and parents bereft of their children: “Now we are drowning in the flood of tears from mothers whose children’s lives have ended, and orphans crying for their parents.” Bonifacio’s description of the pain and hardships of the people is reminiscent of the lengthy pasyon passages describing not only the suffering Christ but also of those like his mother, Mary, who participated in Christ’s experience. The description of hardship and weeping in the pasyon is meant to evoke, from the reader or listener, compassion and damay, signs of response and change in the loób. In similar fashion, Bonifacio dwells on the language of suffering and oppression and then, having “softened” the loób of his audience, shifts in midparagraph to a discussion of the changes that must take place:

Ano ang nararapat nating gawin? Ang araw ng katuiran na sumisikat sa Silangan, ay malinaw na itinuturo sa ating mga matang malaong nabuhagan ang landas na dapat nating tunghin, ang liwanag niya’y tanaw sa ating mga mata, ang kuko ng aksa ng kamatayan alay sa ati nga ganid na asil. Ynunuto ng katuiran, na wala tayong iba pang maantay kundi halat lalung kalihianan, halat lalung katakasian, halat lalung kapitsuan at halat lalung kaapihan. Ynunuto ng katuiran, na hugng nating sayangin ang pasang sa pagasa sa ipinangako sa kaguardahan sa hindi durating at hindi mangyari. Ynunuto ng katuiran ang ato'y umasa sa ating samit sa hugnanta sa iba ang kataluhan. Ynunuto ng katuiran ang tayo'y mag kaisang loób magka ing iba at akala ng ng tayo'y magkalakas na mainanap ang naghalat sa kasasaman sa ating Bayan.

What should be done, then? The sun of reason that shines in the East clearly shows, to our eyes long blind, the way [liwanag] that must be taken; its liwanag
enables us to see the claws of those of inhuman character who brought us death. Reason *katuturan* shows that we cannot expect anything but more and more hardships, more and more treachery, more and more contempt, more and more enslavement. Reason tells us not to waste our time waiting for the promised *ginhawa* that will never arrive. Reason tells us that we must rely upon ourselves alone and never entrust our right to life to anybody. Reason tells us to be one in body, one in thought, so that we may have the strength in finding that evil reigning in our land.

The word “reason” does not quite bring out the root meaning of *katuturan*, which is “straightness.” This connotation is important because in the context of blindness or darkness which is lost is the ability to keep to the “straight path.” Katuturan is also associated with the livinag of the sun which shows the “way” (*landas*). The direction from which livinag comes—the East—is associated with the life-giving powers of the rising sun, with rebirth, and also is the destination of the “way of the cross.” The “sun of reason,” then, is a beacon that enables the Tagalogs to “see,” but does not by itself restore wholeness; it merely points to the path toward death that must be taken. It is characteristic of both Katipunan and Colorum appeals that the mere awaiting of ginhawa is discouraged, that man must participate by “taking the straight path.” Specifically, the Tagalogs must not “entrust their right to life to anybody” but instead be one in heart and thought, meaning that “wholeness” can no longer be defined in terms of a pact between the Tagalogs and “Mother Spain” who shows no love. The Tagalogs must die to this relationship and be “reborn” in a new condition of wholeness—i.e., katipunan or kalayaan.

In a footnote to his classic study of the Katipunan, Agoncillo discusses the confusion in scholarly circles over the meaning of the letter *K* in a Katipunan (Magdalo faction) flag of 1896. The letter *K*, in old Tagalog script, occupied the center of a sun with an indefinite (later reduced to eight) number of white rays. Did the *K* signify “Kalayaan” as General Ricarte contends, or “Katipunan,” according to General Aguinaldo? Accepting the latter’s view, Agoncillo demonstrates that the *K* must have stood for “Katipunan,” the organization’s name, although he admits that by 1897 it may have changed its significance to “Kalayaan,” probably because the din of battle and the intense nationalistic feeling forced into the consciousness of the revolutionists the aptness of the letter *K* to symbolize their ideal—Liberty.19 The apparently unsettled issue perfectly illustrates the multiplicity of meanings that signs like the letter *K* in the center of a radiant sun had to Katipuneros, particularly rank-and-file members, who interpreted them in terms of their experience. What, indeed, is the difference between “katipunan” and “kalayaan,” between “brotherhood” and “liberty”? The root word *laya* does not appear in Noceda and Sanlucar’s eighteenth-century Tagalog dictionary; there is only *layo*, defined as “bodily pleasure,” “satisfaction of necessities,” and “giving to another what he wants.” Recently, Jose Villa Panginin has tried to make a clear distinction between *laya* (freedom) and *layo* or *layaw* (much pampered, willful, self-abandoned). He says, “Distinguish, between *laya* and *layo*. Consequently, between *kalayaan*: freedom, independence, liberty and *kalayaan*: self-abandonment, libertinage. However, those untrained in language make no such distinctions.”20 Panganiban’s last comment is of utmost importance. It suggests that a term like *kalayaan* has several layers of meaning. What the experience of the people contributed to its meaning is no less important than the definition that nationalist leaders assigned to it.

The meaning of “wholeness” or “becoming one” implied by the term *katipunan* is also contained in *kalayaan*. Prior to the rise of the separatist movement, *kalayaan* did not mean “freedom” or “independence.” In translating into Tagalog the ideas of “liberty, fraternity, equality” learned from the West, propagandists like Bonifacio, Jacinto, and perhaps Marcelo H. del Pilar built upon the word *laya* or *layaw*, which means “satisfaction of one’s needs,” “pampering treatment by parents” or “freedom from strict parental control.” Thus, *kalayaan*, as a political term, is inseparable from its connotations of parent-child relationship, reflecting social values like the tendency of mothers in the lowland Philippines to pamper their children and develop strong emotional ties with them. Childhood is fondly remembered as a kind of “lost Eden,” a time of *kagulatan* (contentment) and *kasaganaan* (prosperity), unless one was brought up in abject poverty or by an uncaring (pabañó) stepmother. In “kalayaan,” revolutionists found an ideal term for independence that combined separation from a colonial ruler (i.e., a mother who showed cruelty instead of love) and the “coming together” of people in the Katipunan. Katipunan is kalayaan in that it is a recovery of the country’s pre-Spanish condition of wholeness, bliss and contentment, a condition that is experienced as layaw by the individual, who is thus able to leap from the “familial” to the “national.”21 As a revolutionary document puts it, the


21. A comparison between *kalayaan* and the Taosug *karayaan* is instructive. Literally, *karayaan* means “goodness.” It also implies a state of pleasure and happiness in the afterlife. Anthropologist Thomas Kiefer’s informants described it as “analogous to a state of perpetual orgasm.” Since the religious merit of a killer is transferred to his victim, most Taosug fighters believe that if they die in battle they will be automatically “inside of karayaan” (*The Taosug: Violence and Law in a Philippine Muslim Society* [New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1972], p. 128-29). It seems to me that in the Tagalog context, dying for kalayaan could mean automatically entering a state of bliss in heaven, particularly if the struggle is interpreted as a pasyon.
“Katipunan of Man” is none other than the extension of the experience of unity between mother and child. In the final paragraph of the manifesto, Bonifacio speaks of the “light of truth” (liwangan ng katutubuhan) that will rise, revealing to all men that the Tagalogs—here defined as all Filipinos—have feeling (pagdaramdam), honor or purity of loob (puri), hiya and, finally, damay. This liwangan, then, reveals an image of the possibilities of existence that will be realized in the redemptive process, an image of a condition that was lost when the Tagalogs succumbed to the sweet words of Spain. It shows the “holy and sacred teaching” that will “tear through the curtain that blinds our thinking.” This liwangan, concluded Bonifacio, is the Katipunan.

The second major item in the first issue of Kalayaan is a manifesto by Emilio Jacinto, a man of some education who was called the “eye” of the Katipunan. In this manifesto, kalayaan is personified and appears to a youth (Katagalugan) who is in darkness.

In the introductory lines, the interplay of images of darkness and light establishes the profound nature of the manifesto: “It was a dark night. Not a star shone in the dark sky of this horrible night.” Head bowed, face resting on the palms of his hands, a youth contemplates his miserable state. Beside him is an oil lamp, the room’s only source of illumination, which will remain flickering for the duration of the narrative, signifying an interval of awareness or revelation that interrupts the enveloping gloom.

The youth is about to surrender to anger and frustration when someone taps him on the shoulder. He hears a “sad and sweet-sounding voice” that asks: “Why do you weep? What pain or affliction rends your heart and tarnishes your youth and strength?” The youth looks up and sees, in the dim light, a shadow surrounded by a halo of white vapor. “Oh merciful shadow,” he replies, “my grief has no cure, no consolation. What I have to say is of no importance to you. But why have you come to interrupt my weeping?” The shadow replies that she always appears whenever ignorance and stupidity cause the hardships and sufferings of men and nations. She will always appear until men are released from blindness and can think clearly, until men realize that, without her, “true and perfect happiness” can never be extended over the face of the earth. Still the youth cannot recognize the visitor, who claims in astonishment:

“Does this mean that you don’t recognize me anymore? But I am not surprised, for it has been more than three hundred years since I visited your land. It is the will of your people to adore false gods of religion and men, your fellow-creatures, that is why my memory has been erased from your minds.

Do you want to know who I am? Then listen: I am the origin of all things great, most beautiful and praiseworthy, precious and dignified, that is possible for humanity. Due to me heads of kings fall; thrones are demolished or transferred, crowns of gold destroyed; due to me the flame of the ‘Holy Inquisition’ in which the friars tortured thousands upon thousands of men, was extinguished. For my cause men unite, each one forgetting his selfish interests, seeing nothing but the good of all; because of me slaves are rescued and lifted up from the mire of degradation and shame, the pride and malice of their cruel masters broken . . . .

My name is Kalayaan.

Having recognized Kalayaan, the youth proceeds to tell her about the mockeries and sufferings inflicted upon his people, in the hope that she will pity and give them protective care. The grievances take the form of contradictions between the Christian teachings and the actual practices of the Spanish friars:

“We,” they say, “are hungry,” and they who teach us to feed the hungry reply: “Eat the refuse and the crumbs of our savory fire and our sumptuous board.” My brothers say: “We are thirsty,” and they who teach us to give drink to the thirsty, reply: “Drink your tears and sweat, because we will see to it that there shall be enough of both.”

My brothers clamor: “We are without clothes; we are completely naked,” and they who command us to dress the naked reply: “We shall, right now, wrap your bodies in chains, one above the other . . . .”

My brothers say: “A little love, a little clemency and compassion,” and the superiors and chiefs who govern us judicially and spiritually reply: “These men are filibusters, enemies of God and Mother Spain; exile them!”

The youth asks Kalayaan if the grievances are sufficient cause for despair and tears. In a somewhat sarcastic vein she replies that tears are only for those without life and blood in their veins to avenge the wrongs inflicted upon the people. “To weep in one’s house, in the silence and darkness of night, is inconceivable; it is all the more improper for a youth . . . it is not proper.” The youth, however, cannot conceive of any other recourse. “From the time we were in our mother’s womb we have learned to suffer and endure all kinds of affliction, contempt, and rebuff. What more can you ask us to do but weep?” He cannot understand Kalayaan’s advice that men cast away their “bad inclinations.” With the youth eventually speechless, Kalayaan proceeds to explain:

22. “Ang Katipunan ng Tao” (manuscript; Box 9, PIR-PNL). The author is most probably Apolinario Mahinay.

23. In Wenceslao Retana, Archivo del Biblioglo Filipino, vol. 3 (Madrid, 1895-1905), pp. 52-04. The original has not been found, and Agencillo himself had to rely on the Spanish translation in Retana and on a translation, presumably by Epifanio de los Santos, in The Philippine Review (July 1918). This manifesto is not found in the published collection of Jacinto’s writings, Bulat at mga Simulat ni Emilio Jacinto (Manila: Jose P. Santos, 1935), edited by Jose P. Santos. In other words, it appears that an extant copy of the influential first (and only distributed) issue of Kalayaan has not been found. Even the translation by De los Santos, Agencillo concludes, is from the Spanish version in Retana. I have made a new translation based on this Spanish text.
Listen. In the early days, when the good customs of your ancestors were not sunk in cowardice and isolation or imprisonment, the Tagalog or native people lived in the shade of my protection, and in my bosom she was happy and breathed the air that gave her life and strength. Her knowledge was increased by my light and she was respected by her neighbors. But one day, which must be execrated and accursed, Slavery arrived saying that she was Virtue and Justice, and promised Glory to all who would believe in her.

Notwithstanding the fact that she came disguised with a mask of loveliness and goodness, and was smooth and affectionate in her behavior, I recognized her. I knew that the happiness of the country was over, that she had pierced your unhappy people... and your brothers believed in her and almost adored her... and forgot me, even abhorred me and were irritated by my presence... But now your sighs have reached me, filled me with sadness, which is why I have come. And now I must leave.

The youth begs Kalayaan to stay, to have pity and once more take the Tagalogs into her fold. She replies that indeed her heart feels the suffering of the Tagalogs, and that it is precisely her calling to come to the aid of the afflicted. "But no man is worthy of my protection and care who is not fond of me, does not love me and is not able to die for me. You can announce this to your compatriots." Suddenly, the flame of the oil lamp flickers and dies.

Some of the nuances of the Tagalog language such are found in Bonifacio's manifesto are missing in Jacinto's manifesto, which is available only in Spanish translation. Nevertheless, the translation seems to be faithful enough to the original, for we find in it certain images that point to a "traditional" frame of meaning in talking about revolution and independence. The flickering oil lamp illuminating the room is reminiscent of the solitary candle during Easter Vigil rituals and the candles the cofrados lighted during prayer to signify the presence of Liwanag. For the episode is a moment of Liwanag in which a connection is made between human and pasyon time in the person of Kalayaan. She comes in the form of an apparition with a "sad, sweet-sounding voice," which reminds us of Apolinario's appearance in 1870 and the Santong Boces that bade Caneo to join the revolt against Spain.

The youth had known Kalayaan before, in a time that corresponds to Bonifacio's pre-Spanish past. His failure to recognize her now reflects his blindness. Kalayaan has to explain what she is and in doing so reveals herself in terms of possibilities for man: elimination of despotism and cruelty, unity and love among men, liberation of slaves, and punishment of oppressors. In other words, she is the condition in which society is turned on its head.

Knowing who Kalayaan is gives the youth hope that she will show pity on his people. He proceeds to enumerate their grievances—not only the friars' cruelty but also the discontinuity between their words and their intentions. They had come preaching fine Christian precepts only to seduce the natives; their eventual cruelty to the natives who ask for compassion is only a reflection of the lack of fit between external appearance and interior state. The pasyon repeatedly warns against being seduced by "appealing exteriors" which are all daya, or trickery. The enslaved condition of the youth and his people is a result of weakness in loob, and a way out of this condition is pointed to by the pasyon. The youth, however, cannot see this "way" because of his blindness; all he does is weep and despair in spite of Kalayaan's advice that the Tagalogs shed their "bad inclinations." Kalayaan has to explain further, and at this point the manifestos of Jacinto and Bonifacio converge.

The youth can comprehend the future only when Kalayaan explains his past and present in terms of the pasyon. Thus, she elaborates upon her previous assertion that the Tagalogs had known her, that under her "protective care" they had experienced happiness, prosperity, and knowledge—a condition akin to layaw. Then Slavery came and, like the serpent in paradise, offered ultimate glory to the Tagalogs, who were seduced by Slavery's appearance of beauty, goodness, and "smoothness." They "forgot" or no longer recognized Kalayaan in a classic case of failure to show utang na loob, a familiar situation exemplified by Judas's turning away from his maestro who loved him, and failing to "reflect upon" the motherly care that Mary had shown him:

Di mo na guinunam gunam And you [Judas] did not reflect upon
ang madlang pagsalayay the layaw showered upon you
sa iyo nang Virgeng matfal by the Holy Virgin,
ano mang carin sa bahay whenever there was food in the house
ala-alang matlay.
she never failed to remember you.

(90:5)

Having realized the worthlessness of the pieces of silver, Judas was cast in despair which he never overcame. For the youth, however, there is hope: first, in recognizing Kalayaan and the layaw she showered upon his ancestors; then in heeding her call for the oppressed to love her and be willing to die for her. The "future" Kalayaan points to is the people's experiencing of the pasyon, a dying to a state of darkness. The next morning, a "smoldering project" is seen in the youth's eyes. Liwanag is in him because he is now conscious of the "way" that must be traversed.

Initiation Rites

When a person signified his intention to join the Katipunan, he was sponsored by a member who brought him, blindfolded, to a secret place where initiation rites were performed. The underlying meaning of these rites has never been adequately examined. Outwardly, they appear to be Masonic. But if they were truly so, could unlettered peasants have embraced the Katipunan as truly their own? Our key to understanding the rites is De los Reyes's statement that "at first, [Katipunan leaders] adopted the Masonic formulas, but
later simplified them to suit the cultural level of the members, who belonged to the workmen and peasant classes. 24

When the blindfold was removed inside the ritual chamber, the first thing that met the neophyte's eye was an oil lamp on a table before him. A woman who joined the society described the experience of being blinded by this light: "I was in a tiny room lit only by a single tingtoy lamp that was flickering like a person out of breath. The light was blinding to my eyes." 25 As the neophyte became accustomed to the dimly lit surroundings, he discerned tablets on the walls with the following warnings:

If you have strength and valor, you may proceed.
If only curiosity has brought you here—go away!
If you do not know how to control your passions—go away. Never will the gates of the venerable and respected Society of the Sons of the Country open for you. 26

In some cases, the same warnings were voiced by an officer called metabal-sik, a sort of "terrible brother" who guarded the entrance to the gates of the society. The initial experience of blinding light, or liwanaq, was accompanied by a firm resolve in the loob of the individual. He would not move a step closer toward the light if he did not have strength, valor, and at least the firm intention to control his "passions."

The neophyte was next required to answer the following questions in a printed questionnaire: (1) What was the condition of the country in early times? (2) What is her condition today? (3) What will be her condition in the future? The replies to the questionnaire were taught to the neophyte by his sponsor, and were similar to what Bonifacio said in his manifesto: before the Spaniards came, the country enjoyed perfect harmony, wealth, and intercourse with other nations of Asia. Then the friars came and taught the external forms of Catholicism and its shallow trappings, blinding the natives to the true nature of religion through spectacular and costly festivals. What must be done was to recover the country's condition of kalayaan, freedom and independence, by means of faith, valor, and perseverance. 27

This stage of the ritual was meant not merely to make the neophyte aware of certain facts about his country and its future but to place them in a meaningful context. It is significant that the dark initiation hall was illuminated by a single "blinding" oil lamp, with all its connotations. The Katipunan initiate would, in fact, have found many aspects of the ritual familiar. His experience of religious rituals would have facilitated his understanding of Philippine history as a "fall" that would be followed by redemption. In a variation of the initiation ritual used by a katipunan of 1900, the message is clear to every Indio: joining the society entails one's "last agony" and death, an experience analogous to Christ's redemptive act:

(Leader): Who is this who has never been initiated who wants to take part in the works of the temple?
(Answer): One who wants light and who wants to be a Son of the People.
(Leader): Profane man, think well whether you are able to fulfill all of these obligations. If at this very hour the society demands your life and your body, are you able to give them? The sound of the bells which you have just heard, what does it mean?
It means that you are quitting your former life as the man in his last agony is quitting his, and your anguish is the sign of your separation from your past life, at the same time it is the sign of your entrance into the society where you will see the true light. 28

In the world of the Colorum pilgrim, paradise is at the end of a long and torturous search which takes place during Holy Week. Paradise is the equivalent of liwanaq which, to quote the author of the pilgrim's awit, is the aftermath of the experience of hardship. 29 These notions are also found in the literature of the Katipunan revolt against Spain. The revolutionary experience is conceived of as a search for kalayaan, a term which, in Katipunan literature, is often juxtaposed with liwanaq and paradise. 30 In the portion of the initiation ritual quoted above, the neophyte arrives at the gates of the society in search of liwanaq and brotherhood, and then he is told that he must die to his past life in order to enter the society where he will see the true liwanaq. These themes are brought out even more vividly in an unpublished manuscript detailing a Katipunan form of initiation. 31 The title of the document,

30. Cf. "Ang Liwanaq sa Katipunan" by Soliman, in "Documentos de la Revolución Filipina" (1952), PNA. This document, which is undated, states basically that the Katipunan is a "great light," which means "the true recognition of the unparalleled power of the Lord God" which also revealed the cruel exploitation by the Spaniards and the fact that the Filipinos owe no utang na loob (debt of gratitude) to Spain in spite of what the friars have always insisted.
31. PIR-S0 514-10. Another copy of the manuscript is found in a bundle of papers on the sandatahan formed by Ricarte in Manila in 1899, and also called "Banah Is Kalayaan" apparently based in San Francisco de Malabon, Cavite (PIR, reel 160, frame 271F.)

25. "Mga dahon ng kasaysayan (Sa kalupi ng isang bahagya nanilal sa Katipunan)," RENFIL 2 (7 October 1911): 455.
27. Zaide, History, pp. 6-7; Agoncillo, Revolt, pp. 48-49.
Buhay sa lusak ng pagkaalipin inagao sa kuko ng bulag kapagkatapos ay naglugos sa balabalaking kapansanan at kapahamakan ngayon't tumatang sa mahal mo pong pintuan at hinahanap ang kalayaan.

We have come from the mire of slavery, saved from the claws of blindness; we have repeatedly passed through various obstacles and dangers and now are here calling before your holy gate in search of kalayaan.

The phrase “holy gate” (mabal na pinto) in this and other initiation documents is another indication of the connection between Katipunan and pasyon idioms. In the latter, the word “gate” first appears in the episode where Adam and Eve are driven out through the “gate of paradise” which is then shut close and guarded by an angel. The passage through the gate marks, for Adam and Eve, the beginning of a life of “exhaustion, hunger and fear, incomparable hardship”:

Ano pa t, hindi maisip
pangamba at maling saquit
narating nila t, nasapit
ngumuman na umalis
doon sa lupang mariquit.

And we cannot imagine
the fear and manifold pain
thrust upon them
when they departed
from the radiant land.

At cung canilang maquita
doon na maala-al,
ang una nilang guinhawa
lapis lumay sa ibinahin pa
ng canilang kaloloua.
(10:15-16)

The gate of paradise marks the boundary between suffering and a life of ginawa, between darkness and liwanag. Elsewhere in the pasyon and related texts, the “holy gate” is alluded to as the barrier to man’s complete fulfillment until opened by the completion of Christ’s passion and death. In explaining why the door, or gate, of the synagogue was closed when Christ entered Jerusalem, the pasyon reveals a talinbaga:

Sapagot t, si Cristong Amo
at dili pa naglurusa
lang mahal na Pasion niya,
ay tetoong nasaara
ang pintong mahal na Gloria.

Since Christ our Father
had not yet suffered
his holy passion
so the holy gate of glory
was truly shut.

Tutumbaquin capacouan
niyong Cruz niyong tangan
at ang pintong nang Simbahan

This will be struck squarely
by the cross he will bear
and the gate of the synagogue
will at once open; this is what it means.

When this is done and when he is crucified and has died in suffering at that moment will open the gate of glory.

In 1840, Apolinario de la Cruz referred to "the holy gate of the nineteenth day" (mabal na pinto ng Araw Diesimuyo)—the day of the Cofradía’s Mass—as a stage they have reached on the way to the "holy land of peace" (mabal na Bayan ng kaluwalhatian). Not surprisingly, the Colorum also appropriated the notion of a "holy gate" in their rituals. The narrow cave entrances and other passages through which the pilgrims passed, often with great physical effort, were called pinto. Special prayers were said at these entrances to avoid, so the belief went, being crushed by the pillars of the gates. According to one account, "far from the chapel of Amang Dios is a gate where the keeper loudly asks for the name of the pilgrim and all other necessary information. Then giving him a supply of wax candles he is allowed to begin his subterranean trip." For the Colorum pilgrims, the gates were visible markers of the experienced stages of hardship and concomitant purification and control of loob, culminating in the ascent of Calvary.

The term "holy gate," then, has various layers of significance. Katipunan leaders merely added another layer, a "nationalist" one, by incorporating it in the "opening of the pinnacle." Having knocked on the "holy gate in search of kalayaan," the neophytes are told by the leader that they must "prepare the loob for every test of hardship that will be inflicted." Then the neophytes are subjected to certain trials of ordeal, such as jumping into a well or crawling through a narrow tunnel. The parallel with the trials that a pilgrim undergoes in Banahaw is unmistakable. Moreover, the meaning of the experience is similar. As the initiates emerge from their ordeal, the mabalasik presents them to the leader, who replies: "In that case, brother mabalasik, you have not noticed any drawing back of their loob." Here we are reminded of Apolinario de la Cruz, who once said that Octavio had a "truly converted loob" because he had experienced many trials. The gate of the society is opened; the new Katipuneros have died to their former state of blindness and disorientation. Only then are they allowed to sign the oath of membership with their own blood.

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32. Apolinario de la Cruz to the Cofradía, Manila 6 July 1840 (PNA).
suffering language of a woman in chains who seeks compassion from her sons. In other words, the message must be experienced as well as understood. In the previous chapter, we hinted that Januario Labio's apparently meaningless Latin prayers should be examined in terms of their sound effect rather than their literal translation. Likewise, Katipunan appeals cannot be understood apart from their sounds and mode of presentation. We can liken the leader's speech to poetry or music, its "effect" analogous to a kundiman's (love song). Here is a description of what happens when a kundiman is sung:

One of them will sing a song, a pure Tagalog song which is usually very sentimental, so sentimental that if one should listen to it carefully watching the tenor of words and the way the voice is conducted to express the real meaning of the verses, he cannot but be conquered by a feeling of pity even so far as to shed tears.\textsuperscript{35}

Compassion or pity for Mother Country is precisely what the Katipunan applicants experienced during their initiation. To put it another way, they had damay with her sufferings. This explains why, at the end of the ceremonies, the Katipunan brothers had tears in their eyes.\textsuperscript{36}

Tears and plaintive supplications are only signs of damay. In essence, damay involves a complete change in loób. In the pasyon context, it means a decision to avoid wrongdoing, to follow instead Christ's example. In the Katipunan, having damay implies a commitment to struggle for kalayaan. Toward the end of the sermon, the leader tells his brothers to have humility, to give their lives so that the country may be saved, to think about old Kalayaan as they go off to battle. He talks of the struggle as traversing the "way," in the process of which there is unity, love and purity of self:

Talastasin naman niño pili kong kababayan na angnilandangan ng Katipunan ito ay isa daan pagkakaisa, pagtitiginan at pagdadaamayan na di magsasalita magsalubungan liling. Sa katipunan ito talastasin niño na inaukarasi ang masasamang asal, masasamang loób at lala pa at higitong ang kapalapanan paliibha sa ang initungo ay ang isaang ugas at dalisay ng kalinsinan magsalubungan kailan. Kababahan loób at panumuhunan ng ingat ng nauhay at madlagn kaya upang ipagtanggol ang bandila ng lamang pakikichay Religion at saring bayan.

Bear in mind, my chosen compatriots, that the way travelled by this Katipunan is the way of unity, mutual caring and mutual damay that will not perish even unto death. And bear in mind that in this Katipunan, bad behavior and bad loób and pride in particular, are denounced, for the object of our journey is the purest and most immaculate existence that can ever be attained. Be humble of loób and

Return of King Bernardo Carpio

The significance of many little details which has escaped previous scholars can be seen in the light of what has been said so far. For example, in April 1895, about a year before the start of the revolution, Andres Bonifacio and eight leading members of the Katipunan went on a week-long excursion in the mountains of San Mateo, southeast of Manila. Previous scholars have not seen anything more in this event than a search for a safe haven in the mountains to retreat to in the event of difficulties in the struggle; indeed, that is the reason one of the survivors gave Agoncillo in an interview in 1949. Could it be merely coincidental, though, that the group chose the Holy Week of April, from Holy Tuesday to Holy Saturday, to make the climb? Led by an old man named Tandang Pels, they reached their destination—the caves in Mount Tapusi—on Good Friday. In "the cave of Bernardo Carpio," Bonifacio wrote with a piece of charcoal, "Long live Philippine Independence!" and each Katipunero signed his name with trembling hands and tears in his eyes.\textsuperscript{37}

The ascent of Mount Tapusi, more than being a search for a safe haven, was a gesture of deepest significance to the Katipunan and to the inhabitants of the region. For the peasants believed that the legendary Tagalog folk hero—Bernardo Carpio—was imprisoned in the caves of the mountain, awaiting the day when he would break loose and return to free the people. Let us examine the implications of the Katipunan's choice of the "cave of Bernardo Carpio" as its place of refuge.

Bernardo Carpio was one of the favorite characters in awits and komedias of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{38} Although his story originates from the Mgaedutas of Spanish writer Lope de Vega, the Tagalog version, set in the traditional "dodecaasyllabic quatrains" form, departs from the Spanish original in several ways. In the main, the story is familiar. Bernardo Carpio is the bastard son of a courtier and the sister of the king of Spain. The king, learning about the illicit

36. Agoncillo, Revolt, p. 50.
37. Santos, "Buhay at Ina nga Sinulat," p. 16; Kasandugo (pseud.), Ang Katipunan at si Gat Andres Bonifacio (manuscript, n.d., p. 82, FN); also Agoncillo, Revolt, p. 70. Agoncillo's informant was Guillermo Masangkay, who was with the group that made the "pilgrimage."
romance, banishes the courtier and detains his sister in a monastery. The boy grows up to be a great general, a staunch defender of the Spanish crown, only to find out that his true parents are unknown. So he makes it a vow to search for his parents. In the course of his adventures, a letter drops from heaven telling him where his father has been imprisoned. Unfortunately, his father dies in his arms. This does not prevent Bernardo from legitimizing his tie to his parents. He brings his father, covered with a cloth on the pretext that he must not be exposed to cold air, to the king’s palace, where the wedding with the king’s sister takes place. Only when father, mother, and son are formally reunited does Bernardo pretend to discover that his father is dead.

The awit does not end here, as it does in the Spanish originals. Bernardo, having declined the Spanish throne, continues his travels in search of idolaters to destroy. He arrives before a churchlike structure with two lion statues by the entrance. Because the gate is shut, he kneels outside and prays. A bolt of lightning strikes and destroys one of the lions. Angered by the lightning’s challenge, Bernardo hurls the other lion away and vows to search for the lightning and destroy it. Not far away, he sees two mountains hitting each other at regular intervals. Then a handsome youth—an angel—appears in dazzling brightness and tells Bernardo that the lightning has entered the mountain. God commands that Bernardo shall not see, much less capture it. When the angel himself takes the path of the lightning, Bernardo stubbornly follows, the twin peaks closing in on him.

Bernardo does not die, however. Some report seeing him in a dream, asleep, his body stretched out on a slab of stone. A man enters the cave where Bernardo lies and converses with the imprisoned hero, who says: “I am Bernardo Carpio who has lain here for a long time. If you want to acquire my strength, give me your hand, let’s be friends.” Seeing the many skeletons lying around the marble bed, the stranger offers instead a piece of bone, which crumbles to pieces when Bernardo holds it. Then Bernardo tells him:

You are lucky. Because you are intelligent, I am your friend on whom you can depend. Take the little cross near my head as a gift from me. When you are in danger, just say devoutly ‘Christus’ and the danger will be averted by the power of the Son of God. I am being punished here by God for my sins, but God is good and I am still alive. I am hoping that the time will come when I can arise from my imprisonment. So go, and tell the people about my condition, so that they will be reminded that Jesus after he was interred rose again. In the same manner, I that am now confined in my stone bed inside a cave will, in time, be able to return to the land. For Almighty God has his reasons; He single out one man as saviour of the oppressed. So tell the oppressed people that their Bernardo will soon rise and save them.”

The Tagalog version of the story thus ends in a manner curiously reminiscent of Colomar rituals. Bernardo Carpio follows the lightning, a form of livanang, to the gates of paradise, the pillars of which consist of twin peaks hitting each other. Because his loob has not been fully cleansed, he is barred from entering paradise. When he follows the angel, nevertheless, he is cast in a limbo, a state of sleep. He is alive, a potential of power, and only the completion of a redemptive event will bring about his freedom. Only then will he, together with the oppressed people who participate in the liberation process, see paradise.

Rizal was very much aware of the folk belief in a “king of the Indios” imprisoned in the San Mateo cave who would one day return to free the people. “For no apparent reason,” comments Rizal, “the natives called him King Bernardo, confusing him perhaps with Bernardo del Carpio.” A disgruntled rig driver in El Filibusterismo is made to mutter with a suppressed sigh: “When he [Bernardo Carpio] gets his right foot free, I shall give him my horse, put myself under his orders, and die for him. He will free us from the constabulary.”

In the decade or so prior to the rise of the Katipunan, the Bernardo Carpio story appears to have been appropriated by the peasants as one way of imaging their hopes for a better life, free from oppression and foreign rule. And while Rizal was content to note down this fact, Andres Bonifacio built upon it in mobilizing the Indies against Spain.

Of all the Tagalog plays with which Bonifacio, as an actor, was deeply familiar, the Bernardo Carpio play was his favorite. In his copy of the awit, he even went to the extent of changing Spanish names of places, events and mountains to Tagalog ones. What, one wonders, struck Bonifacio about this awit? The answer is clear if we see Bernardo Carpio, no longer as a Spanish hero, but a Filipino whose life constitutes a talinhaga. Here is a boy whose energy cannot be utilized properly and meaningfully because his parents’ identities are unknown to him. Only when he has repudiated his deceitful stepfather and his patron the king is he able to set out in search of his imprisoned parents. When, like a flash of livanang, his parents’ names are revealed to him by heaven, Bernardo becomes ever more aware of his mission in life. Among other things, he undertakes the supremely political act of intimidating the French court into dissolving Spain’s vassal status to her.

Bonifacio and other Filipino nationalists of some education appear to have found in the Bernardo Carpio story a popular perception of events on which

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41. Agoncillo, Revolt, p. 67.
to hinge their separatist ideas. The Filipino people would, like Bernardo, discover their identity only by repudiating their false parents—Spain and the friars. Bonifacio eloquently expresses this in the following stanzas from the poem *Katapusan Hibil* (Final Lament):

Sumisikat na ina sa sinisilangan  
ang araw ng poot ng katagalugan.  
tatlong daang taong aming iningatan  
sa dagat ng dusa ng karalitan.

Mother at the horizon, has risen  
the sun of Tagalog fury;  
three centuries we kept it  
in the sea of woes wrought by poverty.

Walang isinuway kaming iyong amok  
as bagyong masasal ng dalita't hirap,  
iisa ang puso nitong Pilipinas  
at ikaw ay di na ina mming lahat.  

Your children's hut had nothing to hold it up  
during the terrible storm of pains and troubles,  
all in Filipinas are one of heart—  
no longer a mother you are to us.

Like Bernardo's outburst of strength, the people's emergence from a condition of ignorance and suffering is accompanied by a release of their energy, or "fury," in a fruitful manner. And finally, the Filipino people themselves would conclude the Bernardo Carpio story by participating in the culmination of his pasyon—his emergence from the depths of his mountain grave. Miranda notes that, north of Manila, "the masses were awaiting the liberation of Bernardo Carpio, a character in a Tagalog legend, from the two enormous cliffs of Biak-na-Bato so that he may extirpate the cazadores who defended the Spanish outposts. They say *paa na lamang ang kulang* [only a foot remains pinned]." Meanwhile, continues Miranda, the masses, armed only with bladed weapons, were fighting ferociously to the end.

For Bonifacio and his men who trekked to Mount Tapuasi during the Holy Week of 1893, the search for Bernardo Carpio's cave had two levels of meaning. On one hand, it was purely military, a search for a haven. On the other, it was a gesture of identifying with the folk hero entombed in the mountain. No wonder many came to the cave to be initiated into the Katipunan. We can also understand why Bonifacio's hand trembled with fierce emotion as he wrote on the walls of the cave: "Long live Philippine Independence!" This slogan must be interpreted in its entire form—*Panahon na! Mabuhay ang Kalayaan!*—which was the battlecry of the Katipunan. Its common translation as "The time has come! Long live Liberty!" does not quite capture its meaning. *Panahon na!* (It is time!) implies, not only that the revolution has begun, but that a totally new era (panahon) is about to succeed the old which has irreversibly winded down. And *Mabuhay* should be translated literally as "May it live" or "May it come to life." "Long live" or "Cheers" fails to capture the meaning of the struggle as the experience of hardship in order to redeem or give life to a "dead" or "slumbering" condition called kalayaan.

Bonifacio's appropriation of the Bernardo Carpio story served the same purpose as the pasyon layer of Katipunan appeals discussed earlier. They both enabled the masses to grasp the meaning of nationalism and separatism through the mediation of familiar awit and pasyon language. Bonifacio's poem *Katapusan Hibil* (Final Lament), which we earlier linked to the theme of Bernardo Carpio's liberation through repudiation of his false parents, also recalls the pasyon in its use of the image of the "rising sun of Tagalog fury.

In the resurrection scene there is the following striking passage:

Mamimintat at sisilang  
ang arko sa Silangan  
nang lumabas sa bauman,  
yaong samacop sa tanan  
siya na ngang pagcabuhay  
(177: 12)

The dawn was breaking  
the sun rising in the East  
when from the grave emerged,  
the redeemer of all mankind  
he had truly come alive.

Compare this with the language of the Katipunan in which the dawn, rising sun, lamp flame and other images of liwanag are associated with the awakening or "coming alive" of kalayaan, Mother Country, the youth, Bernardo Carpio, and even the martyrs Rizal, Gomez, Burgos and Zamora. Obviously, without the masses' experience of the pasyon, the revolution against Spain would have taken a much different form.

**Lakaran of the Sons**

Often ignored documents like poems, songs and even dreams are rich in allusions to the revolution's framework of meaning. The following poem is attributed to Procopio Bonifacio, brother of Andres:


44. According to Zaide, it was Aurelio Tolentino who scribbled "Viva la Independencia Filipina" on the wall (The *Philippine Revolution* [Manila: Modern Book Co., rev. ed., 1968], p. 98).

in terms of the bond between mother and child. Together they form a self-contained universe bound by ties of love and utang na loob. A tearful crisis usually occurs when the grown-up son or daughter has to leave home. The preoccupation with the mother-child separation theme has left a strong imprint on Tagalog literature. In the pasyon's development through the centuries, for instance, the dialogues between Christ and the Virgin Mary grew all out of proportion, making the pasyon just as much an epic of Mother Mary's loss. In effect, the everyday theme of separation was raised to a higher level of meaning.

In Bonifacio's poem, the Filipinos are about to embark upon the struggle, which is imaged as everyman's lakaran. Just as the start of Christ's passion is marked by his emotional and painful separation from Mary, so does the struggle of the Filipinos, following the contours of tradition, begin with separation from Mother Spain. In the pasyon text, lengthy dialogues between Jesus and Mary, and between Mary and God the Father, bring to light the irreversibility and "fatedness" of the event. The Day of Redemption has come, Jesus tells his mother, and so we must separate (78:7). In the poem there is a striking parallel in the declaration: "The time has come for us to separate." Bonifacio goes on to exhort his compatriots: "Let us, lowly men, walk on, each to experience hardship / head for the hills and forests." The struggle is imaged as an arduous journey on foot, a lakaran, toward the "hills and forests" where for centuries Indios "fleeing from the bells" found refuge. Bonifacio sees the struggle as a lakaran unto-death—hence his farewell to the land—but with death comes more liwanag over the land. Kalayaan is imaged as the blinding light of the sun, just as, in the pasyon, the outcome of the lakaran unto-death is a radiant "victory." Rising from his grave, Christ is described as:

lubos ang pagpapatuloy
nitong nanalong sang gubat
na isalat sa Personas. (177:13)

completely engulfed in liwanag
was lie who had gone to the hills
this victorious second Person.

In the poems of the Bonifacio brothers, a dominant theme is the changing of mothers—from Spain to Inang Bayan (Mother Country). Now it is not only the separation from Mother Spain that the pasyon tradition rendered intelligible to the masses. The very notion of Mother Country rode on popular images of the Virgin Mary, who appears in the pasyon as the ideal Filipino mother, behaving in the traditional fashion as the son persists in his untraditional mission.

There is a story told by Aurelio Tolentino that one night, as Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Jacinto, himself and others were asleep in Tandang Sora's house in Balintawak, one of them dreamt of a beautiful woman leading by the


hand a handsome child. The woman looked exactly like the Virgin Mary in church statues, except that she wore a native costume, the balintawak. The child was dressed in peasant garb, armed with a glittering bolo, and shouting “kalayaan!” The woman approached the dreamer to warn him about something. Roused from his sleep, he narrated his dream to his companions, who all concluded that the Virgin was warning them against proceeding to Manila that morning. They all decided to stay a while longer in Balintawak. Later, the news arrived that the Katipunan-infiltrated printing shop of the Diario de Manila had been raided by the guardia civil. Without the Virgin’s warning, alleged Tolentino, Bonifacio would have been captured along with the others and executed, and the revolution delayed indefinitely.

The story may be entirely apocryphal, but it was deemed fit to be published in the newspaper La Vanguardia—the successor to El Renacimiento—sometime before Tolentino’s death in 1915. The point is, such a story was entirely credible to Tolentino’s audience. Why was the Virgin in native costume; why was she leading a Katipunero by the hand? Was she Mother Country herself? For the popular mind there was no clear distinction, no crisis of meaning as one image flowed into the other. One of the reasons why, as we shall see, religiopolitical groups and the Philippine Independent Church swelled with peasant members during the days of the republic and the succeeding years was because “nationalist” and “religious” idioms merged in them. Bishop Gregorio Aglipay, for example, continued to instill among his adherents the teachings of Mabini, Rizal and Bonifacio. But at the same time, without hesitation, he could proclaim: 

**Ang Virgen sa Balintawak ay ang Inang Bayan**
(The Virgin at Balintawak is the Mother Country). 48

A fine example of how meaningful images of the revolution are combined in a popular song is the following kundiman:

Sa dalampasan ng dagat Maynila,
Luneta ang tawag ng mga kastila
ay doon binaril ang kraveawa
pobreng Filipino, martir nitong Lupa.

On the shores of Manila bay
called by the Spaniards “Luneta”
there was shot the pitiful
humble Filipino, martyr of this land.

Nara na sa dusa ang ating tanguilan
panghina ng Burgos at barnsong si Rizal
sa naggit at takot ng pay尊敬 sukaban
pinatay at sukatan, walang kasalanan.

Our defenders fell into grief
the eldest Burgos, the youngest Rizal
sons without stain of guilt
were treacherously killed by the envious, fearful friars.

Hindi na inisip ang kanilang buhay
kung ito'y matapos tapos din ang lahay,
paris na nga ngayon, ang kinikapitan
kaming Filipino'y kusang humiwatay.

They did not think of their lives
when life is ended, so is layaw;
just as it is now, it all ended up
in we Filipinos willingly separating.

Oh mga kalahi! Lakad, pagplitang
tunggalin ang bundok, kalawakan parang,
gamitin ang gulok at silat sa kamay,
ating ipagtanagol lupang tinubuan.

Oh compassionate! Walk on, strive
to reach the mountain and the forest
use the holas and spears in your hands,
let us defend the land of our birth.

Huwag manganib, Inang Filipinas
sa kahit ano mang tikda ng palad,
di kami tutugon hanggang di matupad
itong kalayaang ating hinahanap. 49

Fear not, Mother Filipinas
whatever fate has in store for us,
we will not cease to struggle until
the kalayaan we search for is found.

The first thing to be noted about this kundiman is that its composer is unknown, and that several versions of it exist. The longest, though incomplete, version published by Ronquillo in 1910 lacks a title; two others are titled Ang mga MAA'r (The Martyrs) and Ang Dalampasigan (The Seashore), respectively. 50 Ronquillo comments that “the author of the poem evidently had a very confused mind, expressed himself unintelligibly, and knew nothing about the life of Burgos.” Such information points, if not to the folk origins, at least to the

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folk appropriation of the song. Although the poetry is “crude” from the literary critic’s view, it nevertheless reveals popular perceptions of events, more than sophisticated or urbane Tagalog poetry does.

There is a preoccupation with the martyrdoms of the ilustrados Burgos and Rizal who, because of their mode of death, belong to the family of folk heroes. They are pobre (poor) not necessarily because of their economic status but because of their identification with the paradigm of the poor and suffering Christ. The friars, of course, are described just like the parishioners—guardians of the official religion who are motivated by “envy and fear” to condemn innocent men to death. In the third stanza, the martyrdoms of Burgos and Rizal and their consequent loss of layaw are juxtaposed with the separation of the Filipinos from Spain—as if each patriot who participates in the struggle reenacts the experience of the martyrs. In the fourth stanza, we have again the image of the lakaran. With Mother Country hovering in the background, her sons pursue the struggle, not ceasing until kalayaan is found.

As long as the struggle is perceived as a sacred mission—a people’s pasyon—the path toward kalayaan is narrow and straight, and there is no turning back until the end is reached. In view of this, it no longer appears irrational that Katipunan units mostly armed only with bladed weapons and sticks fought the Spaniards with determination. A Spanish observer notes that the Katipuneros seemed to be “hallucinated unto death.” When, for example, the Spanish army recaptured a Katipunan town, “the masses were made to believe that they had to return and retake it,” so that the river was reddened with the blood of the slain, both Filipino and Spanish. And having been “defeated a hundred and one times and driven to the mountains,” the “fanatized” masses were made to believe in the aid of a foreign power or a supernatural being. Isabelo de los Reyes notes that the natives of Pandakan were not frightened when some of their men were executed by the Spaniards:

The peasants, far from being intimidated by these tests, wept with enthusiasm and emotion at having in this immortal association a glimpse into the brilliant future of the Philippines, and they wept with emotion at finding that their country thought them worthy of saving it from its then sad situation.

The tears of the “country people” were not the result of what is usually termed “sentimentality.” They reveal to us that the people had damay and compassion and thus took the path in search of kalayaan.

Was kalayaan ever attained during the Katipunan revolution? In a description of the liberated town of San Francisco de Malabon, Cavite, Santiago Alvarez seems to capture the experience of kalayaan during the latter days of September 1896:

The people were truly happy, free to enjoy life in all sorts of ways. Food was plentiful; all things were cheap; there were no perversities, no robberies, no thefts, no pickpockets. Everyone had love for his fellow men, and in every place the Katipunan’s teaching of brotherly love held sway. Frightful threats of death, like the whistling cannonballs, were viewed calmly as everyone simply ducked to avoid them. And with hope in the grace of God, the children, elders, women and men had no fear of death... no news of the enemy’s advance was ever cause for fear.... The cannon bursts were no longer feared and even came to be regarded as fireworks in a celebration. The women’s stores were open all day and night; singing, dancing, feasting beneath the trees, gambling and cockfighting everywhere, served to make them forget the impending sacrifice of their lives and blood. But at the first sign of fighting, all the men and women would straighten up and grab their weapons of war.

Other sources confirm that the first few months of the revolution were remembered particularly during the difficult years of the war against the United States as some kind of a “Lost Eden.” The experience of release from Spanish rule was indeed exhilarating. Food was cheap and plentiful. And there was an attempt, at least, to practice the Katipunan ideals of love, brotherhood and good moral conduct. But this was a fleeting experience. Not only would the Spanish armies return in force, but in the liberated areas, principala rivalry and vacillation would harm the revolution from within. When Andres Bonifacio arrived in late 1896 to unite the warring Magdalo and Magdiwang factions of the Katipunan in Cavite, little did he realize that he would die at the hands of pinunong bayan.

Ironically, Bonifacio’s downfall can be traced to his preoccupation with “sacred ideals” and moral transformation. He was led to this not so much by his personality and Masonic background as his familiarity with popular perceptions of change. Folk poetry and drama undoubtedly provided him with basic insights into the “folk mind.” Between him and Apolinario de la Cruz in fact exists a strong affinity. Their sermons and exhortations, rooted in the people’s language and experience, drew similar responses and gave rise to similar problems. In Bonifacio’s case, the concept of national unity as each citizen’s rebirth in a society of irwanag was found by others to be unworkable.

in a time of massive recruitment of revolutionists. For example, Roman Basa was expelled or withdrew from the Katipunan because he wanted to do away with "the tedious process of initiation, which Bonifacio never wanted to give up." In fact, Emilio Aguinaldo and others practically abandoned the initiation rituals while retaining Katipunan rhetoric to incite the people to revolt.  

In Cavite, Bonifacio got embroiled in the question of kingship which scholars briefly mention but understandably avoid discussion of. Santiago Alvarez, an eyewitness, says that, as the welcome parade in honor of Bonifacio wound its way from Noveleta to San Francisco de Malabon, some people in the crowd shouted "Mabuhay ang Hari!" (Long live the King!), to which Bonifacio replied "Mabuhay ang Inang Bayan!" (Long live Mother Country!)  

Aguinaldo, in his memoirs, adds that the cabinet of the Magdiwang government conferred upon Bonifacio the highest title they could give: Harang Bayan (sovereign). He describes what happened as Bonifacio and the Magdiwang leaders visited the towns under their jurisdiction:

They gave speeches and lessons about love of country and said other inspiring words concerning our kaibigan. How overjoyed the people (laon nga bayan) were, so filled with pomp and solemnity was their reception that it seemed as if a real king had arrived.  

Scholars have paid scant attention to Aguinaldo's insistence that conflict between the two wings of the Katipunan was inevitable because the Magdiwang faction was Maka-Hari (monarchist), while the Magdalo faction was Republikano. Our sympathies in this modern age tend to lie with Aguinaldo. But if we put ourselves in the context of his time, we can understand why some people greeted Bonifacio as the Filipino king. Some fifty-five years prior to that incident, Apolinario de la Cruz, whether he liked it or not, was crowned "king of the Tagalogs" by his peasant followers. For did not the masses, steeped in the world of awit and lorodo, await the coming of Christ the King or Bernardo Carpio, the Tagalog king? Telesforo Canseco, an admittedly profitor witness, says that while people in his town lamented the execution of Spanish priests, many prayed for "the triumph of the insurrection" and, during Holy Week, theoadjutor led public prayers for "the triumph of the king of the Tagalogs." Was this king Bonifacio himself? Or was it Bernardo Carpio? For Bonifacio himself, as Carlos Ronquillo reports, told his followers that their legendary king Bernardo would descend from Mount Tapusi to aid the Katipunan rebels. Whatever the exact rumors were, the fact is that Bonifacio was so adept at tapping popular feelings to serve his revolutionary ends that he was unavoidably incorporated into the folk view of events. He and some Magdiwang leaders, notably the poet Diego Mojica, appear to have encouraged such beliefs in the hope of consolidating their government's hold over the people.  

Bonifacio eventually drew the ire of the leading citizens, not the people of Cavite as some would have us believe. They called him an ignoramus, an outsider from Tondo, a poor military strategist, a Mason, a monarchist, a tulisan (bandit) even. But beneath these accusations, most of which are valid, lies the simple fact that Bonifacio's Katipunan, if allowed to progress, would have threatened existing boundaries and hierarchies in the province. A comparison of Bonifacio's case with that of other leaders of popular brotherhoods and secret societies like Apolinario de la Cruz, Sebastian Caneo, and Felipe Salvador, reveals similar reactions on the part of the maginoo or pinumong bayan toward upstarts with a powerful message to the masses. In  

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57. Alvarez, Ang Katipunan, p. 116. Agoncillo translates the crowd's greetings as "Long live the ruler of the Philippines" (Revolt, p. 204).  
58. Mga Gunita, pp. 140-41. In Laguna, too, several towns looked up to Bonifacio as "the Supremo, the King of the People" (Antonio Guerra to Emilio Jacinto, 6 May 1897, in Epifanio de los Santos, The Revolutionists: Aguinaldo, Bonifacio, Jacinto [Manila: National Historical Commission], p. 133).  
59. Ibid., p. 143.  
60. For example, Carlos Quirino (The Trial of Andres Bonifacio [Manila: Ateneo de Manila, 1963], p. 8) states that "when acclaimed publicly upon his first arrival in San Francisco de Malabon that December, Bonifacio allowed them to hail him with the words 'Mabuhay ang hari ng bayan'"
keeping with this pattern, it is significant that Bonifacio's counter-accusations harp on the sad state of his rivals' loob. In a letter to Emilio Jacinto, he describes the Magdalo leaders as "envious" (matiggitin). "The selfishness (pagkagabaman) of Magdalo," he says, "is truly nauseating (nakasusuklam) and even led to many reverses." In two other letters, he reiterates the connection he perceives between state of loob and military defeats. On 24 April 1897, he tells Jacinto that the enemy took three or four towns without a fight and that other towns will be similarly captured if kasahiban (greed) and pag-inibot (selfishness) continue to reign; this, he concludes, is "the sole cause of the misfortune (kasawian) of these pueblos." In another letter, Bonifacio attributes frequent enemy attacks on certain towns to "infighting and lack of unity among the leaders who continue to have hardness of loob (matitigas ang kalodban) while ordinary people suffer."63 These charges all reveal Bonifacio's preoccupation with inner transformation as a condition for revolution.

In the preface to his essay Liwanag at Dilim, Emilio Jacinto describes Bonifacio as "bearing on his shoulder all the burdens on the face of the earth" (pumapasan ng madlang kabigatan sa balat ng lupa).64 No other image would have brought home to his audience the nature of Bonifacio's commitment to the struggle. After all, Jacinto states later on, kalayaan is a panatang lakawan—a goal that one devotes his life to pursue—which involves hardship and the shedding of blood.65 Bonifacio, at the age of thirty-three, did give his life in the struggle for kalayaan. But almost in anticipation of the future struggle, his executioners were his own compatriots. One early morning in April 1897, he and his companions were attacked by a detachment of Aguinaldo's army. Understandably, the Katipunan supremo was stunned by the sight of kapatid killing fellow kapatid. Himself wounded in the neck, he was carried to Naik, the capital, where began a mock trial that ended five days later in Maragondon. There the Bonifacio brothers, Andres and Procopio, were pronounced guilty of plotting to assassinate President Aguinaldo and overthrow the revolutionary government. On 10 May 1897, the two were brought to the hills of Maragondon and shot; because of the lack of reliable witnesses, the precise details of their deaths may never be known.

With Bonifacio's execution came the final dissolution of the Katipunan secret society in favor of a truly "national" revolution. This is the standard interpretation, at least. From an organizational point of view, undoubtedly Aguinaldo was now able to form a government with a broader principia base, culminating in the birth of the Filipino nation. But, as we shall see in later chapters, the Katipunan survived in various forms, often taking stands opposed to those of the revolutionary center. This phenomenon can be understood if we view Bonifacio's Katipunan as the embodiment of a revolutionary style, a sort of language which enabled the ordinary Indio to relate his personal experience with the "national." Granted that the Katipunan of Bonifacio was not the totality of the revolution, its appeals for a national rebirth, the redemption of Mother Country and the struggle for kalayaan became part of every revolutionary leader's vocabulary in arousing the people. The language born in the early stages of the struggle far outlived the personalities who created it.

65. Ibid., p. 35.