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## RACE AND LITERARY THEORY: FROM DIFFERENCE TO CONTRADICTION

E. San Juan, Jr.

The University of Connecticut, Storrs

Like all passageways between past and present, the threshold to the 21st century conceived as a crisis-point presents both a danger and an opportunity: a danger of the solid gains of the civil rights struggles in the Sixties being dissolved in an unprecedented social amnesia, an opportunity to learn from experience and advance race relations in an emancipatory, counterhegemonic direction. Change, as everyone knows, always proceeds unevenly. Despite the call for a return to the old dispensation, with the Great Books of the Western World summoned to fill the gaps in the national "cultural illiteracy," progress toward liberating us from Eurocentric, male-dominated learning can be discerned in such reforms as, for example, the presence in recent textbooks of Black women writers (Walker, Petry, Morrison) and token American Indian and Chicano writers.<sup>1</sup> This would not have been possible without such collective efforts as *Radical Teacher*, the Project on Reconstructing American Literature, and numerous individual initiatives. The agenda then was to problematize the canon and transform it—but for whose benefit? on what grounds?

In his introduction to *Reconstructing American Literature* (1983), Paul Lauter observes that in the last decade or so a growing consensus has emerged for revising/transforming the canon established by the aesthetic standard of the New Criticism which has privileged a white/male normative "paradigm of experience." The modernist patriarchal pantheon of Hemingway, Faulkner, Bellow and Mailer, questioned by women and minorities, can no longer claim a transparent foundational superiority when its rationale has been undermined. Nor can the New Critical norms and habits—the dismissal of readers' sensibility, the discounting of the artists' milieu—be taken for granted as truisms. Amid the transvaluation of Establishment values, Lauter envisages the possibility of opening up the canon in consonance with radical social changes whose impact is to compel us to ask not just "how to apply a given and persisting set of standards, but where standards come from, whose values they embed, whose interests they serve." At stake is the function or role of the teaching profession in

a world of alienated labor and mass reification.

The strategy of this new Reconstruction is manifestly one of compromise and piecemeal reforms. While lauding the virtues of oral texts like the American Indian chant, Lauter and colleagues seem unable to forsake such New Critical virtues as "complexity," irony, etc.; what they are pleading for is latitude, pluralism, diversity. But reforms have been won, the Establishment has made concessions: Douglass' *Narrative* and Linda Brent's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (in full or excerpts), for example, are now often mandatory for introductory courses; Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* is on the way to enshrinement. Now I don't mean to discount those necessary critiques of the old formalist standard, but the targetting of the New Criticism (now eclipsed by poststructuralist approaches like reader-response, semiotics, deconstruction, etc.) and the espousal of a more militant liberalism have been overtaken by the larger sociocultural changes in the latter half of the Reagan era.

In the sphere of racial conflicts, some experts have suggested that the issue of "racism" has already been resolved by the civil rights victories of the Sixties so that it no longer figures in the public debate on what the American community is and should be. Jeffrey Prager, for example, argues that race as a social construction, i.e. "the projection of socially created difference" organized by racial category, has been displaced by other collective or social representations which mediate reality for individual subjects. He contends that the resurgent tradition of expressive and utilitarian individualism, now dominant over the biblical and civic republican variants (following Bellah's findings in *Habits of the Heart*), at present articulates race in terms of private virtue, not collective responsibility. Using Durkheim's concept of "collective representations," Prager, however, holds that "the shifting meaning of race is a function of its negotiated and contingent public character."<sup>2</sup> While this may sound like a recap of Gunnar Myrdal's thesis in *An American Dilemma* (1944) which Oliver Cromwell Cox has effectively criticized in *Caste, Class and Race* (1948), Prager does not perceive any discordance between ideals and actuality. In fact he believes that the quest for the meaning and purpose of the American community cannot be accomplished except through the mediation of racial difference as part of "the American tradition" the preservation of which (he thinks) is "critical in a democratic society." Now why and how this collective representation of racial difference acquires permanent status as a necessary and constitutive element in American society is not demonstrated but simply assumed. In any case, what Prager points out as the mutations of racial discourse under the varying pressures of "historical circumstance and social negotiation" may explain, to some extent, why Douglass (but not Angela Davis) can be assimilated or integrated into the canon. But if so, has racism (as the lived experience of millions with real material consequences) been effectively abolished or even neutralized in the pacification of the ghettos and minority enclaves?<sup>3</sup>

Since the Seventies, the repudiation of New Critical dogmatism found in such volumes as *The Politics of Literature* (1970), Richard Ohmann's *English in America* (1976) and the writings of feminists and Third World activists (e.g., Paulo Freire's intervention was catalyzing at one stage of pedagogical reflection), may be regarded as symptomatic of the widespread dissatisfaction not with the racial problematic but chiefly with the exhausted pedagogical scholasticism of Ransom, Tate and Brooks which did not and could not address the urgent concerns of women and Blacks, and particularly students being drafted for the Vietnam war. Academic minds, as usual, lagged behind events. We know that from its genealogy in the agrarian reaction against the capitalist rehabilitation of the South, the New Critics were successfully incorporated into monopoly capital's hegemonic order as required by an expansive State engaged in surmounting the depression, fighting fascism, and asserting post-war global leadership. It was also supplanting Europe in its imperial tutelage / domination of the Third World. New Critical discourse was in effect instrumentalized to articulate the national identity even as the trope of the melting pot yielded to the rhetoric of integration. In line with supplementing the canon that evolved from Matthiessen's *The American Renaissance* (1941), to Spiller's *Literary History of the United States* (revised 1974), the elevation of Faulkner as an American, not just Southern, artist testifies to the New Critics' supremacy in the discipline. Despite the left-liberal reservations of Edmund Wilson and Irving Home on Faulkner's mythmaking, Robert Penn Warren's praise for Faulkner's conscience has succeeded in endowing the novelist with the gift of transcending the color bar. But, ironically, such color-blindness only confirmed the gap between the liberal State which guaranteed formal equality to all and the racially-structured civil society: "What Faulkner does is to make the character transcend his sufferings qua Negro to emerge not as Negro but as man—man, that is, beyond complexion and ethnic considerations....the final story is never one of social injustice; however important that element may be, but of an existential struggle against fate, for identity, a demonstration of the human will to affirm itself."<sup>4</sup> Viewed from this salvational gesture of discrimination, Faulkner's art redeems plantocratic prejudice and the narcissistic violence of a moribund socio-economic formation. Through this metamorphosis negotiated by criticism, Faulkner has indeed become an overdetermined signifier serving the claims of U.S. moral supremacy in the world.

Despite this rear-guard triumphalist humanism, the rituals of the Faulkner cult has been unable to silence dissenting voices, among them Ralph Ellison's refusal of the religious myth and its drive for racial mastery:

For it is the creative function of myth to protect the individual from the irrational, and since it is here in the realm of the irrational that, impervious to science, the stereotype grows, we see that the Negro stereotype is really an image of the unorganized, irrational forces of American life, forces through which, by projecting them in forms of images of an easily dominated minority, the white individual seeks to be at home in the vast unknown world of America. Perhaps the object of the stereotype is not so much to crush the Negro as to console the white man.<sup>5</sup>

We can see how Ellison, through a dialectical ruse of counterpointing outside and inside, conceives his task as one of helping the Black People attain self-definition, that is, "having their ideals and images recognized as part of the composite image which is that of the still forming American people." From the perspective of the reified subject now acquiring self-consciousness, the "American nation" its boundaries are redrawn: "The artist is no freer than the society in which he lives, and in the United States the writers who stereotype or ignore the Negro and other minorities in the final analysis stereotype and distort their own humanity."<sup>6</sup> At this point, we anticipate the totalizing principle of structuralism (most pronounced in Levi-Strauss' anthropology) that would subsequently displace the New Critical doctrine of the self-contained subject with a relational method in which the discovery of identity unfolds through the mediation of the other (social codes, laws, taboos).

Following our premise that race as a social construction (where the exploitation and oppression of one group occurs in a hierarchical system of class conflict) is needed for the self-affirmation of the dominant community, we can construe literature as one privileged field of this ideological operation, one of the most efficacious cultural spaces where the subject is racially marked and constituted? Faulkner's texts are powerful interpellations of the Black population as a subject race, albeit endowed with saving grace; *Intruder in the Dust*, for instance, can even be described as dialogical or intertextual—if only the voices of Richard Wright, Ellison, and Baldwin can be stilled. There is no space here to explore how Faulkner's texts, like the pioneering film *The Birth of a Nation* by D.W. Griffith (based on a fictional apologia, *The Clansman*, 1905), trace a common descent from racist attitudes thematized in religion, pseudo-scientific thinking and popular lore, discourses which also inform non-Southern writing by Frank Norris and Jack London, among others. With the end of Reconstruction followed by a series of economic depressions, the maintenance of fin-de-siecle order required the revitalization of a racist episteme and habitus. According to T.J. Jackson Lears, a historian of this transitional period:

In America as in Europe, racism intertwined with the recoil from modern softness. Anglo-Saxon racism offered a rationale for imperialist crusades against "inferior" overseas foes and also met less obvious social and psychic needs. Racism reasserted the cultural authority of the WASP bourgeoisie; it may also have provided many WASP Americans with a kind of negative identity—a means of shoring up selfhood by disowning impulses they distrusted in themselves. Defining idleness, irresolution, avarice and other moral shortcomings as "race traits" confined to inferior stock, racists reaffirmed a masterful, virtuous mode of identity for those who had lost a solid sense of self. Private needs had public consequences. In a variety of ways, racism revitalized the hegemony of the dominant WASP culture at a critical historical moment.<sup>8</sup>

In short, the presence of the racial Other sustains and validates the master's identity. Since the social field is a complex articulation of various levels of life-activities (political, ideological, economic), the intertextuality between hegemonic socio-political discourse and racist social practices and institutions can only be



mapped in specific historical conjunctures, a mapping which, for example, may be approximated by Thomas Gossett's survey *RACE The History of an Idea in America* (1963) and Michael Banto's *Racial Theories* (1987). Conceptions of racial contradiction, not just juxtaposed differences (such as those voiced by Hegel, Kant, Taine, Gobineau, Le Bon and others) are thus articulated with literary/aesthetic, moral and ethical ideas via the mediation of the underlying public discourse on the identity of American society.

Given this sketchy background on the displacements and sublimations of racist ideology, we may consider next the present conjuncture as a possible turning-point in the fraught relations between race and literary theory. This interaction has preoccupied the contributors to two important volumes both edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr: *Black Literature and Literary Theory* (1984) and *"Race," Writing, and Difference* (1985). In the latter volume, the theoretician of structuralism Tzvetan Todorov asks the tricky but misleading question: "If 'racial differences' do not exist, how can they possibly influence literary texts?" Ignorant of the subtle dynamics of ideology, Todorov misconceives the issue. He reduces the social categorization of people by racial (phenotypical) markers to legitimize hierarchy (economic and political stratification) to a simple question of cultural diversity. How can tolerance of cultures be equivalent to oppression and exploitation of a group based on a belief in its presumed inferiority? Todorov, moreover, seems innocent of the simplest facts of wage-differentiation and other forms of political and economic subordination based on ethnic/ racial identification. Todorov also insists that in general European Enlightenment thought was "universalist and egalitarian," thus enslavement and brutalization of non-white/non-Caucasian peoples. Then he adds insult to injury by apologizing for past racist (in his term, "racialist") ideologies as "not all 'bad' because they coincided with 'popular opinion' in their time, and above all they implied 'the very idea of shared humanity' abandonment of which would be more dangerous than 'ethnocentric universalism': 'All one would have to do in order to 'recycle' these authors [Taine, Gobineau] would be to subject their works to a double 'cleansing' process, first eliminating their now confusing references to 'race' and physical differences (replacing them with 'culture' and its derivatives) and then criticizing their oversimplified classifications and their glaring ethnocentric value judgments...(373)." What a messy salvaging operation for a famous scholar committed to the search for permanent truths!

It appears that the structuralist thinker has escaped the dreaded hermeneutic circle through unwitting bad faith. Although Todorov cautions against fetishizing otherness and mystifying racial difference to thwart the peril of universalism, he himself succumbs to an equally reprehensible essentialism: "We are not only separated by cultural differences; we are also united by a common human identity, and it is this which renders possible communication, dialogue, and, in the final analysis, the comprehension of otherness—it is possible precisely because otherness is ever radical." History is thereby suppressed, nullified. I



agree with the last point insofar as it resembles Bakhti's historically situated notion of intersubjective dialogue. And I endorse Todorov's caveat on unwarrantedly superimposing the deconstructionist critique of "the truth of identity" on Black writing. But he misses the point of the whole controversy which is focused on who precisely commands and exercises the power to articulate this "common human identity" and authorize or enforce it in specific times and places? Just like Derrida (in his reply to his critics in the same volume), Todorov warns against re-imposing cultural apartheid when he rejects Gates' call that Blacks must return to their own literature "to develop theories of criticism indigenous" to it, even though in both volumes all varieties of Western, non-Black approaches were mobilized to interpret and analyze Black and other non-European cultural texts. One can conclude that Todorov's philanthropic humanism is purely verbal. It is singularly blind to the complicity of ideas with State violence and the coercive, disciplinary apparatus of class interests—a concern registered particularly in recent socialist-feminist, Third World, and neo-Marxist inquiries.

Without having to suspect the cunning of Hegel's Reason behind all these ratiocinations, we submit that what Todorov intends in the sphere of thought has already been carried out in the "bantustan" policy of canon formation today. Are we witnessing the return of tokenism writ large, integration recuperated, races separate but equal under the same roof? The phenomenon currently celebrated today as pluralism, heterogeneity, De Man's vertiginous possibilities of meaning, and free play all safely operating in the realm of rarefied theorizing, can be appraised as a new hegemonic strategy of the ruling bloc following the demise of the New Criticism and the bankruptcy of its successors, archetypal criticism (Frye), phenomenological, structuralist, and so forth.<sup>10</sup> One can suggest that in the absence of any powerful mass movement the terms of public discourse tend to be fixed by those who control the ideological means of production. Let me cite a recent case. One can achieve what E.D. Hirsch calls "cultural literacy" and entitle you to join the mainstream community if you can consume enough information about Dubois, racism, apartheid, and a few hundred pieces of knowledge. In the process, Hirsch believes that we shall also recover what has been lost in the last twenty years of social engineering precipitated by urban and student riots, namely "the Ciceronian ideal of a universal public discourse," by expanding the reading list to include the productions of erstwhile marginal groups. This kind of education (and more) has enabled a sophisticated intellectual like Hirsch to appreciate how even members of the Black Panther Party, to his surprise, can write grammatically correct, intelligent English. This programmatic call to return to the basics, part of the conservative revival of the utilitarian individualism alluded to earlier and a reaction to the popular rebellions of the last two decades, pursues the line of universal humanism still prevalent in the mass media and the academies but now retooled and institutionalized in the context of different global contingencies by a predominantly white ruling class and its organic intellectuals. Hirsch's strategy for re-consolidating hegemony proves

once more that all discourse becomes intelligible only when we grasp their social mediations and their implicit political agendas.

Of all mediations, race is still the most dangerous and intractable in contemporary U.S. consciousness. While the assimilation into the curriculum of hitherto alien, potentially disruptive innovations (feminist theories of reading, for example) have enlarged but not substantially deepened the parameters of our discipline, the "political" or ideological critique of texts from an ethnic/racial subaltern perspective remains suspect and can only be intermittently tolerated. That is because subjectivity in the present conjuncture, while constituted by racial discourse, has to operate according to jurisprudential norms of equality, due process, and so forth. What I would call a race-relations mode of metacommentary which also articulates the moments of class and gender (such as those by Black women critics like Barbara Smith and Audre Lorde in *This Bridge Called My Back*, 1981; and the contributions of Hazel Carby and Pratibha Parmar in the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies' *The Empire Strikes Back*, 1982) is one that would not only position antithetical texts such as, for example, Richard Wright's "Blueprint for Negro Writing" (1937) side by side with T.S. Eliot's "Tradition and Individual Talent" (1919), or Frances Beale's "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female" (1969) next to Adriene Rich's "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-vision" (1972) in order to de-homogenize a liberal arts curriculum modeled after the classic "marketplace of ideas." It would insist on highlighting the contradiction of premises, assumptions, principles, and implications between these texts. It would call attention to "the war of position" (Gramsci's term), the dialectical confrontation between texts and practices and their asymmetrical power relations, within the framework of societies still characterized by injustice founded on class division and gender hierarchy—a condition which, for millions of people in our society, is (whether one likes it or not) still primarily lived and experienced as racial oppression. And that is not, to be sure, something undecidable or indeterminate. Ultimately, this approach will help clarify the problematic of race as analogically parallel to that of religion in Marx's well-known formulation in his "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" (1844): it is the "sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people."###

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> For an oppositional critique of the conservative trend, see Stanley Aronowitz and Henry Giroux, "Schooling, Culture and Literacy in the Age of Broken Dreams: A Review of Bloom and Hirs h," *Harvard Education Review*, 58 (1988): 172-194. On the struggle for the empowerment of "subalterns" in Stanford University, see the report in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 14 Dec. 1988: 1, All.

<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey Prager, "American political culture and the shifting meaning of race," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 10 (1987): 62-81. For a new theoretical formulation of the positionality of race as a "decentered complex of social meanings," see Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States From the 1960s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> See Michael Omi and Howard Winant, "By the Rivers of Babylon: Race in the United States," *Socialist Review*, 71 & 72 (September-October 1983): 31-65; 35-69, excerpted in *Racism*, ed. Bruno Leone (St. Paul: Greenhaven press, 1986) 137-143. For an analysis of racist discourse/practices in Britain which can be highly instructive for American scholars, consult Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *The Empire Strikes Back* (London: Hutchinson, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> Robert Penn Warren, "Faulkner: The South, the Negro, and Time," *Faulkner: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1966) 263. Compare Irving Howe, "The Southern Myth and Faulkner," *The American Culture*, ed. Hennig Cohen (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968) 430-48.

<sup>4</sup> David Minter, ed., *William Faulkner The Sound and the Fury* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987) 266. Parenthetically, Ellison's remark uncannily anticipates Lacan's theory of the Imaginary as the matrix of Manichean transitivity, as well as Fanon's dialectics of colonized/colonizer in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963).

<sup>5</sup> Minter 267-268. Elaborations of the Black identity project can be found in Addison Gayle, Jr., ed., *The Black Aesthetic* (New York: Doubleday, 1972) and Amiri Baraka, "The Revolutionary Tradition in Afro-American Literature" (1978), in *Poetry and Politics*, ed. Richard Jones (New York: Quill, 1985) 175-187.

<sup>6</sup> For a neoMarxist articulation of class and race, I recommend Stuart Hall, "Race, articulation and societies structured in dominance," in UNESCO, *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism* (Paris: Unesco, 1980) 305-345. See also John Solomos, "Varieties of Marxist Concepts of 'Race,' Class and the State: a critical analysis," *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations*, ed. John Rex and David Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986) 84-109. For a Gramscian orientation, consult: Eugene Genovese, *In Red and Black* (New York: Pantheon, 1971) 55-72, 188-199; and Cornel West, "Marxist Theory and the Specificity of Afro-American Oppression," *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois P, 1988) 17-29.

<sup>7</sup> *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981) 108-109.

<sup>8</sup> Joel Kovel describes such an attitude (as shown by Todorov) as a form of "metaracism" in *White Racism* (New York: Columbia UP, 1984) 211-230. Certain observations of Robert Blauner are still relevant today; see his *Racial Oppression in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972) 1-110.

<sup>9</sup> Part of this hegemonic strategy may be located in the "ethnicity" approach to the humanities: for example, Werner Sollors, "Literature and Ethnicity," *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1980) 647-665. Current feminist theories of reading persist in being color-blind also; see Elizabeth Flynn and Patrocínio Schweickart, eds., *Gender and Reading* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1986). The scandal of racist white feminism has been noted by Arthur Brittan and Mary Maynard, *Sexism, Racism and Oppression* (New York: Blackwell, 1984) and particularly by Jenny Bourne, "Towards an anti-racist feminism," *Race and Class* (Summer 1983:1-22. On linguistic hegemony/racism, see Mary Louise Pratt, "Linguistic Utopias," *The linguistics of writing*, ed. Nigel Fabb et al. (New York: Methuen, 1987) 48-66.

## FREEDOM AND PATRIOTISM IN THE PRIZE-WINNING POEMS OF ZARAGOZA AND GUMBAN

DEMY P. SONZA

The literature of a people mirrors their sentiments and aspirations, and among the literary forms, poetry seems to be the favorite medium for the artistic articulation of a people's feelings—their anguish and joy, their fears, their hopes, their dreams.

The Ilonggo people have produced a good number of poets who wrote in their native language, Hiligaynon. Their works dwell on subjects as varied as human feeling and imagination can cover. For this paper, however, I have selected the related topics of freedom and patriotism, and have limited the study to the prize-winning poems of the two foremost Hiligaynon poets: Flavio Zaragoza Cano of Cabatuan and Delfin Gumban of Pavia, Iloilo.

The two poets were born six months apart: Zaragoza on June 27 and Gumban on December 25 of 1892. Both attended the Instituto de Molo in Molo, Iloilo City, and then went to Manila to study law. While Zaragoza quit his studies in favor of journalism and literature, Gumban obtained his law degree; but like his friend Flavio Zaragoza, never gave up literature. Indeed, the muse of poetry was, in their case, a jealous mistress.

Zaragoza and Gumban were young boys at the start of the Philippine Revolution in 1898, and their respective families were actively involved in the Revolution as well as in the Filipino-American War that followed. They were in their teens when the Filipino leaders headed by Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmeña began the parliamentary struggle to win back the independence that they had won from Spain but was snatched away by the Americans.

It was no wonder, therefore, that the writings of the two poets were replete with patriotic, nationalistic and libertarian sentiments.

For sure, poems had been written in Hiligaynon earlier than 1926, but it was only in that year that the first major competition in *binalaybay* (poetry) was held in Iloilo, under the sponsorship of the *Makinaugalingon*, a newspaper founded by Rosendo Mejica in 1913. The name of the periodical suggests patriotism because the word “makinaugalingon” means “favoring our own.” The winner of the contest was crowned as “Batharing Mamalaybay” (“Prince of Poets”) at a program held at the Teatro Venus in Iloilo on May 2, 1926.

The winner and the very first “batharing mamalaybay” was Flavio Zaragoza Cano. His winning poem was entitled “Sa Dalagang Ilong-Ilonganon.” The poem extols the beauty and honor of the Ilonggo maiden.

*Daw bulak ka sang sampaga  
Nga wala'y dalang salait,  
Pispis ka sang paghidait  
Kag kabugwason sa aga....  
O mayuyum nga dalaga  
Nga sa Ilong-Ilong sumilak,  
Diwa kang makahililak  
Nga kumonsad sa Madyaas  
Kag ang dungog mong mataas  
Dili mabaylo sa pilak...!*

(The sampaga flower you are  
A prickly thorn you don't possess,  
You are the lovely bird of peace  
You are the brilliant morning star....  
Oh, maiden sweet as the nectar,  
My people's illumination,  
Goddess of matchless attraction  
From Madyaas you've descended,  
Your honor silver cannot bid  
Nor is there any valuation...!

“Sa Dalagang Ilong-Ilonganon” is more than just a tribute to the Ilonggo woman. I think “Dalaga” stands for the Motherland who protects her people and whose people, in turn, are ready to defend her.

*Dili mas-a matugotan  
Nga may maglupig sa amon,  
Kay ikaw ang iloy namon  
Sa 'babaw sang kalibutan.*

(It cannot ever be allowed  
That somebody would oppress us,

You our mother will protect us  
Against anyone in this world.)

“Dalaga” is the Motherland whom the poet assures of his loyalty and willingness to defend even unto death:

*Kag kon sin-ong makulangan  
Nga sa imo magamulay  
Sa akon kusog magahulay,  
Mapukan sa kahamakan  
Agud sia pagatapakan  
Sang imo nga pagkaulay....!*

(And whoever makes the mistake  
To do you any slight or harm  
Will meet with the strength of my arm,  
He will fall in utter defeat  
To be trampled under your feet  
Your honor flying high unharmed...!)

Like Rizal in his “Mi Ultimo Adios,” Zaragoza expresses the sentiment that it is sweet to die for one’s nativeland. The last lines of “Sa Dalagang Ilong-Ilonganon”

*Putsa man ang bangkay nakon  
Sa lambon nimon hamili*

(And enwrap my lifeless body  
In your cold but sacred soil)

rings similarly with Rizal’s

And sleep in thy bosom  
eternity’s long night.

“Sa Dalagang Ilong-Ilonganon” was written at the time when the Filipinos were fighting to win back their independence through peaceful means and the prospect of winning the parliamentary campaign in Washington, D.C. was becoming bright. The poet prays that the budding flower of independence may not be plucked by misfortune, but if that happened, he was willing to shed his blood in its defense. He further declares his belief that the blood of heroes and martyrs does not drench and put out the fire of patriotism. On the contrary, it waters the seed of freedom to grow and prosper. Listen to these lines:

*Kabay pa mangin huwaran  
 Ang bukol nimo nga bulak,  
 Kabay pa dili mapulak,  
 Sa sawi nga kapalaran  
 Sing dugo akon halaran  
 Maugdang mong pamatasan,  
 Agud bisan mapilasan  
 Kag sa lulobngan magdayon,  
 Sa gamut sang kamatayon  
 Manugdo ang kaluwasan...!*

(And I pray for the blossoming  
 Of the young flower that you have,  
 May it not be nipped in the bud  
 By mishap or evil scheming,  
 With blood I'll make an offering  
 To defend your faultless honor,  
 Should I fail to be the victor  
 And to the grave I be taken  
 My death shall be the token  
 For freedom to spring in splendor...!

In the poetry contest of 1926 which Zaragoza won, the poem that captured the second prize was titled "Ambahanon sa Kaluwasan" (Song to Freedom) by Delfin Gumban. But such was the literary fervor of the time that shortly after Zaragoza was crowned "Batharing Mamalaybay," another poetical competition was held, sponsored by the Sociedad Union Juvenil. This time, Gumban emerged triumphant with his poem "Halad kay Rizal" ("Ode to Rizal") and he was proclaimed "Batharing Mamalaybay."

The crowning program was held at the Teatro-Cine Lux in Iloilo on December 30, 1926, the 30th anniversary of Rizal's martyrdom. At that same occasion, a *balagtas* in Hiligaynon was staged on the question of who was more important between the two parents, *Amay* (Father) or *Iloy* (Mother). Gumban spoke in favor of *Amay* while Serapion Torre defended *Iloy*. The contest was a non-decision one, yet the audience acclaimed Gumban as the winner and so the press dubbed him as "Hari sa Balagtas" ("King of Poetical Jousts") in Iloilo.

Back to Gumban's poem "Ambahanon sa Kaluwasan." As the title suggests, it is a poem in praise of freedom. The first stanza reads:

*Diwa nga ginaambahan  
 sang Natuboan Kong Duta,  
 dili malingkang nga kuta  
 sang hilway nga kabikahan;*



*handum nga ginkaisahan  
nga apinan sing hamili,  
hayahay nga ginpasili  
sa dugo sang mga Ulang,  
bahandi'ng ila gindulang  
apang sa amon ginadumili.*

(A goddess thou art who is sung  
by my beloved Nativeland,  
a fortress that's impregnable  
for an independent people;  
a dream for which we all aspire  
and pledged to fight till we acquire,  
a banner whose colors were dyed  
bright by our forebears' crimson blood,  
a jewel that they have moulded  
yet to us is being denied.

The lines "kalipay, gugma kag palad/ dungog, kabuhi kag pilak/ ginahalad sa wa'y kahilak" sound akin to the words of the American Declaration of Independence "We pledge our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

In the same poem Gumban showed his nationalistic bent and expressed his suspicion about American intentions in the Philippines. He tried to convince his readers not to trust in American promises, alleging that the U.S. had selfish and imperialistic designs on the Philippines.

*Dili na ang banwa magpati  
sa America kag magtuo  
sa iya tug-an nga naluo  
nga buot sa amon ikati;  
dapat nga ang salampati  
man zaman sa Salagyan  
kay wala sing nasilawan  
kag ginahangad sa duta  
kundi pagbusog, pagbuta  
sang tinai sing bulawan.*

(The people will believe no more  
in America nor be led  
by her promise that has decayed  
she wants to dangle as a lure;  
the dove that's innocent and pure  
should watch out against the Eagle  
for this bird fears not a single

thing nor craves anything on earth  
but to fully fill its broad girth  
with silver gems and gold spangle.)

The line "ang iya tug-an nga naluo" ("her promise that has decayed") calls to mind the American promise to General Emilio Aguinaldo to help drive the Spaniards out of the Philippines, but as it turned out, the United States took over our country from Spain.

Gumban saw America as a bird of prey that wanted to feed on the rich grounds of the Philippines. He likened the Philippines to the gentle, innocent dove (salampati) and U.S. to the fierce sea eagle (salagyawan) and he warned the dove to beware of the eagle which fears nothing and craves to fill its stomach with gold.

Echoing the sentiments of many Filipinos of his time regarding independence which America was hesitant to grant, Gumban addressed these lines to Freedom:

*Gapaabot kami gihapon  
sang putli mo nga kapawa  
agud makatimawa  
sa singkaw sang dumalapon.*

(We are anxiously awaiting  
the bursting of your radiant light  
in order to lighten our plight  
underneath the alien's yoking.)

And he believed that eventually the Philippines will regain her freedom because no foreign subjugation can last forever.

*Sa gihapon ang pagtuo  
nga ikaw amon madawat  
sa kusog nga dili mapawat  
sang amon kamumuo.*

-----  
*Wa'y panglupig nga gadayon  
kon sa banwa may pag-unong.*

(We never falter in our faith  
that liberty we shall attain  
to become our precious gain  
and with strength defend to death.

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No oppression lasts forever  
if the people rise together.)

Like Zaragoza, Delfin Gumban believed that freedom is worth fighting for, and that a freedom fighter may not live to see the success of his struggle yet his efforts are never in vain. And if the crusader for freedom dies in the process, his blood will soften the seed of freedom to sprout and grow and bloom. A stanza of his "Halad kay Rizal" reads:

*Nanugdu sa alibutod sang kalag sang kauturan  
ang imo ginpaminhi, lunsay kamatuoran,  
nga sa Banwa nag-iwag sa gab-i sang panag-on,  
ikaw dili mamatay, sa dughan wa'y madula;  
kon ang liso sang luthang sang dugu mo nag-ula  
sang imo pagtupok ang Banwa mo nagpag-on.*

(In the core of the soul of your countrymen has sprouted  
the seedlings of the truth that you have patiently planted.  
and gave light in the night of our dear Motherland  
you will never die, from our hearts you can never depart;  
if your innocent blood was spilt by the gun's deadly dart  
your fall strengthened the foundations of our beloved land.)

The last two lines remind us of the words of another Filipino poet, Cecilio Apostol, in his poem also dedicated to Rizal:

*Si una bala destruzo tu craneo  
Tu idea tambien destruzo un empirio.*

(If a bullet had destroyed your cranium  
your idea also toppled down an empire.)

And Zaragoza likewise shared that noble sentiment when he wrote:

*Agud, bisan mapilasan  
Kag sa lulobngan magdayon,  
Sa gamut sang kamatayon  
Manugdo ang kaluwasan.*

(Should I fail to be the victor  
And to the grave I be taken  
My death shall be the token  
For freedom to spring in splendor...!)

Gumban believed in the future of his country and looked towards its development. He was especially fond of Mindanao, to where he migrated in 1927, and which he called "The Land of Promise." The following short poem entitled "Mindanao" expresses his hopes:

*O, mutya nga lihan!  
 Hiyas nga ginpatinga sa Bag-o nga Maragtas:  
 Ako ang Busalian  
 Nga sa talon naglatas  
 Sa paghaklu sang bulak sa imo kapatagan  
 Gikan sa unhan nga baybay;  
 Lumanab kong himagan  
 Ibunsad ko sa duta  
 Agud nga sa salsalon nga dalipi sang kuta  
 Magtubod sing dagaya dugos sang binalaybay.*

(Oh, pearl of deep enchantment!  
 Given in advance payment for the New Future:  
 I am the Medicine Man  
 Through the woods did I venture  
 In order to breathe the floral scent of your level  
 land  
 And my magic spear I cast down  
 Hoping that from the clay wall of this forbidden ground  
 The honey of poetry would gush out in full splendor.

Delfin Gumban pinned his hope for the liberation of the Philippines on the youth of the land because they have obtained higher education than their elders.

*Ang paglaum nga maambong  
 yara sa bag-ong Tinubo  
 nga sa bulawan nga tubo  
 sang kaalam nagatambong;  
 amo ang gakalas sang lambong  
 nga gakuwap sa himaya,  
 magabuhi sang nalaya  
 nga binhi sang kaluwasan  
 sang panglupig kag sang daya  
 sa dalit nga tampalasan.*

(Our hope brilliant and promising  
 are the youth of the nation  
 Who are getting their education  
 seated around the plate of learning;  
 they who are bravely tearing

at the veil that hides the glory  
will revive the lost memory  
of the seedling of our freedom  
wilted by deceit, treachery  
and the most virulent venom.)

Reading the prize-winning poems of Zaragoza and Gumban, one cannot help being moved by their noble thoughts on patriotism and freedom. The poets themselves showed their love of country not only through their poetry but also through their very lives. Both served in the government. Zaragoza was municipal secretary of Cabatuan, then of Dumangas and finally of the Provincial Board of Iloilo. Gumban served as municipal mayor of Pavia, then as a district judge in Agusan from where he was elected to the Constitutional Convention in 1934.

The two foremost Hiligaynon poets lived to a full ripe age, and since they did not lay down their pens till the end, they produced a large number of poems. It is a pity that much of their works have been lost; but even with what has survived there is still plenty of Zaragoza and Gumban that should be read by our people today and tomorrow. Many of their poems beautifully speak of deathless things and therefore will remain relevant for all time.

# **STUDY OF THE COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF FOUR PROCEDURES FOR MAINTAINING THE STERILITY OF USED INFUSION NEEDLES FOR VENOCLYSIS REINSERTION**

**TERESITA LACANLALE-VILLAROSA**

This experimental study was undertaken to determine (1) which of the four procedures was the most effective in maintaining the sterility of the infusion needle for venoclysis reinsertion, (2) whether there was any difference in the percentage of contamination, and (3) what types of microbial contaminants were present in the cases in which the different procedures were used.

The subjects were twenty-four pediatric patients, or six cases in each sequence of four from the pediatric ward of the Western Visayas Medical Center at Mandurriao, Iloilo City.

The post-test-only control group design was used. The four procedures utilized by the nurses involved (1) the use of Cidez™ disinfecting solution, (2) the use of capillary plastic tubing soaked in disinfecting solution overnight, (3) the use of sterile gauze, and (4) the use of disinfected intravenous medication port. Each specimen including those in the control group was obtained directly from each dislodged infusion needle by a medical technologist who took the specimen immediately to the clinical laboratory for incubation and culture testing. The results of the sterility and the culture testing were observed and recorded every 24, 48 and 168-hour interval. The results were verified by the Head Bacteriologist of WVMC.

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<sup>1</sup> Master's thesis done for the degree of Master of Arts in Nursing, at Central Philippine University.

**Findings.** The results of the fluid thioglycolate (FT) testing and the McConkey agar culture plates showed that:

1. All the specimens taken from the infusion needles for all the four procedures used for maintaining sterility were found to be free of any disease-producing microbes within 48 hours from the time the infusion needles were pulled out of the patient's veins. No pathogens were found in the needles from the control group.
2. After 48 hours, two procedures — medication port and sterile gauze — were found to have one contamination each. The procedures using capillary tubes and soaking solution had two contaminations each. The control group was completely free of any pathogens.
3. All the specimens using the four procedures were free of monilia isolates until the 96th hour when the microbes were identified. Two instances of contamination out of six cases using Procedure capillary tubes and one case out of six using Procedure sterile gauze were found to have been contaminated by the same microbes by the 96th hour.

Staphylococcus aureus was isolated after 72 hours or three days in the specimens from Procedure Cidex™ soaking solution. In Procedure medication port, staphylococcus was isolated in 168 hours, or seven days.

**Conclusions.** From the results of the study, the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. All the four procedures were 100 percent effective in maintaining the sterility of used infusion needles within 48 hours as shown by the fact that all the specimens were clear of any microbial growth within this period.
2. After 48 hours, it is not safe to reinsert used infusion needles treated with any of the four procedures because disease-carrying microbes were isolated at various intervals after this time. Identified microbial contaminants include staphylococcus aureus and monilia organism.
3. The results of the control group indicated that aseptically pulled out dislodged needle is certainly sterile. Effort was made to reinsert the needle after it had been pulled out or dislodged, without subjecting the needle to any of the four aforementioned procedures.

**Recommendations.** Based on the results of the study and the conclusions arrived at, the following recommendations are advanced:



1. A dislodged infusion needle may be reinserted into the patient's vein within forty-eight hours after it has been aseptically pulled out.
2. All of the four procedures are effective within the 48-hour period, if there is a need for reinsertion. The administration must choose or prescribe whichever procedure is cost-effective or most economical. It might be remembered that:
  - a. The use of the medication port will not cost anything since the in-use intravenous set is utilized. The needle should be carefully inserted through the softest part at the center of the medication port to protect the tip of the needle from being blunt and causing pain.
  - b. Capillary tubes can be made from discarded intravenous tubing cut into the desired length and soaked in disinfectant solution of Cidex™ overnight. The needle protector that comes with every pack should be conserved, soaked in disinfectant solution, and held in place with surgical tape.
  - c. A piece of 4 x 4 sterile, single ply gauze costs P4.50.
  - d. Disinfectant soaking solution of Cidex™ of 120 centiliters costs P35.
3. Similar studies might be conducted on a larger scale considering other variables not covered by this study.
4. Hospital directors, ward administrators, chiefs of nursing services and physicians should work together to make lawmakers and the Philippine Nursing Board update nursing laws and policies to meet the needs of the patients in hospitals and to improve health care delivery system. One of the problems is the law which specifies that nurses may not insert IV's. A special group of persons other than doctors might be trained for the job of intravenous insertion and their services made available round the clock in hospitals to relieve the doctors of this job and to respond immediately to the patients' need.
5. Nurses should find the time to record when a needle has been dislodged from the patients' vein.
6. The results of this study should be disseminated and made a part of the guidelines for better patient care.

# **THE SMALL-SCALE BAMBOOCRAFT MANUFACTURING ENTREPRENEUR; HIS ECONOMIC PROFILE, PRACTICES AND PROBLEMS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MAASIN, ILOILO\***

**STEPHEN UNAEZE**

The interest in and attention given to the bamboocraft industry and the bamboocraft manufacturers in the municipality of Maasin, as explained by the secretary to the mayor of Maasin, spring from acute scarcity of capital which limits the scope of enterprises in the area. Agriculture, the main means of livelihood of Maasin's population, is largely on a subsistence level. Farming land has been considerably reduced by the acquisition of Metro Iloilo Water District of about 6,150 hectares of the municipal land. This situation, according to him, calls for concerted effort in other areas of economic activities of which bamboocraft production comes first.

In effect this study wishes to determine who are the bamboocraft manufacturers in the municipality of Maasin and what their practices and problems are in relation to the aspects of the manufacturing business such as:

1. Obtaining capital and financing their enterprise
2. Obtaining labor and technical personnel
3. Obtaining material for production

This study also wishes to determine if bamboocraft manufacturers lack skills and what particular skills they and their personnel lack.

To determine the profile, practices and problems of bamboocraft entrepreneurs, this study used the interview technique.

Analysis of data revealed that entrepreneurs engaged in bamboocraft production in the municipality of Maasin are men and women who have usually completed only grade school. They have been engaged in the bamboocraft business for an average of more than 9 years, having organized their business either as sole proprietorship or family-based types.

Bamboocraft entrepreneurs face the problems of inadequate working capital. To overcome this problem, they ask for a down payment or a cash advance for orders received. They adopt the product costing method in determining selling price of products and pay their workers by piece rate. Although they need additional funds to finance their business, high interest rates and the requirement of collateral keep them from seeking and obtaining loans.

Also, bamboocraft business owners lack skills, especially on how to make products different from other producers' products. Again, most bamboocraft producers in the municipality of Maasin buy their bamboo rather than harvest from their own bamboo clumps. They produce various items but fans, baskets, flower vases and sawali are the most frequently produced. They get their bamboo mainly from within Maasin, but their problem in acquiring bamboo is the high cost of bamboo.

Furthermore, bamboocraft manufacturers from the municipality of Maasin face the problem of low sales resulting from inadequate market outlets or channels of distribution. Aside from this, price competition tends to compound the problems of entrepreneurs in this municipality.

Also, they do not market their products adequately. Hence it is recommended that bamboocraft manufacturers in Maasin group themselves together and form a producers / marketing cooperative in order to jointly market their products and avail of group loans from various government agencies. Procedures should be set so that loans availed of is used only for working capital to ensure continued and regular operations.

It is also advised that the present municipal government's plan of building a cottage industry training center be implemented. And when completed this should extend free skills and management training for bamboocraft entrepreneurs.

It is also recommended that, the provincial government should review its various lending policies so as to incorporate in some of these policies new provisions such as, one which could grant collateral-free loans and undertake joint marketing and profit sharing (loans are collected out of profits). This provision can better help entrepreneurs and at the same time safeguard government loans.

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