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filipino

The Migrants' Newspaper

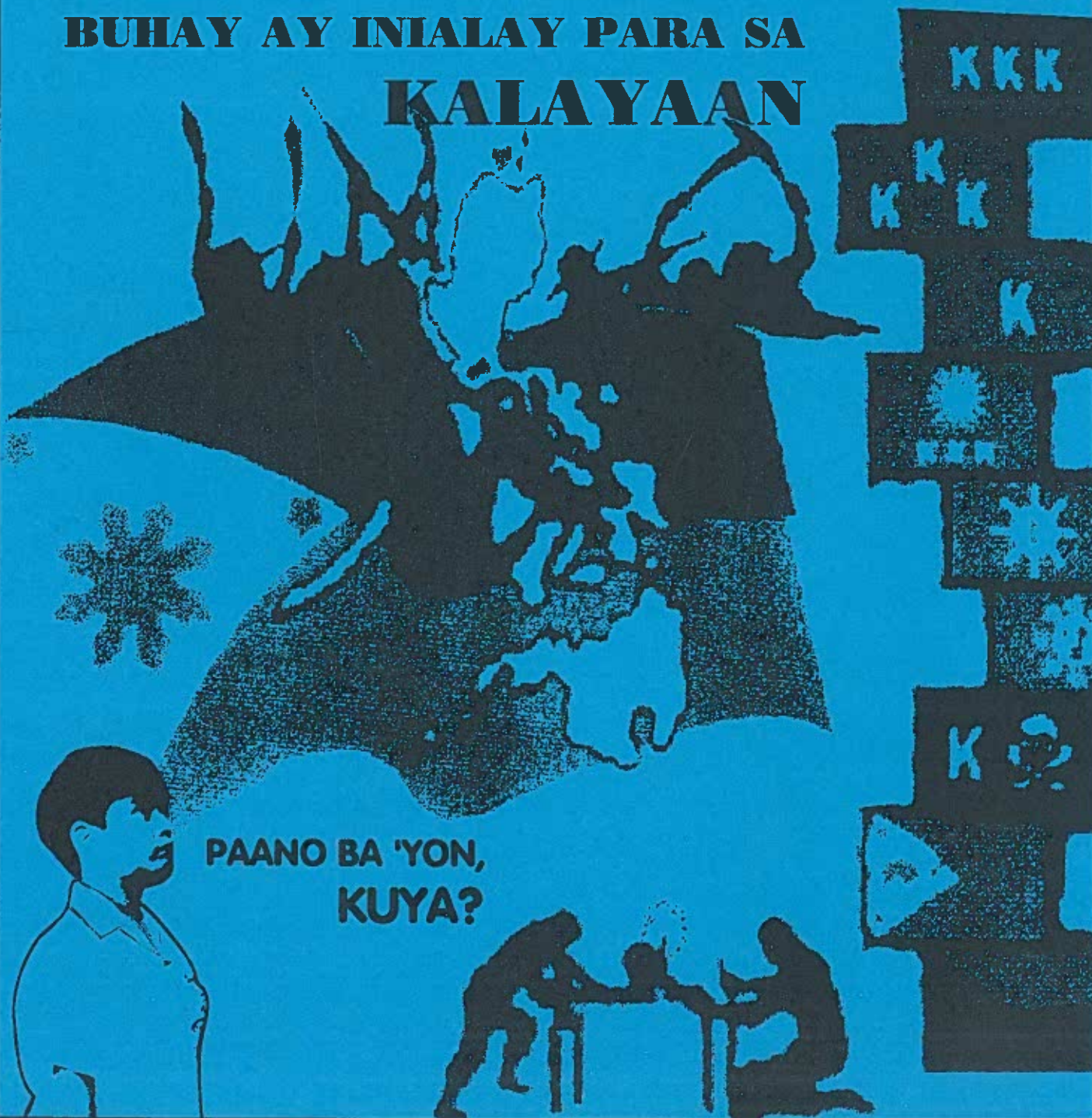
mirror

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Bayanihan Center for Filipino Migrants-Denmark®

June 1998

BUHAY AY INIALAY PARA SA KALAYAAN



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the official organ of the
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FOR FILIPINO MIGRANTS-DENMARK®

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the why of the cover

"Ako ay isang musmos at walang gaanong kaalaman, inaakay pa sa landas ng karunungan at kakayahan. Ngunit nais ko sanang magising sa pagbubukang-liwayway na ang masisilayan ay kapayapaan at kaunlaran. Ngunit paano? Nainiwala akong ang kabayanihan ay hindi lamang sa pamamagitan ng pagbubuwis ng buhay. Kung may mga bayani sa labanan ay may mga bayani rin sa kapayapaan. Sa pagsulong ko sa Taon ng Sentenaryo ng Pilipinas, iuukit ko sa aking murang damdamin ang alaalang nakapaloob sa ating bandila. Ito ang siyang huhubog sa akin upang maging isang munting bayani ng mahal na bayan."

EMBASSY OF THE PHILIPPINES Stockholm



One hundred years ago, we forged a nation marked by a ceaseless struggle for freedom. Today, we stand as the beneficiaries of a rich historical and cultural legacy.

As we thank the Lord for His blessings to our country and people and as we celebrate this joyous day, let us ponder on the meaning of this historic event. Let us instill in the minds of our children patriotism, love of our country and people. Our forebears made great sacrifices and many of them died in the battlefields to defend our freedom. Let us cherish and honor the memory of these men and women of courage and vision who gave so much of themselves so that we will be free.

I urge all of you to heed the teachings embodied in the *Kartilya ng Katipunan* written by Emilio Jacinto. It enjoins all Filipinos to consecrate their lives to a lofty and sacred cause and to perform good deeds because they desire to do good which in essence is kindness to another human being. It reminds us that "true greatness consists in being charitable, in loving one's fellowmen and in adjusting every deed and word to reason." It also teaches us that "all men are equal regardless of the color of their skin." We are reminded that nobility prefers honor to personal gains. Timeless lessons such as the importance of using our time wisely and the need to defend the oppressed and to fight the oppressor. The *Kartilya* tells us that "an intelligent man is he who is cautious in speech and knows how to keep secrets that must be guarded. With regard to human relations, the *Kartilya* says that the man is the guide of his wife and children. The *Kartilya* upholds women and it urges men to "think not of woman as a thing merely to while away time with but to consider the woman as a helper and partner in the hardships of life. It urges the men to respect women in the same manner that they accord respect to their own mothers. We are all reminded of this great teaching: "A noble man is one who has an upright character, who is true to his words, who has dignity and honor; who does not oppress; who knows how to look after and love the land of his birth."

In the words of His Excellency President Fidel V. Ramos: "We see the centenary celebration as a pivotal point in our history. We have envisaged this occasion not only as an opportunity to commemorate the heroism of our forebears, but also as a chance for a national reflection. One hundred years of nationhood have ushered in a more mature statehood for our country. Today there is a reawakening of the same Filipino spirit that inspired our ancestors to declare independence and establish the first democracy in Asia. With this same spirit of national unity, I believe we can emerge as a center of social, economic and cultural forces in our dynamic region."

It is auspicious that a new administration takes over the helm of government by 30 June 1998.

The next six years will be devoted by the Estrada administration to the attainment of a ten-point action agenda which puts emphasis on governance, fiscal policy, monetary and financial reforms, exports and investments, infrastructure, agriculture, safety nets, education, science and technology, and the environment.

The years to come will usher in more positive developments that will bring us closer to the realization of all our aspirations for our country and people. A determined and a united people - whether they are at home or abroad - can help achieve national goals. Let this be your pledge and your mission.

I commend all of you who worked very hard to make the Philippine Centenary celebrations a great success.

Malugod ko kayong binabati sa makasaysayang pagdiriwang ng ikasandaang taon ng ating kasarinlan. lagi po ninyong alalahanin na ang kalayaan ay kayamanan ng bayan.

To the friends of the Philippines who have joined us this evening in celebrating 100 years of our nationhood, we say "Maraming Salamat Po" and "Mabuhay kayong lahat." It means "Thank You" and "Welcome to the Philippines." We hope that your presence this evening is just a prelude to your visit to our country.

Mabuhay ang Republika ng Pilipinas!

(Sgd.) ERLINDA F. BASILIO
Ambassador

6 June 1998

SANKT ANNÆ KIRKE Copenhagen



A Centennial and a Congress

When you see the above heading, you might ask what has that got to do with the Filipino Mirror and the June Centennial Independence celebration. There is a connection. Like two sides to a good story, there is happy historical outcome after the Philippine Revolution against Spain in 1896. Freedom and independence for the Filipino people was at last in sight. Filipinos at home and abroad celebrate this year the centennial that brought colonization to an end.

But there is another side to the story. What about Christianity and the Faith left as a heritage by Spain to the Philippines? A companion of mine, Fr. Gerry Pierse who came from Ireland as a student, was ordained in Cebu in the sixties and has been working in the Philippines since then, had this to say: "At the outbreak of the Revolution in 1896, there were about 1,300 Spanish friars in the Philippines. In the next two years, about 40 were killed and about 700 left the islands. The American government took over "respecting all religions and teaching none." The Church lacked priests and was threatened on one side by Gregorio Aglipay's Independent Church of the Philippines and on the other by scores of American Protestant missionaries.

In 1902, the Papal Apostolic delegate Mgr. Agius appealed to our General Superior in Rome for American Redemptorists to come to the Philippines. The superiors in Rome referred the request to the Irish Redemptorists. The Irish Redemptorists took formal possession of the Convento in Opon (now Lapu-Lapu City) on Mactan island, Cebu on 17 March 1906. They were the first of the Missionary Societies to answer the appeal for help for the Philippine Church and the first Redemptorists to arrive in Asia.

The first Irish community of five priests and two brothers began their missionary work there in June. The following year, some Fathers from Australia joined them. The beginnings were not easy. They were not used to the heat, the culture or the language. To add to their problems, a boycott was organized against "these new foreigners taking the place of the 'frailies.'" However, after a few months the opposition melted and they were warmly accepted by the people.

In May 1913, a foundation was begun in Malate, Manila with the intention of giving missions in the Tagalog regions. In 1928, the Irish Redemptorists handed over the Malate Parish to the Columban Fathers. They had now new bases in Cebu, Iloilo and Baclaran from which they could devote themselves entirely to the missions, their first priority.

When the missionaries went out to the cities, towns and barrios, they preached the simple but important truths of God's great love and mercy for all. They brought with them the devotion to the Mother of Perpetual Help. Because there were no Spanish priests to take care of the people, they left in the barrios and towns the great devotion to our Lady. She would be there to take care of them with her Son, until some day the Filipinos themselves would have sufficient priests to look after their own people.



This year, as the heading above clearly states, Baclaran, which has the largest novena to the Mother of Perpetual Help in the whole world, will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the devotion. Each Wednesday, about 100,000 Filipinos attend the Novenas and the Masses. The Congress will reflect on how the devotion to the Mother of Perpetual Help can respond to the challenges of the times and the needs of the Filipino people, and continue to be a blessing for them wherever they are in the world and right into the Third Millennium.

(Sgd.) FR. PATRICK J. SHEILS, C.S.S.R.
Chaplain for the Filipino Community

VOR FRUE KIRKE

Herlev



As a family we celebrate!

Let me begin with a story. "A mother was telling her little girl about life on the farm when she was growing up. 'I had great fun on the farm,' she said. 'I had my own swing made from an old car tire, which hung from an old oak tree. I had my own pony to ride. I used to slide down the haystack in the summer. And when it snowed, I would ride in a sleigh pulled by one of the horses. My life on the farm was a real joyful experience.' Her daughter's eyes opened wide and just sparkled. And she said to her mother, 'I sure wish I had met you sooner.' "

Each of you, who has migrated to Denmark, has your memories of growing up in the Philippines and your dreams and plans for a new life for yourselves and your children. We, your children and your friends, can only listen and try to imagine what those days and events in your life were like. Like the woman's daughter, we too can say that we would have liked to have known you then.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, reflecting on the dreams, hopes and aspirations of people, has written: "All the events of the past and all the events of the future are just little things as compared to what is happening to me now." Here today, right now, is where I dream and hope, play and cry, meet success or experience failure with life's challenges, and live and die. Today is very important to me. And so it is with each of you, whether immigrants to Denmark, or born here; important too to your friends, who come to know you and to share our lives with you.

The Filipino people have a long history leading to its birth as a free and independent nation and building bridges of friendship with its neighbors. You remember and are grateful to God for His blessings and gifts. Nevertheless, what is important now is where you are as a people both in the Philippines or here in Denmark. The important questions are: "Who are we now?" and "What must we do to realize our dreams for the future?"

I offer one answer. Remember your heritage as a Christian and Moslem people. In common, there is belief in a one God and Father of all His children. It is this belief, which helps you understand the treasure, which every single person truly is. It is the life blood that makes you a family, a people. In this family you live and love, you argue and disagree, you manifest how you are alike and how you are different. Nevertheless, you are still a family, and you can use reason and discussion, not violence toward a brother or a sister, to resolve your differences. This is truly the wealth and treasure of a people.

Today, I extend my congratulations and best wishes to the Filipino people, as you celebrate worldwide your 100th Anniversary of Independence as a nation. May you continue to enjoy the blessings of God, our Father, in the years to come.

Unlike the little girl, "I wish I had met you sooner," but I am glad to know you now. Congratulations on your (our) anniversary!

(Sgd.) FR. CARROLL PARKER, OMI
Chaplain for the English-speaking Community

FILIPINO COMMUNITY CELEBRATES 100TH YEAR OF KALAYAAN

The Philippine Centennial Committee - Denmark is the coordinating unit among the different clubs and organizations for the year-long centennial celebration of the Philippine Independence.

Participating Organizations

- o Babaylan Women's Organization
- o Bayanihan Center for Filipino Migrants-DK
- o Damayan (Scholarship Club)
- o DFA
- o Eagle Bowling Club
- o Filipino Association of Denmark
- o Mabuhay Organization of Filipinos
- o Maharlika Philippine Cultural Guild
- o Radyo Pinoy

CENTENNIAL ACTIVITIES: JUNE 1998 ONWARDS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 17-21 June
Filipinos in Focus
National Museum
PCCD | 3 October
Harana Awards Finals
St. Anne's Church
Mabuhay Organization of
Filipinos |
| 20 June
Centennial Gala Night
Scandic Copenhagen Hotel
PCCD | 27 October
Philippine Music: Concerts
Borups Højskole
National Museum
St. Anne's Church
PCCD |
| 18 July
Harana Award
Gimle Medborgerhuset
Mabuhay Organization of
Denmark | November
Filipino Filmfest
Filmhouse
PCCD |
| 25 July
Philippine-Scandinavian
Sports League
DGI Byen
PCCD | December
Paakuhan
National Museum
St. Anne's Church
PCCD |
| 15 August
Buhay Pinoy
Gimle Medborgerhuset
Bayanihan Center
for Filipino Migrants-Denmark
& Radyo Pinoy | 12 December
Centennial Christmas
Scandic Copenhagen Hotel
PCCD |
| 29 August
Eco-Picknick
Bingwitan
Dyrehaven
Babaylan | 13 December
Julehygge:
Danish-Filipino Christmas
St. Anne's Church
FAD |
| 18-30 September
Food Festival:
Lasang Pinoy
Store Kro
Mabuhay Organization of
Filipinos | 25 December
Panunuluyan
Christmas tableau
St. Anne's Church
FAD |



PCCD PLANS CENTENARY ACTIVITIES. Above photo shows Marc. R. Dicap (right), BCFM President, discussing the results of his meeting with Consul General Hermes Dorado in Stockholm regarding the centennial trophies and medals which the latter guaranteed to deliver. Seated from left to right are Boy Garcia, Benn Adriatico, Nene Sorensen (partly hidden), Teresa Barbaso, Leonie Alcaraz, Grace Holm, Jennifer Stilling, Nit-Nit Høghshol and Jun Malveda. Not facing the camera are Bubut Sabeniano and Onofre Garcia.

BASILIO RECEIVES OFFICERS OF NORDIC ORGANIZATIONS. Her Excellency Erlinda F. Basilio poses with the officers of the different associations in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland after the reception held at Sheraton Hotel in Stockholm last 11 June in celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Philippine Independence. Also with her are Ms. Bugarin (Fourth from left) and Mr. Dorado (Eighth from left), Chargé d'Affaires and Consul General respectively.



My name is Josephine Peralta. I am here to share my story as a second generation Filipina and as a daughter to a migrant family in Europe.

My parents were newly married when certain events impelled them to migrate in 1973. My mother was offered to work on a two year contract in Denmark where there was a demand for foreign labor, and saw this as an opportunity to obtain their nest egg. It wasn't until they had finalized her papers that she realized she was three months pregnant with me. We were to come back to the Philippines after her contract was over. However, shortly after my birth in Copenhagen in 1974, my dad, a broker at the Philippine Stock Exchange, realized the bleak future of Martial Law and joined us in Denmark instead. The language barrier led him to jobs lower than his qualifications. His first job was as a janitor. Like many overseas Filipinos, they both struggled to establish themselves in order to give their children a better life. Through the last 25 years, my parents have settled as residents of Denmark and are today self-employed at their travel agency.

My primary school and junior high years at the Copenhagen International School encouraged me to be as Filipina as possible. Each one of us was considered special because of our different cultural backgrounds. Joining the Filipino Dance Troupe at the age of five, I was able to share and proudly represent my country. During cultural events, I'd bring a Filipino dish for the International Dinner and dance the *Itik-itik*, *Pandango sa Ilaw* or *Tinikling* in our national costume for the variety shows. All the other kids were representing their countries, I wanted to do as well. One very memorable incident was when I became the first female Student Council President of CIS. My teachers were commenting on that year being the debut of Filipina presidents. It was 1987, the same year that Cory Aquino became President of the Philippines. In fact, I hadn't really thought about it then, but uncannily I was wearing a yellow dress during my oath-taking.

The only shortcoming I had which couldn't make me a thorough Filipina was the fact that I did not speak the language, though I did understand most of what was being said to me when I was spoken to in Filipino. I grew up speaking English and Danish. It wasn't until I came here for college that I actually learnt how to articulate myself in Filipino.

I must admit it was quite a personal sacrifice to leave familiar faces, environment and especially my family. However as I stand here today, I can profess that that sacrifice and my experiences these last six years in the Philippines have certainly made me assertive of who I am and the whole purpose of my existence.

I wouldn't say that I was unfamiliar with the Philippines. Besides visiting the country a few times, my parents along with other Filipino parents in Copenhagen would organize activities such as catechism classes, prayer groups, Sunday masses and celebrate various feasts, incorporating our traditions and values in the community.

Basically, I did not have any significant problems during my childhood and pre-teen years. However, being a teenager in an uncertain and ever changing world is certainly hard. It was even harder when I transferred to a Danish school for senior high, due to the increase of tuition at the CIS.

Through the influence of my peers and the contemporary Danish culture, my world turned topsy-turvy. In spite of the fact that it was a private Catholic school, the rules and regulations were much more lax. Where I was used to addressing my teachers at the CIS as Mr., Miss or Mrs., we literally called our teachers by their first names or simply their last names at the Danish school. There was hardly any discipline. In

This was the speech on the topic of Migrant Families & Second Generation Filipinos delivered by Josephine Peralta at the convention of the Episcopal Commission on Migrants and Itinerant People organized by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines on 4 March 1998.



fact some teachers whom we could actually relate to didn't live exemplary lives. Smoking during recess time was permitted and we didn't need the approval of our parents to cut class. Everybody was fascinating and so "grown up." They were ruthless and I wanted to belong. I'd go out on schooldays until late in the evenings. I started to smoke simply to be accepted. I would overindulge in liquor at parties with my classmates, most of whom were already 18 (the legal drinking age in Denmark). Intimate relationships were so casual that one-night-stands were very common. I had friends who would have abortions as if they were simply having their hair trimmed. When they talked about it, I would nod in agreement to a "practical" decision made. Today, I cringe with shame at that thought.

Moreover, I was often subject to mocking inquiries about Smokey Mountain, prostitution in Ermita, mail-order brides and paedophilia in the Philippines which were being featured in Danish television. I was so ashamed of being associated with such a country and couldn't be bothered to understand the effects of poverty. At this point, I started to rebel against my parents. We would have endless arguments, to the point that I blamed them for not understanding the ways of the Danish youth when they were responsible for bringing me to Denmark in the first place. I had forgotten that they had migrated to Denmark to give me a more privileged life.

My pre-occupation with fitting in with my Danish schoolmates had great negative effects on me. I didn't want to attend mass anymore and I got pretty weary of school that I almost dropped out by twelfth grade, had it not through the persistent encouragement of my parents and my guidance counselor. After that, I went through the pain of telling my parents that I didn't want to go to college to pursue a degree anymore. I clearly remember the distressed look on my parents' faces. We argued again, but I was stubborn. I already had a part-time job as a waitress at a hotel in Copenhagen. It was paying well, and all that mattered to me then was being able to spend my money buying all my heart's desire. Besides, if I lost my job, I could always go on social welfare. I finally went full time at the restaurant and was having the time of my life...so I thought.

However, reality dawned upon me when I found myself having to cope with depression and aching limbs from working late shifts everyday and partying afterwards. I recall standing in the restaurant kitchen, emptying the dirty dishes into the waste bucket. This wasn't what I had been educated for. I was indeed meeting a lot of interesting people and earning a lot at the restaurant...but where was the challenge and what kind of self-fulfillment could I look forward to? It wasn't my calling. I was very young and there was so much to discover.

That's when I started reflecting on the course of my life. I had once felt complete and in a span of just a few years I was extremely confused. My life felt meaningless. I did a lot of soul-searching, and remembered how much I had enjoyed the Philippines. The warmth and simple life of the Filipinos. Somehow it had felt like home when I'd

come on vacation. My best friend, who is a Filipina and more Danish than myself even pointed it to me that I had always referred to the Philippines as "home" in spite of the fact that I had been born and raised in Denmark. At this point, I scrutinized what was I really wanted. I wanted to go back to school, obtain a degree...but most of all, I wanted to get to know myself and I had a strong feeling that coming here would do it. My parents were pleasantly surprised when I suddenly announced to them that I had made up my mind to pursue college in the Philippines. I explained my confusion and need to find myself. I was determined and I got their full support.

In 1992 when I was 18, my father accompanied me to the Philippines. When we finally arrived and made our way through Roxas Boulevard, an inexplicable comforting feeling overwhelmed me. I knew I was finally doing something right for myself.

My six years here have given me more than a degree. However, I admit having to go through culture shock during my first few years, adjusting to the climate, the environment, the structure of society and even the Filipino mentality. Once again, I was in another "foreign" environment. I was desperately homesick for my family and friends that I cried a lot. My parents would call me regularly and give me the option to go back to Denmark.

I did go back to Denmark for about six months in 1994 after my second year here. During those months, I was blessed with the opportunity to work as the interpreter for the advanced party of His Excellency President Fidel Ramos in preparation for his attendance at the United Nations Social Summit in Copenhagen. During his brief meeting with the Filipino-Scandinavian communities, he addressed the second generation Filipinos, telling us not to forget our roots and that our foreign education and upbringing could indeed contribute to the development of the Philippines. A speech that definitely inspired me to come back and finish what I had started. So in 1995, equipped with the determination to overcome the adjustment, I came back for college.

Through the constant moral support of my parents, I have definitely come a long way from being the naive and inconsiderate teenager that I was. The roller coaster ride of trying to find myself here and there has definitely added more perspective to my life. Today, I consider my parents my best buddies. I'm glad they never gave up on me, in spite of the many disappointments I have given them. I have become more open with them about my life. They are the first people I turn to for any advice...be it my academic life or my personal life.

Some may owe it to the fact that I am older and matured. But there are second generation Filipinos my age whose parents know very little about what's actually going on with them. I don't know if it's because they aren't aware of it or they don't want to realize it. It's as if they've kept that authoritative wall between them which is a common trait in the Filipino family. We rigidly respect our elders...but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't be able to relate to them and vice versa.

The friends that I have acquired through my years here are also balikbayans from all over the world. We have shared our stories with each other and realized that we had similar problems growing up abroad and reconciling ourselves with the Philippines. The problem arises when the adolescent fails to discern one's cultural identity. Who are we? Where do we belong? As I encountered in the Danish society, much of what was taught in the Filipino home and church did not coincide with what was going on outside. If there is one thing I have learnt to appreciate in the Philippines, it is the fact that the teachings of the church aren't confined within its four walls, they actually radiate out into

the society.

Through my experiences with migrant parents and second generation Filipinos who grew up abroad, trying to find one's cultural identity is crucial for the individual to be able to understand himself as a whole, and eventually work toward a goal in life. The sense of belonging is a need to feel complete. However, it wouldn't be fair to expect second generation Filipinos growing up abroad to be totally Filipino; likewise it wouldn't be fair to consider them totally foreign. I have had experiences where my Filipino mentality was used against me while I was living in Denmark; similarly I've had my foreign background used against me while I have been here in the Philippines. For instance, my emphatic side has been characterized by my friends in Denmark as the Filipino way of overdramatizing a situation; while my outspoken side has been characterized by my friends in the Philippines as the Western female's lack of grace. I analyzed this a lot. I finally drew the conclusion that we, second generation Filipinos abroad are a unique breed that has been given the opportunity to experience different cultures and broaden our mentality. With the proper guidance, we can use it to our advantage and contribute to our communities whether here or abroad. Quoting a very good friend of mine who is also a balikbayan: "We have the privilege to make our own culture. We have a choice. But before we can do that, we must seek to understand the various cultures behind us, and eventually live the beauty of having a multi-cultural background. Then we can assert ourselves as an individual with a place in this world."

My special message to this conference is: "It all starts at home." Parents who migrated also went through a lot of cultural adjustments, and need to define their own cultural identity. I am happy to know that last year through the help of Mr. & Mrs. Borja of CFC Philippines, my parents together with other Filipino parents in the Danish community were able to organize Couples for Christ in Denmark. I feel that this will give the parents more perspective on how to educate their children at home. Through the commitment, they take the reflection of their spiritual lives more seriously.

When you go back to your communities, I'd like to suggest the following points:

- o Continue the catechism and Sunday school activities in the host countries, merging cultural values and traditions.
- o Realize the mind-set of the second generation. To the parents, I know that you are aware of the society your children live in, but do not be ignorant to the fact that they are prone to influence; Listen to the adolescent, and don't over emphasize their wrongdoings. Have the patience to explain; Make them feel that you are a friend and not an enemy. If you want to guide them, they must want your guidance; Be an example by radiating those values you'd like them to learn.
- o On cultural issues, actively interact with other ethnic communities in the host country, to build that international atmosphere where the Migrant Filipino can appreciate and share his multicultural background.

The personal education of the second generation Filipinos is indeed a very complex situation. But please have the patience to continue guiding us, so that we may understand ourselves in order for us to guide the future generations of Filipino youth abroad.

Thank you.

ORIANg: The woman behind the image

By Babes Luis-Rodriguez
Source: KALAYAAN, May 1998



PABLO B. SANTOS DEFINES GREGORIA "ORIANg" DE JESUS, wife of Katipunan Supremo Andres Bonifacio and herself a battle-scarred veteran, amidst images of conflicts and struggles, war and death.

One of the most well-known women in Philippine history, Gregoria de Jesus began her revolutionary work at 18, when she fell in love and married Andres Bonifacio, the *Supremo* of the Katipunan. Oriang was inducted into the Katipunan Women Chapter after their marriage, and chose Lakambini as her symbolic name. She acted as secretary though she could have been president of the women members of the secret movement. As the revolution loomed, however, Oriang assumed the actual presidency, just as her husband took over the reins of the Katipunan: As custodian of the Katipunan seal, papers and arms, she faced constant risks. "I nearly wrapped myself with the Katipunan documents that were so dangerous to keep in those days," De Jesus reveals in her autobiography, *Mga*

Tala ng Aking Buhay, speaking of how she had strapped vital papers of the revolution to her waist, or hid them inside her clothes. Further, she writes: "Many times, on receiving some warning that the house would be searched by the *Veterana* police, regardless of the hour, I would immediately gather all the papers, the arms and the seal, and order a *quiles* (a carriage with closed windows) and, abandoned my meals, for quite often this happened at noon, or at 8 o'clock in the evening, I would go driving until midnight along the bay of Tondo and the streets of Binondo in order to save my countrymen from danger." Historians believe that had Oriang shirked from the task, succeeding generations of Filipinos would probably never know how the Katipunan was organized, who its key

personalities were, how it conducted its activities, and how it progressed to become a national organization that commanded the respect and the esteem of both the masses and the *ilustrado*.

Oriang's scholarly bent was also revealed in the same autobiography. "I was the first to translate or decipher the alphabet of the Katipunan in code, which Emilio Jacinto sent to me in Pasig."

One of Oriang's most poignant recollections was her account of the birth of their son, christened and named after his father, Andres Bonifacio. She writes: "When I was about to become a mother, Andres temporarily moved me to my parents' house where I had been born, and there too, our eldest child saw the first light of day." After two months, she returned to Manila. A series of tragic events followed them, starting with the fire in Dulong-Bayan on Maundy Thursday, 1896, which left them homeless. Moving from one place to another, they were overtaken by events in the house of Dr. Pio Valenzuela on Calle Lavezares, Binondo, where their infant son died.

When the Katipunan secrets were discovered in August, 1896, Oriang fled and joined the Katipuneros in the battlefield. The thought of dying did not faze her. She recounts: "I had no fear of facing danger, not even death itself, whenever I accompanied the soldiers in the battle, impelled as I was then by no other desire than to see unfurled the flag of an independent Philippines, and I was present in and witnessed many encounters. I was considered a soldier and to be a true one, I learned to ride a horse, shoot a rifle, and manipulate other

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weapons which I actually used in many occasions."

In December 1896, de Jesus accompanied Andres who was summoned to Cavite to settle a rift between the Magdiwang and Magdalo factions of the Katipunan. She stood by Andres' side when he was tried and executed by the government of Emilio Aguinaldo.

She was only 22 when she was widowed and she grieved for Andres deeply. Forced to live with other refugees of the revolution in the mountains of Pasig, Oriang got to know Julio Felipe Nakpil better. Nakpil was known as J. Giliw, poet musician of the Katipunan and secretary of her late husband. They were married in Quiapo Church on December 10, 1898.

When the revolution ended and peace was restored, Julio and Gregoria and their children lived in the house of Julio's sister Petrona Nakpil, who was married to well known philanthropist Dr. Ariston Bautista. All their children (Juan, Julia, Francisca, Josefina, Mercedes and Caridad) were sent to school by Dr. Bautista.

Well-loved by her family, Oriang was said to have stayed with only son Juan's residence for some time. In an interview with UP Professor Albina Pesson Fernandez, Oriang's granddaughter Anna Nakpil-Tañada reveals: "One of life's blessings on me was the companionship of Gregoria de Jesus, whom everyone in the household called *Inay*. Her bravery was infectious," cites

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Kapit sa Patalim

Gina Altamirano
Section Editor



There is a popular Filipino idiomatic expression that aptly describes the flight of majority of the Filipino women and those of other Asian countries. The expression is *kapit sa patalim*. Literally, it means clutching a knife's blade. For the Filipino, these words sum up a person's extreme despair and sacrifice called for under extreme adversities. It describes what women or men, in their helplessness, would do in response to their human desire to continue living today and, perhaps, for another day even to the point of demeaning themselves.

Kapit sa patalim is the situation of thousands of Filipino domestic helpers who were stranded in the deserts of Iraq and Kuwait years ago - some of them were raped at the height of chaos and war - because they hesitated to evacuate immediately for fear of losing their once-in-a-lifetime, dollar-paying jobs.

Kapit sa patalim is the lot of 16,000 Filipino girls, mostly coming from landless peasant families in the provinces who have become prostitutes, catering to the sexual whims of American servicemen in Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base, both US military installations in the Philippines. The girls thought that, perhaps, through luck and hard work, they may someday land a more dignified

and better-paying job, but most of them have ended up afflicted with sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS and more destitute that when they first came to the city looking for work.

Kapit sa patalim describes the circumstances of women workers in foreign-owned garment factories in the Bataan Export Processing Zone in the Philippines who are forced to work in 36-hours shift during which they allowed only two hours of sleep a day. They are given only a few minutes break during their shift.

This Filipino idiomatic expression also accurately describes the similar state of despair and sacrifice required of women in other Asian countries. It aptly describes the experience of tens of thousands of Sri Lankan women who migrate to countries in the Middle East to work as nannies and domestic helpers; of 200,000 Nepalese women who earn a living in various brothels of India; and of Indonesian women workers employed in transnational factories half of whom are afflicted with kidney ailments because of the presence of mercury in and around their factories.

The same aptly describes the victims of wife abuse in Papua, New Guinea whose number, according to a reform law committee, has reached 67

percent of the country's rural women and 56 percent of its urban women; for the battered wives in Bangladesh who, despite their husbands' cruelty, would not file for divorce nor leave home because, in their country, separated, abandoned or divorced women are considered as social outcasts; for the Indian brides threatened by dowry deaths which, according to estimates made by the Ahmedabad Women's Action Group, reached 1,000 in 1988 in one state alone; and for the Indian mothers of 78,000 fe-

male fetuses who, succumbing to a dominant cultural bias against female children, agreed to an abortion after undergoing sex-determination tests.

Extreme yet not uncommon situations such as these underscore the pathetic state of women's human rights in Asia. If these cases are so gross and skewed, if these are too concentrated forms of discrimination and violence against our gender, it is because Asian women live in the

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ABANSE! Pinay: Women's Seven Point Agenda

We, the Women of ABANSE! Pinay, believe that: ALL ISSUES ARE WOMEN'S ISSUES. Women's voices must be heard in the articulation and pursuit of a social change agenda, including agrarian reform and rural development, sustainable livelihood, environmental protection, peace and good governance, cultural and spiritual renewal. In particular, we pledge ourselves to pursue the following legislative agenda:

1. FREEDOM FROM POVERTY IS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT. We will work for the delivery of quality basic services, particularly water, shelter and health -that most affect the quality of life of women and their families. At the same time, women's economic decision-making toward equitable growth and sustainable development must be ensured.
2. A TRULY PEACEFUL SOCIETY CANNOT BE ACHIEVED WHILE THERE IS VIOLENCE IN THE HOME. We will work for laws on family violence and partner abuse as well as laws that will require the establishment of crisis support services and mechanisms for survivors of violence against women.
3. CHILDREN NEED SPECIAL PROTECTION IN THE LAW. We propose the creation of the office of a Children's Advocate and of special courts for child offenders and child victims. The Barangay Day Care Law must be amended and improved.
4. QUALITY EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO A BETTER FUTURE. Incentives should be provided for education of children from the poorest families. Education must also be gender-fair in content as well as in structures.
5. WOMEN ARE EQUAL TO MEN AND PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT. We will strengthen the Family Code and the Women in Nation Building and Development Law and enact more laws to ensure equity for women in the home, workplace and in economic life.
6. GOVERNMENT MUST PROMOTE THE RIGHT OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS, ESPECIALLY MIGRANT WOMEN WORKERS. We will work for laws requiring review of bilateral agreements, and requiring women labor attaches and welfare officers where majority of the overseas workers are women. Overseas Filipinos should also enjoy the right to vote.
7. WOMEN MUST BE BETTER REPRESENTED IN GOVERNMENT AND IN ALL LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING. We will work for the immediate passage of an enabling law on local sectoral elections and for amendment of the Local Government Code to establish a quota of at least 30% women in mandatory consultations and assemblies.

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Anna. "During the war, when my father was called to action, I would cry," she recalls. Inay would say, "Tahan na. huwag kang magpakitang umiyyak sa iyong tatay, baka masira ang loob. (Don't show your father you're crying; he might lose his nerve.)"

Anna also remembers hearing a lot of stories from her Inay, who loved to tell her grandchildren stories about her family. Oriang's father was a carpenter, and her mother a housewife who was good at managing money. De Jesus finished only *primera ensenanza* (Grade 5) because she had to give way to her brother's education. Being boys, they had priority in schooling at that time. Despite that, she proved to be more knowledgeable about a lot of things because she read a lot.

Oriang naturally loved to regale her grandchildren with stories about the Katipunan. Recounts Anna: "I remember her story about how she and Andres Bonifacio were kept safe from harm by the town-folks. She called the system *barangayan*. If enemies made inquiries about them, the household would relay this to the next household and so on, until they received the information."

Anna recalls her Inay's sadness everytime the latter would reminisce about how her son by Bonifacio died. "There was a plague or something, and the boy got sick and died of smallpox." The couple continued what they had begun in the struggle for independence. Anna remembers her Inay saying: "*Pag kailangan ng bayan, dapat gawin. (If it's for the country, do it)*"

According to Anna, Oriang was also fond of music and dance, and taught her the

folk song *Leron, Leron Sinta*, with dancing to match. "Our singing and dancing activities are my most vivid memories of her. Old as she was then (she died in 1943), she was still agile and graceful," Anna says of her beloved grandmother.

Gregoria de Jesus was born on May 9, 1875 in Kalookan, Rizal. Her parents were Nicolas de Jesus, a *maestro de obras* and *cantero carpintero* who became a *teniente mayor* and *gobernadorcillo*, and Baltazara Alvarez Francisco. *

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margins of a region where two-thirds of humanity exist in hunger and squalor. They have actually been pushed to the edge where every human beings' right to dignity, to life and development are not only empty rhetorics but have become cruel ironies.

The story of women, however, is grimmer. It is a story that says where a poor Asian country's people earn too little or are thrown out of farms and factories, its women aland in brothels. It says that where people are poor and malnourished, women are wretched and diseased. It says that where people are unhappy, women are anguished.

Patriarchy and male domination which is strong in traditional Asian societies have resulted in an unequal apportioning of social afflictions among the masses with women getting the heaviest load and enduring the most vicious and perverse forms.

While both men and women migrants face hardship in finding secure and better paying jobs in the cities, the difficulty that one has to go through isn't the same for both sexes. Males usually land more stable and better paying jobs than women.

Patriarchy and male domination also spawned the widespread commission of distinct crimes on gender

While prostitution in Asian countries, of course, did not start with tourism and while this problem is rooted in extreme underdevelopment and colonial vestiges, the malaise has been certainly aggravated by the overnment's tourism schemes. Massive building and dispersal of infrastructures such as hotels and cottages and the development of attractive service packages have surely contributed to the high incidence of prostitution such as the reported existence of 800,000 child prostitutes in Thailand and 400,00 adult and child prostitutes in the Philippines.

This in brief is the human rights situation of majority of the women in Asia, therefore the advocacy of women's right in the region should be put in this perspective.

Women's human rights advocacy should not focus solely on the existing inequalities of the masses of men and women in Asia. It should not be reduced to a limited demand for attaining equality under a situation where there is hardly any bread and freedom for the many. Demanding such an equality would only mean asking for equal sharing of the burden of want and slavery bearing on the whole people. What lasting good will this be for our women? What lasting good will this be for the rest of the people of Asia?

But neither should advocacy of human rights of Asian women gloss over the fact that the strong system of patriarchy and male domination in the region has made the burden of oppression and exploitation of women far worse and unbearable than that of the menfolk.

Neither should it slur over the fact that, in addition to this burden, women constantly face violence and assaults on their dignity and live simply for the reason they are women. Recognition of these facts should heighten our appreciation of the extreme urgency of human rights work for Asian women and our resolve to improve the present conditions. Women who have been trodden down by the bottom of the social slough deserve our greatest attention. Our sisters who are in the brink of ruin because of assaults against their physical and mental well being need our immediate care.

Advocacy of human rights for Asian women, therefore, should mean working for their total liberation from the forces that oppress them and ensuring their development and empowerment.

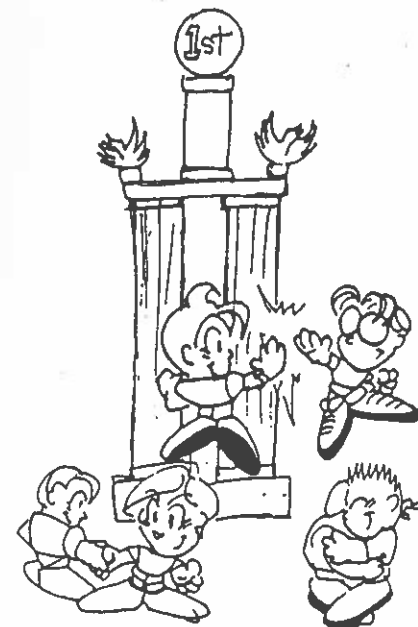
It should oppose the domination and exploitation of poor nations by a few rich and powerful ones, promote a new world economic order and the genuine development of Third World countries especially those in Asia.

It should work for the eradication of unjust and repressive structures of most Asian societies and promote an equitable distribution of wealth and the development of democracy and popular initiative. It should consistently struggle against patriarchy and male domination of all its manifestations, protect and raise the status of women as co-equal partners of men in all spheres of life. *

Excerpt from
Human Rights
from the Asian Women's Perspective
By Nella S. Liao
Asian Women's Human Rights
Council for Asian

Teamwork

By Deng A. Valera-Larsen



Don't you just hate it when you're already in a group and yet you can't seem to get anything done? When apparently nobody can get along and everybody is stumped? Maybe something very essential is missing.

Sometimes we grow tired of listening to people who complain that they are not getting their share of the workload, and consequently the glory. Other say that they do too much, which to them is essentially everything. I admit I too fall into this trap once in a while, but I manage to check and remind myself that "I'm not the only one around, so I might as well start relating and working with everybody, instead of just by myself."

PHIL-SCAN SPORTS LEAGUE UPDATE

BASKETBALL

As most predicted and expected, the final game of the Filipino Centennial Basketball Tournament, ended up with Jamming Butiki subduing the sleepy second placer Pungays, 101-60.

The round robin elimination, participated by six teams, namely, B.C.Manila, Buwaya, Damayan, Jamming Butiki, Pungay and Radio Pinoy, commenced 19 April and ended 31 May at the DGI Byen Sports Center in Copenhagen.

Jamming Butiki, the team of young schoolboys whose team chemistry worked perfectly, hence, tasting no defeat in the

Teamwork. That is the right word. I'll bet you're thinking "Teamwork should always be present." But the problem is it isn't. I'm sure you've played bowling with a guy who thinks he is the best and he is Paeng Nepomuceno reincarnated. Maybe you've run across Mr. Know-it-all who can't seem to agree with anybody and who wants to do everything his way mainly because he thinks everybody else is incompetent.

Sports is ideally the place to find a team at work. Whether in basketball or in bowling, it is very rare that the team scores a point because of one dude or dudette's effort. A team player can't possibly win a game by himself. He or she needs the expertise of the other team players to complement his or her own.

Teamwork comes around when a person stops thinking of himself, and instead combines his effort with those of others in an attempt to fulfill the final objective. Here the star athlete has to disappear and merge with the team.

So the next time when we feel that we're not getting anywhere, let's stop thinking about ourselves. Let's think about our team and start working with the people around us. We just might get something done.

round robin elimination, is composed of the following: Mark Andreasen, Jonathan Soriano, Steven Torres, Michael Medina, Robin Benjamin, Johnny Frørup, Gilbert Gallo, Christopher Jacolbe, Eugene Torres, Bjørn Belardo, Rocky Frørup and Jun Jun Silao.

Damayan were sure sorry when B.C.Manila outplayed them and claimed third placing.

Top scorers include Edwin Camacho of Damayan, 125 points; Mark Andreasen of Jamming Butiki, 120 points; Geoffrey Camacho of Buwaya, 106 points; and Jonathan Soriano of Jamming Butiki, 102

points.

With each and every member playing team ball, Jamming Butiki is expected to win the Philippine Scandinavian Sports League rescheduled on the 25th of July in Copenhagen.

BOWLING

The Centennial Bowling Tournament held last 23 May at the Bryggens Bowling Center in Amager (BBC) produced Denmark's delegation to the Philippine Scandinavian Sports League to be hosted by the Philippine Centennial Committee-Denmark and not by Sweden's Buklod-Filipino as earlier planned.

Cornelio Garcia, Lito Gales, Gil Jumawan, Ramon Ortiz, Alfredo Santos, Philip Santos and Jimmy Soriano qualified for the Men's Division; while Melanie Damasco, Erlinda Jensen, Lenita Jensen, Norlita Poulsen, Angelina Roth, Mona Soliman and Deng Valera-Larsen, for the Women's Division

CHESS

Using the knock-down system, Ronnie Abainza, Manuel Damasco and Larry Abundo emerged winners and will represent Denmark in the chess tournament next month.

Eagles top Magic Strikers' bowling meet

The newly founded Magic Strikers sponsored its first open tournament last 21 June on the alleys of Bryggens Bowling Center. The first of its kind, the tournament which started with MS President Henny Jacolbe's welcome address was the most participated ever with more or less 90 couples playing two or three times to be able to qualify for the final game.

Although bowling is not her kind of game, Ambassador Erlinda Basilio rolled the first ball signifying the official opening of the tournament.

The Eagle keglers once again proved their worth by winning four of the six places: First Place: Alfredo Santos and Norlita Poulsen; Second Place: Manuel and Melanie Damasco; Third Place: Francisco and Rosalinda Jimenez; and Fifth Place: Monching Ortiz and Deng Valera-Larsen.