

# **Singing History: The Huk Movement from the Perspective of the Guerrillas**

**TERESITA G. MACEDA**

## **ABSTRACT**

The Japanese may have occupied the Philippines for only three years, yet the brief period yields a trove of songs spontaneously created by members of the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon (People's Army against the Japanese or HUKBALAHAP). Even during the post-war period when the unrecognized Huk guerrillas reconstituted the movement into the Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (People's Liberation Army or HMB) and waged a revolution that lasted a decade, they continued to sing the narrative of

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TERESITA GIMENEZ MACEDA is Professor Emeritus of the University of the Philippines Diliman.

their struggle. This paper explores selected songs of the HUKBALAHAP. Orally handed down from generation to generation, the songs reveal the ordinary Huk guerrillas' perception of the country as a larger family, whose children are bound to each other by the same experiences of tears and terror but also extraordinary courage to free their enslaved *Inang Bayan* or Motherland.

### KEYWORDS

Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon (HUKBALAHAP), Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (HMB), guerrilla songs, artistic creation, nationalist movement

### HEARING HISTORY

A country “shrouded in suffering,” and a “portrait soaked in tears”—these are the images of *Inang Bayan* or the Motherland depicted in the narratives woven by the songs of guerrilla members of the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon (People’s Army Against the Japanese or HUKBALAHAP). Loneliness from their own families and hardships experienced in the terrain of struggle are what these guerrillas must endure so that the larger family of *Inang Bayan* could be delivered from the clutches of foreign powers:

*Ing Pilipinas tang mutia  
A mibalot na ning palliasa*

*Ing bigu nang calma,  
Ing albun nang mebasa lua*

*Itang mangatni nang gulisac  
Menalunton caring uyat  
Licuan dong magsalbat  
Pamilyang kasindaksindak.*

*Balen, macalunos  
Ing malungcut dang bie ring sundalos  
Pagal, puyat, ampun danup  
Kng tula la ginulot.*

*Ing kasakitan mibabata  
O licuan da pang pamilia  
Licuan dong anac da  
Balen kng bacang ligaya.<sup>1</sup>*

(Our precious Philippines  
Shrouded in suffering  
Her unfortunate history  
A portrait soaked in tears.

Their shrill cries  
Course through their veins  
They turn their backs  
Leaving their families disconsolate.

Motherland, how pitiful  
Is the sad life of your soldiers  
Fatigue, lack of sleep, hunger  
Uncaring for their own happiness.

Hardship they endure  
Turned their backs on their families  
Left behind their children  
So you, our Motherland, may have joy.)

The Japanese occupied the Philippines for only three years; yet through oral tradition, the Huk guerrillas handed down from generation to generation the cultural creations they spontaneously created during wartime. Through songs, they kept alive their own historical narratives, their views on the guerrilla warfare they were waging and their understanding of the sacrifices entailed to bring an end to the condition of enslavement of *Inang Bayan*.

Unlike many historical texts drawn from what their more articulate leaders had said and written and where the ordinary members of social movements appear simply as statistics, Huk guerrillas sang their history in their treks up and down the mountains, in organizing their networks of support, while resting, and even in the midst of battle. Their songs allow us to feel the hearts beating behind the statistics, the individuated faces, and the living persons represented by the term “Huk guerrillas.” These make us understand from where they derived the strength of their commitment to what they called “golden freedom” of *Inang Bayan*. The guerrillas referred to their cause as *prinsipyo* (principle). In the words of former Huk guerrilla Arcadio Manabat:

A principle is simple. But a principle is rooted within you, is internalized. You will stand by it, fight for it,

risk your life ten times over. It is serious. A principle weighs more than your own life.<sup>2</sup>

Justino Taruc, another former Huk guerrilla, compared the song to water needed by plants (*tagadilig ng prinsipyo*) to nurture their cause or principle.<sup>3</sup>

This paper on selected songs of the HUKBALAHAP is derived from the fourth chapter of my book, *Mga Tinig mula sa Ibaba, Kasaysayan ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas at Partido Sosyalista ng Pilipinas sa Awit, 1930-1955*<sup>4</sup> (*Voices from Below: History of the Communist Party of the Philippines and Socialist Party of the Philippines in Song, 1930-1955*). The songs that former Huk guerrillas shared with me in the 1980s reveal the ordinary Huk guerrillas' perception of the resistance they waged against the Japanese invaders.

## **FOLDING THE COMMUNIST BANNER AND ORGANIZING THE UNITED FRONT**

Undeniably, the HUKBALAHAP was organized and led by the merged old Communist and Socialist Parties. But while hundreds of workers and farmers who were members of the mass organizations of the combined PKP-PSP<sup>5</sup> initially formed the bulk of its membership, the guerrilla movement was able to win over professionals, unorganized workers and peasants, people from varied economic backgrounds (poor or rich), different age groups (young and old), and men and women by folding its communist/socialist ideological banners and triggering patriotic fervor in defense of only one flag—that of the

Philippines. Although many of the Huk guerrillas hardly had any combat experience, the Huk movement relied on its rich tradition of organizing and mobilizing so as to establish a united front against the Japanese invaders.

During the three years of Japanese occupation, the HUKBALAHAP challenged the might and strength of the Japanese forces. It was, in the words of the late nationalist Jose W. Diokno, “probably one of the most effective if not the most effective guerrilla force in the country.”<sup>6</sup> Toward the end of the occupation, the HUKBALAHAP had already established a number of liberated zones.

## **THE SONG AS A POWERFUL WAR WEAPON**

Decades of struggle taught the leaders and members of the HUKBALAHAP the value of cultural creations in disseminating information especially during perilous times, as organizing tools to entice future members and sympathizers or to establish a network of community support through the Barrio United Defense Corps (BUDC). Immediately after the HUKBALAHAP was founded, it mandated the formation among its units of a core group called the Cultural Information Division (CID). Artistic creation became a crucial part of the Huk’s educational and organizational strategy.

To explain issues to different communities, the CID held what became popularly known as “flying meetings.” The late HUKBALAHAP leader Luis Taruc explained these meetings:

Under the CID, we had singers and poets. We also had short skits. Our programs that we called “flying meetings” concluded with a ten-minute speech. First, we controlled the area. We had a reliable relay of information. We knew when there was danger. If the conditions were what we called “peace time,” we would then establish a five-kilometer perimeter around the village. Our signal corps controlled all the sides. Oh, was it so enjoyable! Our propaganda program lasted for a whole hour. It was all based on our fundamental goal. The themes revolved around fascism, the Japanese, what militarism meant, what kind of democracy we aspired to establish, what kind of freedom we wanted for our country. And so we sang songs like this: “Narito na kami, ang Hukbo ng Bayan” (“Here we are, the People’s Army”). And after the people enjoyed what they heard, then we established the Barrio United Defense Corps. Right there and there, within one or two hours, we put up the BUDC.<sup>7</sup>

To attract an audience, Huk singers began with lively marching songs that emphasized the importance of the guerrilla movement and shared experiences of fighting against Japanese troops:

*Narito na kami ang Hukbo ng Bayan*  
*Handang iligtas ka Pilipinas naming minamahal*  
*Tambangan natin ang mananalakay*  
*Sulong, lusob, sabay-sabay*  
*Kalaba’y puyatin at laging hapuin, sila’y abalatin.*

*Tayong gerilyero ay di masusugpo  
Bayan nasa ating panig,  
pagtulong nila'y di bigo  
Kalaba'y mapilitang masira ang loob  
Sa halip tumatag, magkaisang-hanay, tumibay ang loob.*

*Lakad, hakbang nang banayad  
Yuko, gapang, usad  
Laging mag-iingat  
Kalaba'y puyatin upang di makaligtas.*

*Iwasan tayo'y maaksayahan  
Kahit isang buhay, bala't kasangkapan  
Magtiis, pansarili'y iwaksi  
Mabuhay ang Hukbo nitong Bayan!*

(Here we are, the People's Army  
Ready to liberate you, our beloved Philippines  
Let's ambush the invaders  
Advance, attack altogether  
Don't allow the enemies to sleep, tire them, engage  
them.

We guerrillas will not be defeated  
The country's on our side,  
The people's help will not be wasted  
Discourage the enemy  
Be firm, unite, be strong.

March, step slowly  
Bend, crawl, move forward

Always be careful  
Keep the enemy awake, don't allow them to escape.

Be vigilant  
Let's not waste even a single life, bullet, weapon  
Be patient, get rid of selfishness  
Long live the People's Army!)

When the so-called "flying meetings" could not be held, a small group of organizers was sent to the barrio to make initial contact or to test the waters. According to a former Huk organizer and singer, Jovita "Ka Tobing" Julian:

I was only 18 years old. Then, I got to join the organizers. We went to the barrios....We helped establish the united front in the barrio. We were five or sometimes three. We used the song to organize.... If you want to gather many people, then we sang the lively songs.<sup>8</sup>

In the barrios of Pampanga where Ka Tobing was assigned, the organizers usually opened a meeting with the marching song of "Pamesan-tamung A Panig Mitatag Ya" ("Let Us Set Up the United Front"). The song never failed to draw a crowd.

The song "United Front" was very very popular... When they hear that kind of song, it takes only a short time before many people come and gather. They really liked that song. That opened their minds, gave them inspiration....<sup>9</sup>



*M'yag nanagnan tang igulisac*  
*Biba, biba, HUKBALAHAP!*<sup>10</sup>

(Let us form the United Front  
Under the banner of our beloved Motherland  
So we can reclaim the freedom  
Of our nation, the Philippines.

Men, women, the old, the young  
Let us unite and fight  
So we can reclaim the freedom  
Of our nation, the Philippines.

Let us drive away the Japanese fascists.  
The executioners of our race  
They seized all our properties and violated our women  
Let's all shout, *Viva* HUKBALAHAP!  
Many love our Motherland, Philippines.

Oh! Many unfortunate people  
Have been beheaded  
The ones who struck the blow  
They are the enemies,  
Though they are of our own skin.

We now call on everyone to be on the side of justice  
Under the flag with three colors, three stars,  
a radiant sun  
Raise our weapons, brandish them in battle  
All together shout  
*Viva, viva, HUKBALAHAP!*)

It was also imperative for the organizers to narrate the hardships of guerrilla life in the hope of eliciting sympathy from the audience. Only when a number of people had been gathered did the organizers/singers sing the melancholy songs that recount the sacrifices of the guerrillas in fighting for the freedom of the Motherland. According to Benjamin Cunanan, better known as Commander Hizon:

The songs narrate the hardships. They tell of the condition of separation from your family. When they say that is part of what your country needs, you forget your own travails. Therefore, the song is a cadre. And the cadre, you sing. You yourself, no one else has to tell you this is what you do. And while you keep repeating the song, you keep nurturing your own consciousness.<sup>11</sup>

Another very popular song among the Huk guerrillas was “Ang Gerilya Kung Orasyon” (“The Guerrilla during Angelus Hour”). It was originally composed by Tiburcio Gatbonton during a period of rest in a mountain when his troop was not engaged in combat. Sunset was the most melancholy time of the day. Sometimes, from a distance, the Huks could hear the pealing of bells, announcing the Angelus hour. Intense loneliness for the families they left behind seared their beings for the traditional Angelus hour was the time when families gathered together to pray and children would take their parent’s right hand, bring it to their forehead while bowing to ask for blessing. Would they ever see their parents and loved ones again? This was a question that niggled their minds for their future was uncertain. Gatbonton wrote the song for himself,<sup>12</sup> yet it

was soon picked up by other troops. As it became part of the Huk oral tradition, the guerrillas took liberty in revising the song by adding new lyrics to it. Several versions of the song later emerged:

*Ang buhay naming mga gerilya  
Hirap, pagod, ang laging nadarama  
Lalo na't kung may magulang pa  
Anong lungkot, anong saklap kung maalaala.*

*Lulubog na naman ang araw sa hapon  
Tutugtugin malungkot na orasyon  
Ang gerilya pala ay gayon  
Walang ina, walang amang magbendisyon.<sup>13</sup>*

(Oh how hard is the life of guerrillas  
Always enduring suffering and fatigue  
Especially if you have parents  
What sadness, what heartache their memory brings.

The sun once again sets  
And Angelus bells peal sadly  
The guerrilla is that way  
No mother, no father to bless him.)

Additional lines sung by Ka Maria:

*Lalayo na ako, sa piling mo ina  
Ang tutunguhin ko para nang himagsikan  
Kung ako'y wala na at hindi dumadalaw  
Ang bangkay ko'y sa gubat ninyo hanapin.*

(I leave the comfort of your side, mother  
Where I'm heading is like a revolution  
Once I'm gone and can no longer visit  
In the forest, look for my remains.)

Refrain added to the song in another version sung by  
Ka Meding Manalus:

*Dahil sa paglaya ng bayan kong sawi  
Iwinaksing lahat ang pansarili  
Lungkot, gutom, uhaw ay mananatili  
Sa araw ng bukas hanggat may duhagi.*

(To liberate my oppressed land  
I gave up all personal desires  
There'll be no end to sadness, hunger, thirst  
So long as there's repression.)

A song that also stirred hearts portrayed the every day life of the guerrillas as they trekked up and down mountains, battled cold and rain, slept while being drenched to the bone, yet still finding strength to endure all kinds of privation. The recounting of these episodes in a song such as “Ing Bie Ring Anac Mu” (“The Lives of Your Children”) was never meant to overwhelm the listeners with a sense of futility or fear of what would become of those who joined the movement. Rather, the intention was to elicit sympathy and bring to the fore the willingness of guerrillas to face, suffer, and endure harsh conditions for the sake of the Motherland:

*Ing bie ring anac mu, Balen cung alipan  
Nung akit mulasa malunos cang tangal  
Carelang panglakad qng benging limputan  
Sundesape lasa qng danup at pagal.*

*At nung matud-tud la, qng benging caniglan  
Bulung daring dutung carelang pagkeran  
Sabeung ning angin, at sabug ning uran  
Potang migising la, alanong piblasan.*

.....

*Teya reng bie ra, qng lagiu ning Indu  
Mate qng labanan, matibe pangacu  
Qng aldo ning bucas, mitimawa camu  
Ligaya carela, qng "aun" manabu.*

*Lalu ding Babai, simpa rang matibe  
Mulang mayapas man, mayangu ing bie  
Ayatbus dasanang mesintang mung puri  
Mate qng labanan, anti mong lalaki....<sup>14</sup>*

(The lives of your children, my enslaved Country  
If you can only see, you'll surely take pity  
They march in the dark  
Feeling dizzy from hunger and fatigue.

And when they sleep deep into the night  
Leaves of trees serve as their beds  
No protection from howling wind and pouring rain  
They awake drenched but have no change of clothes.

.....

Their lives they risk in the name of Motherland  
To die fighting is their firm oath

When the future comes, we'll surely be free  
Happiness for them is to fall to the grave.

Look especially at the women who firmly vow  
Even if they're all slain, their lives taken  
To reclaim your honor is all they desire  
In battle, they fight like men....)

Though the song was only one of the creative products of the movement, this was the more popular form among members. Songs are easy to remember especially when the lyrics are set to familiar melodies, whether they be folk, pop, martial music, or original simple tunes. The music latches the lyrics more quickly to memory.

Songs are also portable and can be carried anywhere the guerrillas go. Marching to the beat of music and singing aloud the lyrics reenergize the guerrillas and give them strength to continue despite fatigue. Listening to songs during periods when there are no enemy engagements drives away boredom that is a very real condition during wartime. Huk Commander Ka Loring talked of singing competitions among the guerrillas not only as a form of entertainment but also as a way of sharing experiences and inspiring fervor.<sup>15</sup>

Music has great affective power. It can stir various feelings: pity, joy, love, anger, courage, compassion, and patriotic fervor. Add lyrics that narrate an experience, nudge the mind, express deep sentiment, and call for action to fight for the Motherland, and the songs become even more compelling.

The Huk movement had a treasure trove of songs. It did not only consider the song as a teaching and organizing tool. The song also served as news carrier, a military journal that documented encounters and battles.

In the experience of any army throughout the world, songs in martial beat are what soldiers or guerrillas sing together in military training or in marching off to battle. But the Huk guerrillas brought the song to the battlefield. They carried with them not only their rifles and Garands but also their guitars and *bandurias*. To give us courage was what Tereso Dayrit said about the importance of songs:

I belonged to Squadron 48. We had a guitar even in battle. And we sang. The songs gave our comrades courage so they would not be scared to fight. Because our enemies had trench mortar. And our only weapons were Garands, rifles, Thompson, Springfield, and .45.<sup>16</sup>

To calm the nerves was what Protacio Manaluz stated:

In the midst of fighting, everyone joins in the singing. The march is what we usually sing in a situation such as this. When you are fighting, of course, that serves as an inspiration. You overcome your nervousness when you hear the marching song of your comrades.<sup>17</sup>

In Pampanga, songs like “Pilipinas, Mipacde Ca” (“Philippines, Awaken”) were heard in the midst of gun bursts. Even in this lively song, the image of family, and of

the fight as the endeavor of all the children to bring back happiness to a suffering Motherland was projected.

*Pilipinas, mipacde ca  
Suliapan mo ding anac mong mibabata  
Telacad da ing guerrilla  
Ban ampatan da ing luncut mu at dusa.*

*Ing tagimpan dang parati  
Anguan daca qng carinan mong palsimi  
Ebala in mate cami  
Tangalan da casing maili.*

*Balen cu ena camalungkot  
Pulisan mung luang mamagus  
Uling ding anac mung keka malugu  
Ipaglualu dacang lubos.*

*Tumiman naca at tumula  
Tano mangapatad kechang tanikala  
Bucas reyna cang sakdal laya  
Samban ding aliwang bansa.<sup>18</sup>*

(Philippines, awake  
Glance at your suffering children  
The guerrilla movement they established  
To heal you of your sadness and suffering.

Their dream has always been  
To free you from your wretched condition  
Death we welcome  
So we can see you happy.

Motherland, forget your sadness  
Wipe away your flowing tears  
Here we are, your children who revere you  
Ready to defend you at all cost.

Smile now and be joyful  
Your chains will be broken  
Tomorrow you'll be a queen truly free,  
Worshipped by other nations.)

Huk guerrillas did actually consider and use the song as a valuable war weapon. In the field of combat, there was no space for the weakening of nerves for grave wounds and death were likely to result. In the midst of fighting, songs not only boosted the morale but also gave confidence in the certainty of victory:

In the battlefield, you don't need the commander to order you to "rise so you can see you enemy." Once you hear the song "Sulong, gerilyerong sandatahan" ("Advance, armed guerrillas") especially the line "broom-boom-boom-pak-pak-boom-boom," you get out of hiding, stand on the narrow dike, and accompany the song with gun burst....And even if you only have a few bullets left, courage will not leave you. In truth, you find new energy to continue the fight.<sup>19</sup>

"Sulong Gerilyerong Sandatahan" ("Advance, Armed Guerrillas") was probably the most popular battle song for the Huk guerrillas who engaged the Japanese enemy in the Tagalog provinces of Nueva Ecija and Bulacan. The

song continued to be sung during the postwar period when the HUKBALAHAP transformed itself into the Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (People's Liberation Army or HMB) and well into the 1960s, the time of student activism and nationalist movement.

*Sulong tayo gerilyerong sandatahan  
Pasanin ang riple't garand,  
Awtomatik at masinggan  
Gaygayin ang bundok, bukid, kaparangan  
Tambangan natin pasistang Hapones na tulisan  
(makamkam).*

*Hwag indahin ang pagod,  
Gutom, uhaw, hirap, antok  
Ang tulog natin sa gulod,  
Walang banig, walang kumot  
Maraming lamok, maraming langgam.*

*Ito ay dahil sa bayan,  
Sinisiil ng dayuhan  
Nagkukunwang kaibigan  
Bagkus ay ganid na mangangamkam.*

*Tayo ay Hukbo ng Bayang mapanghimagsik  
Puhunan natin kamulatan at pagtitiis  
Nais natin ay lumaya itong Bayang aba  
Bayan natin giginhawa  
Kung mapalayas ang pasista.*

*Humanay tayo, gerilyero,  
At nariyan na ang sakim na Hapones*

*Ihanda ang pamuksa  
Upang sila'y ating mailigpit.*

*Hayaang pumasok sa ating bitag  
Sapukin sila hanggang mawasak  
Paputukan sabay-sabay  
Broom-boom-boom-pak-pak-boom-boom!*

*Ganyan ang buhay naming HUKBALAHAP sa paglaban  
Hindi magtitigil hanggang paglaya'y makamtan  
Nais natin ay lumaya itong Bayang aba  
Bayan nati'y giginhawa  
Kung mapalayas ang pasista  
HUKBALAHAP, boom!<sup>20</sup>*

(Advance, armed guerrillas  
Carry your rifle and Garand  
Automatic and machine gun  
Explore the mountains, fields and plains  
Ambush the outlawed (greedy) Japanese fascists.

Don't mind fatigue  
Hunger, thirst, hardship, drowsiness  
On hilltops we sleep  
Without mats, without blankets  
So many mosquitoes, so many ants,

All these are for the country  
Oppressed by foreigners  
They pretend to be friends  
But are really greedy plunderers.

We are the revolutionary People's Army  
Awareness and endurance are our capital  
Our desire is to see our abject Country free  
Our Country will flourish  
Once we drive away the fascists.

Guerrillas, fall in line,  
The rapacious Japanese are here  
Ready the weapons  
So we can wipe them out

Let them fall into our trap  
Strike at them until they're destroyed  
Altogether, fire!  
Broom-boom-boom-pak-pak-boom-boom!

That's the life of the HUKBALAHAP in combat  
There's no stopping until freedom is attained  
Our desire is to see our abject Country free  
Our country will flourish  
Once we drive away the fascists.  
HUKBALAHAP, boom!)

On the whole, the songs that were spontaneously composed by the Huk guerrillas during World War II helped immensely to stoke the fire of patriotic sentiment among the Filipino people. The collective voices of men and women sang the history, and the narrative of their participation in the Huk guerrilla movement, of their lives during wartime, of their own views on the kind of struggle they waged, and of the victory they finally helped achieve.

## **THE END OF WAR, THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER STRUGGLE**

The end of Japanese rule marked the return of the old social problems that only hibernated during the three war years. The enemy had not yet surrendered to the returning American forces when another period of fighting for the elusive freedom began.

Though the HUKBALAHAP gained popular support among the people in Central Luzon and became renowned as one of the most valiant guerrilla forces that successfully challenged the might of the Japanese imperial forces, its war efforts and contributions to the liberation of the country were not recognized by both American and Philippine governments. Instead, some of its leaders and members were either imprisoned or exiled. Some Huk leaders attempted to participate in the democratic electoral process of the new Philippine Republic by running for Congress in order to push for the necessary agrarian reforms. It did not take long for the six Huk leaders who had won the elections, among them Luis Taruc, to be unseated.

Instead of honoring the patriotism and heroism of the Huk guerrillas, the government, under the clime of the Cold War, demonized them as godless, troublemakers, outlaws, brigands, arsonists, and enemies of the people. How could the Huk guerrillas, who perceived their struggle as the endeavor of the Motherland's children to break her chains of bondage and reclaim freedom, tolerate these labels? And so they reorganized themselves into the

Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (People's Liberation Army or HMB) and this time engaged government forces. They continued to compose and sing songs that narrated their fight for a just, equitable, compassionate, and truly free society—songs that lamented the unchanging history of their silenced voices.

The essence or spirit of the collective songs composed by Huk guerrillas after the war was represented by the song, “Gintong Catimawaan” (“Golden Freedom”). The Huks borrowed the song from another guerrilla unit allied with the USAFFE. They wrote new lyrics to the music and took the song as their own to become expressive of their biography, their history, or the narrative of their lives.

*Babu ring bunduc akit mung parang  
Macalunos, bie ring daralanan  
Ing aldo at bengi alus kasakitan  
Palaguan da kekang taksil at tulisan.*

*Eke bandido, eke tulisan  
Tau caming manintun catuliran  
Ebale ing mate, mibual kng parang  
Akit sumala gintung catimauan.*

*Nung ing bunduc macapagsalita la  
Istoria na ing bie ding guerrilla  
Dacalang ding bayani, anac ning masa  
Kng uling Balen, binuwis da ing bie ra.<sup>21</sup>*

(On top of the mountain, you can see the fields  
How pitiful is this life we lead  
Day and night, nothing but suffering  
Yet we're labeled traitors and brigands.

We're neither bandits nor outlaws  
We're people searching for justice  
Neither death nor being felled to the ground matter  
All we yearn for is to see golden freedom rise.

If the mountain could speak  
It would tell the story of the lives of guerrillas  
They are heroes, children of the masses  
For you, Motherland, their lives they offer.)

As the product of actual participants of the struggle to liberate *Inang Bayan*, and as the way of the “anak ng bayan” (the country’s children) to “write” their history, the songs were etched in the memories of the Huk guerrillas, their families and communities, and transmitted to their children and grandchildren to become their memories too, give us the rare opportunity to listen to real stories of courage and nationalist fervor. They allow us to catch a glimpse of the inner character and “soul” of the HUKBALAHAP movement. In the words of Protacio Manaluz:

In that journey of ours, the songs demonstrate where we come from, a vital piece of cultural knowledge of our people, and that is the soul of the movement. But why is the soul of our movement not in the

books taught to children? Why have our knowledge and history of struggle been omitted? If they really want change, why can't our children be given the true picture of our movement? ...This matter is so important to me.<sup>22</sup>

## NOTES

- 1 "Ing Pilipinas Tang Mutia" ("The Philippines We Cherish"). Sung by Jovita Julian. Cassette tape-recorded in Angeles, Pampanga on 22 February 1983. I recorded, documented, and transcribed the HUKBALAHAP songs from 1981–1986. The Capampangan songs cited were translated initially to Filipino with the help of Luis Taruc, Benjamin Cunanan (Komander Hizon), and Arcadio Manabat (Ka Boy Mata). All English translations of cited songs are mine.
- 2 "Simple lang ang prinsipyo. Pero ang prinsipyo, nakatanim sa iyo. Sinasalob, pinaninindigan, pinaglalaman. Mabigat iyan. Sampu ng buhay mo itataya mo. Mas matimbang ang prinsipyo sa buhay mo." Interview with Arcadio Manabat (Ka Boy Mata), Angeles, Pampanga, 14 October 1985.
- 3 Interview with Justino Taruc, Angeles, Pampanga, 14 October 1985.
- 4 Teresita Gimenez Maceda, *"Ang Kapatiran ng HUKBALAHAP: Kilusang Gerilya sa Panahon ng Hapon"* ("The Brotherhood of the HUKBALAHAP: Guerrilla Movement during the Japanese Period"), *Mga Tinig mula sa Ibaba, Kasaysayan ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas at Partido Sosyalista ng Pilipinas sa Awit, 1930-1955* (*Voices from Below: History of the Communist Party of the Philippines and Socialist Party of the Philippines in Song, 1930-1955*), (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press and UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies, 1996), 109-161. The complete text and music transcriptions of the

HUKBALAHAP songs are in Appendix I: D of the book, 291–385.

- 5 The Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (old Communist Party of the Philippines or PKP) and Partido Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (Socialist Party of the Philippines or PSP) were separately founded—the PKP in 1930 and the PSP shortly thereafter. They merged in 1938 under the banner of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas.
- 6 Jose W. Diokno, “The Legalization of the Communist Party,” in *A Nation for our Children, Human Rights, Nationalism, Sovereignty: Selected Writings*, ed. Priscila S. Manalang (Quezon City: The Jose W. Diokno Foundation, Inc. and Claretian Publications, 1987), 57.
- 7 “Under the CID, mayroon kaming manganganta, tumutula. Mayroon din kaming short skit. At ang konklusyon doon ay 10-minute speech. Ang tawag namin nito ay “flying meetings.” Kokontrolin namin ang paligid at mahusay ang aming relay of information. Alam namin kung may panganib. Kung “peace time” ‘ika nga, mayroon kaming limang kilometro sa bayan, magkabilang kontrolado ng aming signal corps ang sitwasyon. Ay masaya.... Umaabot sa isang oras ang programang propaganda. Yon ay nakasalalay sa pundamental na layunin. Paikot-ikot sa mga temang ano ang pasismo, ano ang Hapon, ano ang militarismo, ano ang demokrasyang gusto natin, ano ang kalayaang gusto ng Bayan? Kaya ang mga awitin namin ay ganito: ‘Narito na kami, ang Hukbo ng Bayan....’ Pagkatapos na masiyahan sila sa narinig nila, o itatag na natin ang BUDC (Barrio United Defense Corps). Doon mismo sa isa o dalawang oras na iyon maitatatag ang BUDC.” Interview with Luis Taruc, Quezon City, 19 October 1981.
- 8 “Labing-walo pa lamang ako noon. Tapos, napasama ako sa organisador. Pupunta sa baryo... Kasama kami sa pagtayo ng buklod sa baryo. Lima kami, kung minsan tatlo. Ginagamit namin ang kanta pang-organays.... Kung gusto mong marami ang tao, iyang kumakanta kami ng masiglang kanta.” Interview with Julian, Angeles, Pampanga, 19 February 1983.

- 9 “Popular na popular ang kantang “Pamisan Metung”.... Pag narinig nila ang kantang ganyan, sandali lang, marami nang tao, dahil gustong-gusto nila. Doon nabubuksan ang kanilang kaisipan, nakabibigay ng inspirasyon....” Interview with Jovita Julian.
- 10 “Pamisan Metung A Panig Mitatag Ya” (“Let Us Form the United Front”). Sung by Jovita Julian, Tereso Dayrit, and Orlando Sarmiento. Cassette tape-recorded in Angeles, Pampanga, 25 February 1983.
- 11 “Sinasalaysay ng mga awit ang kahirapan. Sinasalaysay din ng mga kanta ang kalagayan ng pagkahiwalay mo sa iyong pamilya. Pag sinabing bahagi iyon ng iyong Bayan, nakakalimutan mo ang iyong kahirapan. Samakatwid, yung kantahin, kadre na yon. At ang kadre, ikaw ang bumibigkas. Ikaw mismo, hindi na iba ang magsasabi sa iyo na ganito ang gawin mo. Habang paulit-ulit mong inaawit, paulit-ulit mong napapangalagaan ang iyong kamulatan.” Interview with Benjamin Cunanan, Quezon City, 29 January 1983.
- 12 Interview with Tiburcio Gatbonton, former Huk guerrilla, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, 5 January 1986.
- 13 “Ang Gerilya kung Orasyon” (“The Guerrilla at Dusk”). Version sung by Consolacion Arellano. Cassette tape-recorded in Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, 6 August 1982. Additional lines sung by Ka Maria, Aliaga, Nueva Ecija. Additional lyrics of the refrain comes from another version of the song as sung by Nicomedes Manaluz in Quezon City, 4 August 1981.
- 14 “Ing Bie Ding Anac Mu, Balen Cu” (“The Lives of Your Children, Motherland”). Sung by Ka Loring, former Huk commander. Cassette tape-recorded in Angeles, Pampanga, 13 March 1983.
- 15 Interview with Ka Loring, Angeles, Pampanga, 8 March 1983.
- 16 “Ang iskwadron ko, iskwadron 48. May gitara kami kahit sa labanan. At kumakanta kami. Ang kanta ay nagbibigay ng lakas loob sa kasama mo, para hindi sila matakot sa mga labanan.

Dahil ang mga kalaban may *tres mortal* (trench mortar). E gamit namin noon, Garand lang at saka riple, Thompson at Springfield, saka .45.” Interview with Tereso Dayrit, Angeles, Pampanga, 25 February 1983.

- 17 Sa gitna ng labanan, sumasabay lahat sa pagkanta. Ang martsa ang karaniwang ginagamit sa ganitong sitwasyon. Pag nakikipaglaban ka, syempre, inspirasyon yan. Ang konti mong nerbyos, naaalis pag narinig ang martsa ng mga kasama.” Interview with Protacio Manaluz, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, 5 January 1986.
- 18 “Pilipinas, Mipacde Ca” (“Awake, Philippines”). Sung by Jovita Julian, Tereso Dayrit, and Orlando Sarmiento. Cassette tape-recorded in Angeles, Pampanga, 25 February 1983.
- 19 “Sa battlefield, hindi na kailangan ng komander para sabihin sa iyo, ‘angat ka para makita mo ang kalaban mo.’ Pag narinig mo ang ‘Sulong, sulong, gerilyerong sandatahan,’ lalong lalo na ang linyang ‘broom boom boom pak pak boom boom,’ lumalabas ka na sa iyong kubli, naaangat ka na sa pilapil at sinasabayan mo ang kanta ng iyong mga putok.... At kahit iilan na lamang ang iyong bala, hindi ka pa rin nasisiraan ng loob. Sa katunayan, nabibigyan ka ng bagong kasiglaan upang ipagpatuloy ang labanan.” Interview with Cunanan, Quezon City, 29 January 1983.
- 20 “Sulong Gerilyerong Sandatahan” (“Advance, Armed Guerrillas”). Sung by the Aliaga Cultural and Dramatic Association led by former Huk guerrilla Flaviano Aliaga. Cassette tape-recorded in Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, 4 March 1986.
- 21 “Gintong Catimauan,” (“Golden Freedom”). Sung by Orlando Sarmiento, Jovita Julian, and Tereso Dayrit. Cassette tape-recorded in Angeles, Pampanga, 25 February 1983.
- 22 “Sa aming lakad na iyon, ang mga awitin ay nagpapakita na alam natin ang ating pinanggalingan, isa sa mahalagang kaalamang pangkultura ng tao, at iyan ang kaluluwa ng kilusan. E bakit ang kaluluwa ng aming samahan ay hindi malagay sa libro na ipinapaturong sa mga bata? Bakit hindi maisama ang aming kaalaman at kasaysayan ng pakikipaglaban? Kung talagang nais nila ng

pagbabago, bakit hindi mabigyan ang mga anak natin ng tunay na larawan ng samahan?... Ito ay isang bagay na napakahalaga sa akin.” Interview with Protacio Manaluz, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, 5 January 1986.

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