

MARIANO ANGEL HENSON: A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF HIS LIFE AND WORKS ON LOCAL HISTORY, 1948-1975

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Abstract

Local history is one of the most interesting areas of history. It is in this area of study where Mariano A. Henson, a Kapampangan historian, dedicated most of his writings. These two aspects are the focus of the paper. The life of Mariano A. Henson is examined through his works concerning local history. Initially, he did not focus on the study of local history, but rather he earned his degree and license in Pharmacy. In 1948, after acquiring the estate of his father, he began writing history books concerning his locality. The interest in history of Henson and his curiosity made him visit different archives and libraries in the world. With his expertise in different fields of studies he was considered as “Homo Universalis” or “Grand Old Man” by some. His importance in the study of history and social sciences lies in the corpus of research and works which he published. Through the lens of historiography and history, this paper provides an assessment and analysis of the works of Henson concerning local history. These works became the heritage and legacy of Mariano A. Henson in the study of Kapampangan culture and history, thus, sealing the title “Father of Kapampangan Studies.”

Keywords: Kapampangan Studies, Mariano A. Henson, Pampanga, Kapampangan, Local History.

1. Introduction

Knowing the mind of an individual is a very difficult task and near to impossible, but that is not the objective of life history. Historians try to write life history in order to learn from the lives of other individuals and to unravel the mysteries of their past that made a great impact on the lives of individuals around them. In light of this, I chose to write a biography of a local and prominent Kapampangan named Mariano A. Henson (will be referred as M.A. Henson in the paper).

One aspect that made M.A. Henson a prominent individual was his ancestry. The Hensons of Pampanga¹ are directly connected to the founders of the town of Angeles (present day Angeles City), namely Don Angel Pantaleon de Miranda and Don Severino Henson. Mariano A. Henson, an *hacendero*, he entered several fields of study from Chemistry in Ateneo de Manila University, University of the Philippines in Padre Faura, Pharmacy in University of Santo Tomas, Radio Course in an international school, later in the field of cuisine and history writing. His interest about the history of Pampanga came into him later in his life when he got hold of massive data from his father's estate. When one inquires different museum curators, the Hensons, and different persons in the field of academe in Pampanga about Mariano A. Henson, they would most likely answer you about him being "The Kapampangan Historian" or the "Grand old man". One article also labeled him as the "Father of Kapampangan Studies" for his numerous contributions in the study of the province and its people. One would also refer him as the "Renaissance Man". But, all of these labels

are subject to question. However, we cannot deny that his works contributed in the study of Kapampangan culture. It is in this aspect, that writing his life and works focused on his history works are worth studying.

2. Objective and Significance of the study

This research aims – first, to reconstruct different episodes in the life of Mariano A. Henson, as local historian. This research will try to reconstruct the past by examining the experiences of the individual and his participation in the American Colonialism, Japanese Occupation until the Republic. Secondly, it looks into the contributions of Mariano A. Henson and his writings to the local history writing, by focusing on his works concerning the history of Pampanga. The selected works of Mariano A. Henson pertinent to local history will be examined using the lens of historical methods and historiography.

Writing the life history of Mariano A. Henson would contribute to further studies of the individuals who advanced the study of Kapampangan history and culture. This paper will contribute to the study of local history writers of Pampanga.

The study covers the period from 1948 to 1975, both as watershed to the career of Mariano A. Henson as history writer. Firstly, in 1948, he was appointed as manager of the estate of his father, Jose P. Henson and got hold of the massive data. It was also this year that his first book concerning local history was published. From that moment, he got interested in local history writing until 1975 when he died. Until his twilight years, he was trying to finish a local history book but was unsuccessful.

3. Survey of Related Literature

The writers on history and culture of Pampanga and its people have produced a great number of works relating to the life and works of some prominent locals. Some of these works are worth mentioning for they will contribute to the study and writing of this research. This part will provide a review of three literatures connected to the subject under study. The first article that this paper will review was written by Fr. Edilberto V. Santos in his column in *SunStar Pampanga*, the second one was the dissertation of John Alan Larkin which was submitted in the Department of History, New York University at Buffalo in October 1966. As a starting point in reviewing the three literatures, the key points will be laid down, from that, the strengths and weaknesses of the three will then be analyzed. Finally, the relation of the three works on the subject under study will be explored.

It is interesting to note that despite the abundance on biography writing about prominent Kapampangan natives, there were no attempts to write about the life and works of Mariano A. Henson except for the article published by Marc Nepomuceno entitled *Don Mariano A. Henson: Father of Kapampangan Studies*. This article was published first in *Kmagazine*, issue 16, pages 23-25 but Marc Nepomuceno the original author gave Fr. Santos the permission to revise and republished this article. The lack thereof, was the reason why the article of Marc Nepomuceno was chosen as one of the literature to be reviewed. The article is divided into five parts and was published in *Kmagazine*.

The article began by narrating the importance of Mariano A. Henson in different efforts to preserve and study the Kapampangan culture and then proceeded to the brief ancestral history of the Henson including their connection to the founding family of the Town of Angeles (now Angeles City). The narration then continues to the early years of M. A. Henson until he finished his degree in Ateneo (present day Ateneo de Manila University), although the flow of the narrative was cut with the introduction of the different themes that the author of the article used in writing the life of

M.A. Henson. The article then became thematic rather than continuous narration in chronological manner. It looked into the life of M.A. Henson as the agriculturist, chemist, historian, public servant and as a married man. This manner of presenting a biography may be considered, especially in presenting the different contributions of Mariano, but it lacks focus.

It must also be noted that the first author of this article was Marc Nepomuceno, who happened to be closely related to Mariano A. Henson by blood. This might be the reason why the article keeps on praising and presenting the achievements of Mariano that in the end, it is comparable to a hagiography than to a biography. A typical biography usually ends with the death of the individual; however, in this case, the date and cause of M.A. Henson's death were never mentioned. The article simply ends in the lists of works of Mariano both published and unpublished. In the end, the author must also be given credit for his efforts to contribute in the reconstruction of the life of Mariano A. Henson.

The second work to be reviewed is entitled *The Evolution of Pampangan Society: A Case Study of Social and Economic Change in the Rural Philippines*. This work was written by John Alan Larkin for his dissertation in the Department of History, New York University at Buffalo in the year 1966. The copy was obtained from the University of the Philippines Main Library. In the front page of the dissertation, it was written that the copy was given to Mr. Mariano A. Henson for his help to Larkin while doing his research in Pampanga.

The work of Larkin covers the period from the Pre-Spanish Pampanga to Pampanga in 1896 until the third phase of the 1896 Revolution. The focus of Larkin, was the economic and social change that happened from the Pre-Spanish Society to the Colonial Society. The narrative focuses on the development of agriculture in the *Pampangan* society from their communal land ownership and farming up to the expansion of the Philippine commerce and the rise of Sugar as cash crop. The strength of the work of Larkin lies on the ground that he was able to narrate the changes that happened within the *Pampangan* society from the Pre-Spanish period until the eve of the revolution without dwelling too much on political events.

In summary, the first article might lack its focus on a particular aspect of M.A. Henson's career, but it is also a good take-off point for a researcher. The task now is to fill in those gaps in writing the biography of M.A. Henson. This research will try in filling up those gaps by focusing on a particular aspect of the career of M.A. Henson, that is in history writing. Finally, the work of Larkin, is of use in analyzing the local history works of M.A. Henson.

4. The life story of Mariano A. Henson

In order to better understand the writings and works of an individual, his life story and context must also be put into consideration. This part of the paper will narrate the life story of Mariano A. Henson in two parts – first, from 1897 to 1947, being born in 1897 and in 1947 when he first had his permit to operate a chemistry laboratory. The second section will focus from 1948 to 1975. His life story is divided into two, mainly because the main focus of this paper is his life and works from 1948 to 1975. In 1948 when he started writing local history works about Pampanga and by the time of his death in the year 1975. His life from 1897 to 1947 will be used as the first part of his life story while maintaining the focus from 1948 onwards in the second.

4.1 The life of Mariano A. Henson from 1897-1947

On the breezy midnight of Sunday, October 03, 1897 the fourth child of Don Jose P. Henson and

Dona Maxima R. Saddi of the Town of Angeles, was born. Their fourth child was given the name Mariano Angel Henson. He was born at *Bale Cuayan*ⁱⁱ, Lot No. 273-B and it was in front of the residence house of Don Angel Pantaleon de Miranda, the founder of the Town of Angeles (Henson, 1948, p. 1 and p. 2).ⁱⁱⁱ

On the seventh day of October 1897, Rev. Fr. Diez, then the temporary Parish Priest of Minalin, Pampanga baptized Mariano Angel Henson. The first and second names given to him were in honor of their ancestors, the founder of Angeles and of the religious. The day of his birth coincides with the Marian feast day of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, the reason why his parents decided to name him Mariano in honor of Our Lady. The name Mariano also honors his grandfather Don Mariano Vicente Henson (Henson, 1948, p. 1 and p. 2)^{iv} and his great grandfather Don Mariano Henson. The name Angel on the other hand was given to honor Don Jose P. Henson's great grandfather, Don Angel Pantaleon de Miranda as well as, the Holy Guardian Angels. Mariano A. Henson was of mixed descent. The Hensons were believed to be from a Chinese family who resided in the Philippines and later on intermarried with the natives producing Chinese Mestizos. On his mother side, the family Saddi was believed to be of Arabic origin, a corruption from the Saddia.

The knowledge of Mariano's young mind was honed by Don Julian Manankil, who, according to the word of Mariano was a disciplinarian. He was under the supervision of Manankil from the year 1903 up to 1907. His learning of letters and penmanship was attributed to Manankil. The year 1907 was an important watershed in the life of Mariano because at the age of 10 he entered Ateneo de Manila and was enrolled to the *Clase Infima*, thus receiving his first formal education. He continued his education in Ateneo de Manila until 1909, when he was enrolled in *Clase Media* and then in *Clase Superior*.^v The Clase Superior served as a preparation class for his enrollment the next year as an *interno* or boarder in the *Seminario Central de San Francisco Javier* on Padre Faura St., Ermita. Manila.^{vi} In the seminario, he was enrolled to the *Primer Año de Segunda Enseñanza* (First Academic Year). It was during this time that his interest in learning European languages manifested. He began studying Spanish, English, Latin and Greek. This particular interest in learning European languages, later, became evident in his composition of Latin verses, epigrams, epitaphs and Spanish poems.

The penchant of Mariano for composing Spanish poems and Latin verses, was according to him, his passion and consequently in the year 1969, in the book entitled *Penola y Tinta de Mariano A. Henson*, he compiled his works on Latin, Spanish, English and Pampango epigrams, epitaphs, sonnets, odes and anecdotes. Some of the works included in the book were the Spanish poems entitled *El Colegial Bajo disciplina Jesuitica* and *¿Que Tien Razon?* It is also interesting to note that in the last part of the book, he translated in Kapampangan Jose P. Rizal's *Mi Ultimo Adios*, giving it a Kapampangan title *Tauling Capamunan a Quepampangan nang Mariano A. Henson*.

Mariano was enrolled, in his last year in the Seminario, to the *Cuarto Año de Segunda Enseñanza* (Sophomore). He re-entered in the year 1914 and was enrolled to the *Quinto Año de Segunda Enseñanza* (Junior High School) (Henson, 1970, p. 2).^{vii} All his subjects in the *Quinto Año de Segunda Enseñanza* were all given *sobresaliente* (Henson, 1970, p 2).^{viii} The day of his graduation from Ateneo de Manila for his secondary education happened on March 13, 1917 where he graduated with honors, Cum Laude.

A milestone in the life of Mariano happened in July of the same year. He entered the University of the Philippines in Padre Faura st. with Chemistry as his course which was his true vocation.^{ix} His passion for studying Chemistry at the University of the Philippines did not last long, for he was

transferred by Don Jose P. Henson to the University of Santo Tomas. In the University of Santo Tomas he was enrolled in the course Pharmacy which would later on be useful to him, as it is related to chemistry. Although his practice in pharmacy helped him later on, the transfer from the University of the Philippines to the University of Santo Tomas was against his will (Henson, 1970, p. 3).^x

Shortly after he got hold of his degree and license in Pharmacy, he was employed as a Pharmacist of Magalang Drug Store, Pampanga. His curiosity and love of chemistry did not end in his graduation from the university, as he experimented with fertilizer. The experiment he made about a fertilizer led to a successful process of fertilization of Lanzon trees to which he called as **HENSONIZATION** (Henson, 1970, p. 4).^{xi} The presentation of his unique technique, to then Dr. Manuel Roxas of Bureau of Plant Industry under the American Civil government, led to a disappointment. When Roxas saw the technique he uttered to Mariano, "*nihil novum sub sole*" or "nothing new under the sun".

Meanwhile, different events of importance were happening during this period. In the year 1941, the Pacific War broke out and the Commonwealth government of the Philippines went into exile as the advancing forces of Japanese Imperial Army continue to seize different parts of the country from the American forces. The exit of the American forces did not stop the continuing resistance of the Filipinos against the Japanese Imperial Forces different guerrilla forces fought the Japanese. It was also during this period that the Communist rebellion in Central Luzon was at its peak. It was not yet a full armed struggle, but it was a rebellion in the form of sabotage, mysterious assassinations and kidnappings of the landlords and relatives. Later on, the HUKBALAHAP (*Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa mga Hapon*) was formed in the Central Luzon, and was one of the guerrilla forces fighting the Japanese. Mariano, being the son of one of the largest land owning persons in the town of Angeles then, fled to Davao and was appointed as superintendent of the abaca plantations of the Pamintuan Development Co., Inc. The Pamintuan family was one a close family friend of the Hensons, they personally invited Mariano to take a look at the land in Davao. Mariano then being very inclined to agriculture and fled to Davao. His flight to Davao was also an escape from the communists who were then chasing and having a rebellion to their landlords in Pampanga. The father of Mariano, Don Pepe was one of the largest land owning individuals in the Town of Angeles then.^{xii} He then returned from Davao to Pampanga, to be the lone pharmacist in the Farmacia Henson in Angeles. Although, Don Pepe chose the degree pharmacy program for him, he was not given the chance to practice that profession in Manila where three Henson Pharmacies were acquired from the late owner Jose B. Henson. After the American liberation of the Philippines, he was assigned as a medical technician to the 248th General Hospital in Clark Airforce Base in Angeles.

Although, Mariano was faced with different changes in his social environment, he was still able to cope with those changes. He was born at the tail end of the Spanish colonial era and continued his life with the entrance of a new colonizer from the west and the intervention of an Asian power. Despite these changes, he still continued on his passion with chemistry and experimented with a lot of things from fertilizer to the chemistry of flavor, scent and cosmetics.

4. 2 The life of M.A. Henson and his works on local history from 1948-1975

Don Pepe, being a strict and a conservative father to his children, influenced almost all the decisions being made by his children. By the year 1948, as preparation for the future, Don Pepe decided to appoint Mariano to manage their vast estate in Angeles, Pampanga. Don Pepe was certain of Mariano becoming the most probable heir to his estate because he [Mariano] was the

eldest son. His three elder siblings were all female (Henson, 1948, p. 16). Not only was the estate being inherited by Mariano, but also the massive collection of data that was kept by his father Don Pepe, and was compiled by his late grandfather Don Mariano Vicente Henson. This compilation of documents included the documents about the family of the Hensons of Pampanga. One of these hidden documents was made by Mariano himself, in the year 1912, when he was instructed by his father to transfer their family tree in a tracing cloth in the form of a grape vine. It was also that event which made Mariano interested in writing genealogy; however, this interest did not materialize in that year. Finally, in the year 1948, after thirty-six years, a book entitled "*The Hensons of Pampanga*" was published (Henson, 1966).

The 28-page book contains the genealogy of the Hensons in Pampanga, from the oldest record in existence up to the fifth generation of the Hensons. The main purpose of this project was to show the close ties of the Hensons and to show the preservation of their loved and pet names through their descendants in the subsequent generation. A vision of establishing in the Philippines the "Henson Genetic Records Office" also prompted him to write down the genealogy of their family. The genealogy is divided into two tables – the first table showing the earliest possible ancestors of the Hensons based on existing record, while the second table traces the Henson descendants up to fifth generation from San Fernando and Angeles, Pampanga. Mariano A. Henson, based on this book belongs to the fourth generation Henson from the Angeles line. Aside from the hidden data from his father's estate, he also sought the help of the old Hensons in order to reconstruct their genealogy, especially on the Betis and San Fernando line. While doing the research, he found out that most of the physical characteristics of the male Hensons were retained. They were of "medium stature, lightly stooping shoulders, receding hairline after middle age and taciturn disposition". After completing this project he came into a conclusion that: "All Hensons are Pampangos: if they are Pampangos they are closely related to each other (Henson, 1948, p. 2)."

The genealogies of the Hensons and the founders of Angeles were not the only documents in the cache of hidden data. Other documents included the papers about the province of Pampanga, its landscape, especially agriculture and its history. With these documents being handed to Mariano, he opened himself to a new career in local history writing.

There was a desire in Mariano to share these documents and their contents with his fellow Filipinos, in general, and his *Kabalen* in particular. This desire resulted to 42 works, pertinent to Kapampangan history, culture and society in general. Some of these works were published by Mariano, himself. Among the first work relevant to the history of Pampanga that was materialized from the writings of Mariano was a short book entitled "A Brief History of the Town of Angeles".

The book covers the period from the founding of the Town of Angeles, now a city, to the present day pertaining to the period when Mariano wrote the book which was 1948. It covers roughly 152 years, from 1796 the founding year of the Angeles. Given the time period covered, it could have been volumes of work, however, Mariano summarized the 152 years in an eighty-three page book. The book was written in a chronological form which lacks narration of the author. It offers important events that occurred in a particular period of time or year, but it does not look into its subsequent effect on the course of history. Most of the events that was given much importance by Mariano in his book were the founding of Angeles from the Barrio Culiati, the foundation of the Church of Angeles, the festivities of different patron saints and different tragic events that happened in the town like fire, earthquake, pestilence and typhoons. In the process, the book assumes the form of a chronology rather than of history. It was just a pure listing of the events that happened in a particular day and a particular year.

The opening of new career path to Mariano did not end with his new passion for writing about Pampanga and their family. In the year 1951, proving his capability to serve as a public servant he was appointed as an acting Mayor and Vice Mayor of Angeles, in absence of the officials of the town (Henson, 1970, p. 13).^{xiii} After this brief entrance to the world of politics, he did not have in mind future political ambitions, for he will later on use his time to continue writing about Angeles. That momentum of entering the world of politics veered Mariano away from writing for a small period of time. When he left the public office he then continued analyzing and reading the data he acquired from his father's estate. In the cache of documents he stumbled upon a particular document written in the year 1840 by Nicolas Vicente Navarro. This document recounts the story and history of the formation of the Town of Angeles from its founding fathers up to their death. Nicolas Vicente Navarro according to Mariano, was an eyewitness account of almost all the events that happened in Angeles from the time of its founding. Navarro served as one of the most trusted secretary of the founders of Angeles from the start until their death. This was published three times by Mariano's father and grandfather. In the year 1954, Mariano published the said document for the fourth time, but with changes in its form. He followed the document on the orthography of Spanish instead of Tagalog, and then made it into octosyllabic. The content and meaning, remains the same. The published material under Mariano A. Henson was entitled *Ing Pangatatag ning Balen Angeles*.

The curiosity of Mariano in the field of History in general led him to pursue and expand his knowledge by doing diligent research in the Philippines and in different parts of the world. Mariano left Pampanga and their family estate for a while for five years, from the year 1961 to 1966, to travel and to do some research. Being one of the oldest school institutions in the country, he went first to the University of Santo Tomas archives and library, and later on was given permission to research on the archives and library of the Malacanang Palace.

Knowing that a vast of information lies beyond the border of the Philippines, he travelled abroad. He extensively looked into every library which concerns the past of our country, it is as if he was looking for a needle in haystack. Some of the notable libraries that he visited were -*Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris, *Biblioteca Sagarmínaga* in Bilbao, Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., The National Library of India in Calcutta and *Archivo General de Indias* (La Lonja) in Sevilla.

In the year 1961, he spent two months researching and using the facilities of *Biblioteca Nacional* on Calvo Sotelo Ave., located in Madrid, Spain. In this library, he was able to access some of the works of earliest Spanish writers and Spanish rare books or *libros raros*. The following month, July, he was given a pass to enter the *Bibliothèque Nationale* of Paris, France. On the same year, from Europe, he travelled to Washington, D.C. in the United States of America where he gained access to the LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. He did not stop in the US, the direction of his research now faces southwards. He visited the *Archivo General de la Nación*, *Biblioteca Miguel Lerdo de Tejada* and *Biblioteca Nacional* in Mexico, all at the same year in 1964. In the Biblioteca Nacional, it houses 200,000 volumes and among these Mariano found the *Recuerdos de Filipinas* published in Madrid in the year 1877 by Francisco Canamaque (Henson, 1965, p. vi). The *Recuerdos* is a satirical tale or story about the Spanish, friars and native customs in the Philippines during this period. After spending some time in Mexico, he went back to Europe, particularly Spain to exploit and uncover the treasure of knowledge hidden in some of its libraries. *Archivo General de Indias* in Sevilla was his first stop, which contains fourteen million folios. Mariano then went to Madrid to read in *Archivo Historico Nacional*, *Real Academia de la Historia* and *Instituto de Cultura Hispanica*.

In his research in *Archivo General de Indias*, the following conclusion was emphasized in his

account:

"he found out the time-honored allegations that the University of Santo Tomas of Manila was founded in 1611 to be false: the College of Santo Tomas (very different from the University of Santo Tomas) was founded in 1619 (Catalogo de los Documentos Relativos a las Islas Filipinas, Vol. 5, page 233), whereas the title of "Real" was granted to the College of Santo Tomas on 7 March 1785 (Audiencia. Invent. ced. y cons. Legajo No. 353). The title "Pontificia" was never found out extant and granted to either the College or to the Univeristy of Santo Tomas on any document (Henson, 1970, p. 16)."

Mariano, according to his own account, also disproved from his researches in all the books and documents read in five libraries in Spain, the myth that Rajah Soliman III was killed on May 24, 1571 in the Battle of Bangkusay. According to him, no account or books state the killing of Rajah Soliman III in the Battle of Bangkusay. He also cited that Fr. Jeronimo Marin, O.S.A was calling the attention of the Rajahs Lakandula and Soliman and to their respective followers not to start an uprising or rebellion against the Spanish colonial government. This mentioning of Fr. Marin to these two Rajahs happened upon the arrival of Limahong in 1575 which happened later than the Battle of Bangkusay in 1571. He used the Catalogo Bio-Bibliografico in Biblioteca de Agustinos Filipinos in Valladolid in providing the evidence for the citation of Fr. Marin to Rajah Soliman III. However, close research and analysis of the events that occurred in the so called Battle of the Bangkusay Channel would lead us to a leader of Macabebe, Pampanga who waged a war against the Spanish forces of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi who was able to convince Rajah Soliman III to join his forces. Their forces were defeated by the Spanish forces and there were claims that in the battle, Rajah Soliman was slain, but it was the leader of the Macabebe forces that was slain. His name was Tarik Soliman. According to the account of Gaspar de San Agustin, O.S.A :

"The people of Macabebe and other neighboring towns saw the valor and might of the Spaniards, since they conquered so many with such few men, and killed their Moor leader whom they considered to be the bravest on the island. They thus began respecting the castillians tremendously (San Agustin, 1998, p. 553)."^{xiv} (underlined for emphasis)

The similarity in the name of the two leaders who fought in the Battle of Bangkusay might have been one of the factors in the confusion on who really was killed in the battle. One can say that Mariano, did not really bust or debunk a myth in the real sense, rather it was just a clarification on who really was killed. And the search for books which state the slaying of Rajah Soliman III, was to begin with non-practical because it was not Rajah Soliman III that was killed but Tarik Sulayman of the Macabebe.

After coming up with different conclusions from his research, Mariano ended his journey to different libraries in the world and returned back to the Philippines on the same year. His research and travels from the different libraries resulted to a comprehensive book about Kapampangan History, Culture, Government, Cuisine and Agriculture. Expanding his coverage, this work does not only relate to the history of Angeles but in the Province of Pampanga in general. This book was entitled *The Province of Pampanga and Its Towns (A.D. 1300-1965)*. This 235 page book was the concrete result and manifestation of all the researches he had done in different libraries of the world. The book was divided into 28 parts ranging. It started with the descriptive part. The first

part describes the geographical setting of Pampanga and its different towns which is really needed, especially in local history writing. It was then followed by the listing of the different governors of Pampanga from the Spanish period. This was followed by a short narration on the possible origins of the Kapampangans and the world *Pampangans*. Then, political themes followed, the book then talked about the government of Pampanga, the Kapampangans as soldiers, the municipalities of Pampanga and their revenues, foundations of towns and parishes, and Politics and Communism in Pampanga. Another theme that was present in the book was religion. There were eight parts of the book dealing with religion, for example the founding of different parishes, religion and education, and huge part deals with the Missions of Agustinians, Franciscans, Recollects and Filipino Secular Clergy in Pampanga. The theme on economy also stands out, for example, he talks about the resources and industries, tenancy laws, Pampanga soils and coinage. These different parts could have been connected together in a single narrative which shows the development of these different aspects as time changes. What is interesting about the book, at the end Mariano dedicated almost three pages for what he termed as *Other World History Curiosities*, in this part he tried to show the descendants of Alexander the Great and then the other part pertains to the commonality of the name Jesus, Judas and Mary during their period. This has to be one of the milestone book in the career of Mariano Henson as a local history writer. This comprehensive book published in 1965 was the result of the attempt to share a vast knowledge about Pampanga and its history.

The following year, without attempting any rest on writing about history published another book this time a family genealogy of the founder of Angeles Don Angel Pantaleon de Miranda entitled *The Descendants of the Founder of Angeles, Pampanga Don Angel Pantaleon de Miranda and of Don Severino Henson*. It closely follows the format he had used in writing the earlier family tree book *The Hensons of Pampanga*. In this book, one can see clearly the direct relation of Mariano A. Henson to the founders of Angeles to which he prides himself. Mariano A. Henson was the grandson of Mariano Vicente Henson who in turn was the grandson of the founders through the marriage of their daughter Juana de Miranda and Dr. Mariano Henson, the father of Mariano Vicente Henson. This project was still in line with the premise that one day he will establish the Henson Genetics Record Office in the Philippines. This, consequently, was the last book published by Mariano Henson relating to genealogy of their family.

On February 20, 1966 he was invited by the Manila Booklovers Society as a guest speaker. He was asked to share his experiences in the different libraries in the world. Finally, after years of writing, his work and diligent research in history writing was finally given attention by the *Katipunan Talasulat Kapampangan* (Association of Pampango Writers). He was given the award for Outstanding Historian by the said organization on May 5, 1970 at the Philippine Columbian Club in Taft Avenue. Mariano did not, however, confine himself to history writing, being a "Universal Man" as others would call him, he put into practice his knowledge of Radio Technology. He served as a private typhoon forecaster by relaying the readings from the Padre Faura's barometer pressure to a broadcaster who in turn advises the people of Angeles of the proper things to do, in advance. His access to this information could have been the reason for the dominance and importance he gave to the typhoons and such events in writing some of his history works.

On December 5 of the year 1970, he presented to the National Historical Association in Intramuros, Manila his work and research about the Will of Fernando Malang Balagtas. Fernando Malang Balagtas was considered to be connected to the founders of the ancient towns in Central Luzon and of some Pre-Spanish rulers of Manila. He was then given a diploma by the officials of the National Historical Association for his work. In this research he was indebted to Professor Otley H. Beyer of the University of the Philippines because he was allowed by Beyer to use his

special collections and especially the Will of Fernando Malang Balagtas in Spanish, English and Tagalog versions.

As the years of Mariano near its conclusion, that did not stop him from doing his passion in writing about local history. The distance from the time of Japanese occupation was just right and the time is ripe to write the events that occurred during the Pacific War in Pampanga, specifically in Angeles. Instead of writing a separate book about the Japanese Occupation in Angeles, Mariano instead sought to update his earlier book entitled *The Brief History of Angeles*. This book covers only up to 1948, the year it was first published. The problem of sources was faced by Mariano in trying to update his earlier book. He had almost the chance to be an eyewitness account of the Japanese Occupation in Angeles however, due to different circumstances he was in Davao during those times. In order to solve this problem, he sought the help of his sister's son named Daniel Dizon y Henson. Like Mariano, Daniel also has an inclination and interest in local history writing. They agreed to collaborate to update Mariano's earlier book. Daniel agreed to provide an eyewitness account of the Japanese Occupation in Angeles, in the process he himself also became one of the eyewitness account.

All is set for the finalization and then publication of the Second Edition of the book "*A Brief History of Angeles*" but on July 5, 1975 after celebrating and eating his heart out in the Fourth of July Open House in Clarkfield, Angeles, Mariano died a sudden death.

The story has now ended, and with the death of a Kapampangan "old man" a vast of unshared knowledge will be buried together with him. Angeles had lost a son, but also in the process gained because of the works left by its old man.

Concluding Assessment

In the end, the paper was able to provide glimpses of the important episodes in the life of Mariano A. Henson over the changing society where he lives in. The interaction between the individual and the society shows the effect that these changes had on the individual. This research also explored the contribution of Mariano to the field of history by presenting his works pertinent to local history of Pampanga in general and Angeles in particular. Using the present day standards of history writing, some of his works might not be counted under this designation. Some of his works are more comparable to a chronology than to history because of the lack of substantive narration. It has the necessary facts or what historians call as the backbone, needed in history writing, however, the flesh of history which is narrative was never given.

Finally, one can say that time had limited Mariano in what he is doing, but that does not make him less good because he was able to intelligently use his time by dedicating it to knowledge accumulation and sharing of information to his fellow Filipinos and Kapampangans. One cannot disagree with the importance of Mariano A. Henson and his works in the development of Kapampangan historiography.

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APPENDIX



Figure 1: Map of Pampanga

Source: www.mapsofworld.com/philippines/provinces/pampanga.html

ENDNOTES

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- ⁱ Pampanga is an administrative province of the Philippines located in Central Luzon and part of Region III. The people of Pampanga are called Kapampangan and are speaking the Kapampangan language. See Appendix for the map of Pampanga
- ii Bale Cuayan literally means Bamboo House. According to the interview of the researcher to Daniel Dizon y Henson, it was constructed in the year 1892 which served as a rest house. It is literally made of bamboo. It was said that a fan was not need when inside the house because of the fresh and continuous entrance of the wind. Five years later Mariano was born here. Later on the family had to move to the house of the founders of Angeles when it was given as inheritance to the family of Don Jose P. Henson. In the present the house of the founders of Angeles is still in place, and the Bale Cuayan is now owned by Daniel Dizon. According to him, the bamboo house will be demolished in favor of a new establishment.
- iii It must be noted that Angeles became a city in the year 1964.
- iv Mariano V. Henson is considered as the builder of the Holy Rosary Parish in Angeles. The building of the church started in 1877 and was completed on February 12, 1896.
- v *Clase Infima* is roughly equivalent to present day Grade III in the elementary education, while *Clase Media* , on the other, to Grade IV. *Clase Superior* served as his preparatory class. It must also be noted that during this time Ateneo de Manila is still located at Arzobispo street, Intramuros, Manila. It was relocated in 1932 in Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila after it was destroyed by a fire.
- vi *Seminario Central de San Javier* was one of the seminaries under the authority of the Jesuits (Society of Jesus), which would later become the site for the relocation of the Ateneo de Manila campus after it was destroyed by fire in 1932.
- vii It is interesting to note that Mariano A. Henson first entered Ateneo de Manila in Intramuros and then he transferred to Seminario Central de San Francisco Javier and after spending 3 years, Mariano together with several classmates re-entered Ateneo de Manila in Intramuros. According to him, this transfer and re-entry from Ateneo de Manila to Seminario Central de San Javier then to Ateneo de Manila again, was propelled by unknown college authorities policies and they were just following these policies.
- viii *Sobresaliente* means having the highest grade in a particular subject. It is equivalent to being excellent in class.
- ix Mariano A. Henson stayed under the Chemistry degree program of the University of the Philippines for a year. Throughout his stay in UP, he was staying as a boarder or interno in the Colegio de San Jose in Padre Faura st., Ermita, Manila. This Colegio de San Jose was the same Seminario Central de San Javier where he [Mariano A. Henson] stayed and studied from 1910 to 1913. Colegio de San Jose traces its origin in the 17th century and it was under the Jesuit Order [Society of Jesus].
- x It was mentioned in his own account, that there were no other career opportunities available for a graduate major in chemistry during that period. We can then attribute to this factor the reason why his father, Don Pepe, transferred him in the University of Sto. Tomas under the degree Pharmacy.

xi It is the process devised by Mariano A. Henson for the fertilization of Lanzon Trees starting from seedlings until its fructification to 8 years.

xii Interview with Daniel H. Dizon.

xiii Mariano was appointed by Jose B. Lingad, then the governor of Pampanga.

xiv The Moor leader was unnamed however it pertains to the leader of Macabebe during the Battle of Bangkusay whom historians refer to as Tarik Sulayman assuming that he was related to the Sulaymans of Tondo. Some also refer to the genealogy of his descendants in Pampanga that were presented in the 19th century. For a complete account of the Battle of Bangkusay see San Agustin, Gaspar de. *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas 1565-1615* (in Bilingual (Spanish and English)). Translated by Luis Antonio Mañeru (1st bilingual ed [Spanish and English] ed.). Intramuros, Manila, 1998 Chapter IV, page 553