

Where is the patis essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Carmen Guerrero Nakpil (b. July 19, 1922) is a Filipino journalist, author, historian and public servant. She was born in Ermita, Manila, into the Guerrero clan of that town, who were painters and poets, as well as scientists and doctors. Her paternal grandfather was Leon Maria Guerrero (b. January 21, 1853), pharmacist, botanist, member of the Malolos Congress and the First Philippine Assembly, who was likewise born in Ermita, Manila. He was the younger brother of Lorenzo Guerrero, the painter and mentor to Juan Luna.

Dr. Jose P. Bantug referred to Leon Ma. Guerrero as the “ Father of Philippine Botany”, having classified and described hundreds of Filipino medicinal plants. [1] Her maternal grandfather was Gabriel Beato Francisco (b. March 18, 1850), Tagalog writer, journalist, novelist, playwright, born in Sampalok, then a town independent of Manila. Francisco’s contribution to the development of Tagalog literature lies in the novel.

Chronologically considered his *Cababalaghan ni P. Bravo* might be regarded as the first novel to be published in Tagalog literature. (This fact appears to be unknown to students and historians of Tagalog literature, not mentioned in Inigo Ed. Regalado’s *Ang Pagkaunlad ng Nobelang Tagalog* (1939).

Secondly, Francisco was responsible for introducing the historical genre in the beginning and early development of the Tagalog novel. [1] Parents were the prominent doctor Alfredo Guerrero and Filomena Francisco, who was celebrated as one of the Philippines’ first female pharmacists.

She studied at St. Theresa’s College, Manila and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1942. Between 1946 and 2006, she worked as either staff

member, editor or editorial columnist at the Evening News, The Philippines Herald, the Manila Chronicle (where she had a daily column for 12 years), the Manila Times, Asia magazine, and Malaya, in addition to contributing lectures, essays, short stories to other publications in the Philippines and the rest of the world.

She has published a total of ten books : Woman Enough, A Question of Identity, History Today, The Philippines and the Filipinos, The Rice Conspiracy (a novel), the Centennial Reader and Whatever; as well as a wildly successful autobiographical trilogy Myself, Elsewhere; Legends & Adventures; and Exeunt. Where is the Patis? by Carmen Guerrero- Nakpil A Filipino may denationalize himself but not his stomach. He may travel over the seven seas, the five continents, the two hemispheres and lose the savor of home, forget his identity and believes him a citizen of the world.

But he remains- gastronomically, at least, always a Filipino. For, if in no other way, the Filipino loves his country with his stomach. Travel has become the great Filipino dream. In the same way that an American dreams of becoming a millionaire or English boy dreams of going to one of the great universities, the Filipino dreams of going abroad. His most constant vision is that of himself as a tourist. To visit Hongkong, Tokyo and other cities of Asia, perchance or to catch a glimpse of Rome, Paris or London or to go to America (even for only a week in a fly- specked motel in California) is the sum of all delights.

Yet having left Manila International Airport in a pink cloud of despedidas and sampaguita garlands and pabilin, the dream turns into a nightmare very

quickly. But why? Because the first bastion of the Filipino spirit is the palate. And in all the palaces and fleshpots and skyscrapers of that magic world called “ abroad” there is no patis to be had. Consider the Pinoy abroad. He has discarded the barong tagalog or “ polo” for a dark, sleek Western suit. He takes to the hailments from Hongkong, Brooks Brothers or Savile Row with the greatest of ease.

He has also shed the casual informality of manner that is characteristically Filipino. He gives himself the airs of a cosmopolite to the credit-card born. He is extravagantly courteous (especially in a borrowed language) and has taken to hand-kissing and to plenty of American “ D’you mind’s? ” He hardly misses the heat, the native accents of Tagalog or Ilongo or the company of his brown- skinned cheerful compatriots. He takes, like duck to water, to the skyscrapers, the temperate climate, the strange landscape and the fabled refinements of another world.

How nice, after all, to be away from good old R. P. for a change! But as he sits down to meal, no matter how sumptuous, his heart sinks. His stomach juices, he discovers, are much less neither as apahap nor lapu-lapu.

Tournedos is meat done in barbarian way, thick and barely cooked with red juices still oozing out. The safest choice is a steak. If the Pinoy can get it well done enough and sliced thinly enough, it might remind him of tapa. If the waiter only knew enough about Philippine cuisine, he might suggest venison which is really something like tapang usa, or escargots which the unstylish poor on Philippine beaches know as snails.

Or even frog' legs which are a Pampango delight. But this is the crux of the problem, where is the rice? A silver tray offers varieties of bread: slices of crusty French bread, soft yellow rolls, rye bread, crescents studded with sesame seeds. There are also potatoes in every conceivable manner, fried, mashed, boiled, buttered. But no rice. The Pinoy learns that rice is considered a vegetable in Europe and America. The staff of life a vegetable! Where is the patis? And when it comes a special order which takes at least half an hour the grains are large, oval and foreign- looking and what's more, yellow with butter.

And oh horrors! – one must shove it with a fork or pile it with one's knife on the back of another fork. After a few days of these debacles, the Pinoy, sick with longing, decides to comb the strange city for a Chinese restaurant, the closest thing to the beloved gastronomic country. There, in the company of other Asian exiles, he will put his nose finally in a bowl of rice and find it more fragrant than an English rose garden, more exciting than a castle on the Rhine and more delicious than pink champagne.

To go with the rice there is siopao (not so rich as at Salazar), pancit guisado reeking with garlic (but never so good as any that can be had on the sidewalks of Quiapo), fried lumpia with the incorrect sauce, and even mami (but nothing like the down-town wanton) Better than a Chinese restaurant is the kitchen of a kababayan. When in a foreign city, a Pinoy searches every busy sidewalk, theater, restaurant for the well- remembered golden features of a fellow- pinoy. But make it no mistake.