



Tinig ng Tropa

Tropa ng Kabataang Pinoy sa Deutschland

Landas ng Liwanag

A reflection based on the stage play on the life of San Lorenzo Ruiz and the Filipinos

By: Fr. Jun de Ocampo, SVD
 Seelsorger, philippinische Katholiken, Erzbistum Köln



There are moments in our lives when we experience crises. Our problems become bigger and complicated, making it very difficult to go on. It is as if we find ourselves standing in the middle of nowhere, in the middle of the night - where it is completely dark and raining heavily - not knowing where to go. We are afraid that when we move a tiny bit, we might fall into a ravine, a canal of water, or bump into a tree. Then, unexpectedly, from the sky, there comes a flash of lightning! That one flash of lightning is enough to make us see everything around us clearly. Then everything turns completely dark again. And all that is left to us is a clear vision of what that one flash of lightning has shown us.

This theater piece, *Landas ng Liwanag* is something like that. It is a story about two Filipinos: one of yesteryears and another of now-a-days. Both find themselves in the midst of difficult situations in their lives as migrants. Both unexpectedly experience that flash of lightning that suddenly gives them a clear vision of a definite road to take, a definite choice to make, a definite path to follow – the path of light – *ang Landas ng Liwanag*. In life, what is important is not what happens to us, but how we react or respond. The choice that we make will spell all the difference. This is what Lorenzo and Laura will show in *Landas ng Liwanag*: how each responds to the unexpected events in their lives, and chooses what is LEAST expected.

Talking about the unexpected, this play will feature people you least expect to perform onstage. No imported actors from the Philippines – these are *Pinoys* whom you have met here and there. For most of them, this is their first time act, notwithstanding, their first to develop their own play. And what more, a good number of them are young people.

Thanks to the Tropa ng Kabataang Pinoy sa Deutschland for spearheading this project. Special thanks too to the year 2006 Hermano-Hermana Mayor of San Lorenzo Ruiz feast, Rizaldy and Liberty Tanangco and family, as whose brainchild this stageplay *Landas ng Liwanag* was conceived. Finally, congratulations and thanks to Lando Velasco who successfully translated the concept and directed it into a concrete, down-to-earth and moving stage play.

Zugabe! Isa pa nga!

Watch it again on 13 & 14 April, 7 p.m., at the Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V., Internationales Zentrum, Stolze Str. 1a, 50674 Köln. Free Entrance!



THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER, KABATAAN!

If you have any comments or if you would like to contribute, please feel free to do so and contact us. You are most welcome. It's your newsletter, Kabataan!

There are more updates on other issues regarding WYD 2008, so browse along our newsletter.

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

Unity
 to be real
 must stand
 the severest strain
 without
 breaking

- Mahatma Gandhi



Impressions...

From the cast and crew:

The St. Lorenzo play was a really nice experience for all of us, especially for us (youth), 'cuz we really didn't know how his life was... why he became a saint and all this stuff. The play was a big event after the "World Youth Day 2005" and everything went mostly good because we have worked as a "TEAM".

- Christopher

...acting in the San Lorenzo play on Sept 8 was the best gift I received on that day -- my birthday!!! ...I really had a lot of fun acting (and playing) with some of the members of the cast and crew...and I love you, Tatay Lorenzo!!!!...

- Nina

...I'm so happy to be a part of the San Lorenzo play...I love you, Tito Ays! ...I love you, Kuya Bubbie! ...I love you, Tita Grace! ...I love you, Padre Antonio! ...I love you, Tita Toni!!!!...

- Sofia

I'm thankful that I were given a chance to take an active part in this play. I've learned a lot about my role because „Laura“ taught me to keep faith with God in spite of my problems. „Laura gave birth to her child and offered her own life.“ In almost the same manner of all the „Landas ng Liwanag“ participants, we were all busy in our studies, jobs and families but we're proud that we have succesfully presented „San Lorenzo's Life“ to all the Filipinos in Germany. It's worth the trouble after practicing for two months. I hope you got to know „San Lorenzo“ better and experienced a nice story! God Bless Us All!!!

- Grace

It was interesting to prepare but stressfull as in sobra nakakapagod!! Galing tlga ng mga main role nakakadala and the props as well, tlgang may unity... Cguro naman sa remake nung play hindi na gaanong ka stressfull. I like the fotoshoot... feeling ko artista na tlga ako kahit ang liit lng ng role ko. hehe ...

- Ivy

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who supported me in San Lorenzo Play. Yes! I'm proud to be a part of this, especially proud po ako sa role ko (daig ko ang BIDA!) They call it "Dakilang Alalay ". Nobody can take this away from me...hmm..

Nakakuwa lang po para sa newcomer na katulad ko na ipinagkatiwala sa akin ung mga roles ...yes, mga roles from being a mother, a Doctor hanggang sa naging nurse and at the same time props din pala ako! See...Sino ang hindi makakalimot sa mga sandaling un...Pero ang isang bagay na

hindi ko malilimutan dito e ung nabuong "friendship"..

- Sheila

Das Theaterstück zeigt mir, was für einen starken Glauben Filipinos haben und wie wichtig ihnen dieser ist. Das Stück zeigt, dass egal was passiert, auch wenn Leute ihren Glauben nicht wirklich ausleben, sie sich am Ende immer noch an Gott wenden. Zum Aufbau des Stückes: Es hat sehr viele Nerven, Geduld, Zusammenarbeit und vor allem Zeit gekostet. Es war vor allem für die Organisatoren eine stressige aber sicherlich eine tolle Zeit, da das Endkonzept Leute gelehrt und inspiriert hat. Und trotz des ganzen Stress hat das Stück den Zusammenhalt von TROPA widergespiegelt.

- Mervie

Durch dieses Theaterstück "LANDAS NG LIWANAG" erfuhr ich viel über Lorenzo, dass er der erste Heilige von Manila war. Anfangs wusste ich noch nicht mals genaueres über Ihn, aber das Theater war mir eine große Hilfe über Ihn mehr zu wissen. Ich konnte durch das Spiel miterleben wie schlimm das Leben von Lorenzo war und wie sehr er darunter leiden musste, als er von den Japanern gefolter wurde. Ich hab großen Respekt vor Ihn, weil er viel durch machen musste in der Zeit wo er in Japan war. Das Projekt für uns "TROPA" war eine große Herausforderung mal wieder zusammen was zu meistern und es war eine tolle Erfahrung Lorenzo's Leben näher anzuschauen.

- Nixie

Das St. Lorenzo Theaterstück war für uns Jugendliche (TROPA) eine sehr schöne Erfahrung. Es war spannend für uns alle, weil wir als Gruppe noch nie wirklich Theater gespielt haben. Wir haben uns jede woche mehrmals getroffen um das Theaterstück zusammen zu proben. Wir hatten viel spaß, haben viel über St. Lorenzo gelernt und

haben aber auch gelernt das man beim Theater viel Geduld und Disziplin braucht. Wir hatten nur wenig Zeit um alles rechtzeitig fertig zu bekommen aber in der Zeit sind wir uns alle wieder näher gekommen, weil es seit dem Weltjugendtag 2005 wieder das erste größere Ereignis war. Am Ende sind wir doch noch rechtzeitig fertig geworden und haben erfolgreich ein gutes Theater auf die beine gestellt.

- Bubbie

"Masakit ba 'yun?! Hindi ka ba nasaktan?", These are the usual questions they threw at me after the play, most especially the kids. I am grateful that we have received good reviews about it and that has made me proud of the whole group. Sabi nga namin, "Nananalantay sa aming mga ugat ang dugong artista!" Pinoy kasi kaya natural na ma-a-arte!

But thru this play we haven't only shown how beautiful San Lorenzo's life were but also how similar it is to the lives of Filipinos today worldwide. I hope that this would even strengthen the Filipino faith and make them realize that God has His own plans and reasons for everything.

It was an honor to be chosen to play the role of San Lorenzo and after that, it has even strengthen my faith. He got His own plans for each one of us and I hope that when the time comes that He calls us, we would gladly attend to it. Just as San Lorenzo did. Anyways, everything that we have come from Him and it is just right for us to give it back it Him.

- Ays

When Fr. Jun invited our family to come with him to the Shalom Center on July 30, 2006, this was what he said, "*Halikayo, makigulo tayo du'n sa pictorial ng San Lorenzo play!*" Not having any other appointments at that time, we readily



Landas ng Liwanag cast: Standing (L-R); Bubbie Doles (Japanese soldier), JR Salazar (Japanese soldier), Ramon Manaig (Padre Domingo Ibañez), Edison "ays" Espiritu (Lorenzo Ruiz), Ivy Hernandez (Lorenzo's wife), Ed Andres (Padre Antonio Gonzales). Seated (L-R); Geoffrey Tria (Japanese soldier), Jorell Tana (Lorenzo's son), Nina Auxilian (Lorenzo's daughter), Sofia Auxilian (Lorenzo's son), Dharlen Trio (Cheiko), Jericho Tanangco (Masa)

agreed, never knowing that what we thought would be just plain “panggugulo” for us as part of the audience would turn out to be something very special for me and our daughters, Nina & Sofia...we were actually given ROLES in the play!

It was a lot of hard work AND FUN all together, plus a bonus of discovering new talents in everybody--both centerstage and backstage. The camaraderie among the cast and crew was in itself gratifying. Most of all, the audience's positive response during the two playdates on September 8 & 9 was very rewarding.

In the end we realized how beautiful the project was, with its objective of making the viewers (and even the cast and crew themselves) know who San Lorenzo Ruiz, was indeed successfully achieved, and how it gave everyone a wonderful and memorable experience to be part of it.

- Dr. Vita Auxilian

From the bleachers:

If I could sum up the theme of “Landas ng Liwanag”, it would be this: dying for one's beliefs. San Lorenzo Ruiz died because he was killed by those who did not share his faith. Laura died because she believed in the dignity of life and chose to uphold it at the risk of her own life. Neither, I would say, set out to become saints, and as different parts of the play showed, they weren't quiet, submissive types who automatically accepted God's will. *Mahaba at mahirap ang kanilang mga landas ng liwanag, nguni't sila'y nagpursigi at nagtagumpay sa huli, sa tulong ng Diyos.*

My heart swelled with pride at this simple, yet striking piece that friends and children of friends had produced. I wondered how much time, no, love, they had poured into the production. I told some of them afterwards that this play was too good for just two stagings; they had to take the play elsewhere! And so it is with delight that I have learned that “Landas ng Liwanag” will be shown in Cologne. Maybe this will be the beginning of a road show. And a DVD with subtitles? *Mabuhay ang kabataang Pilipino at purihin ang Diyos magpakailanman!*

- Atty. Socky Manguiat

After the stageplay by the talented members of the Filipino community in Bonn, a remark I heard quite often from those who watched the play was, “now I know him better.... mas kilala ko na siya”.

The way the cast presented the life of San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila gave us such a good insight into his life - his trials, his hardships and the tests the Lord gave him--from the time he left Manila until his death in Japan. The strength of his character, his steadfastness and most especially his unwavering Christian faith - the qualities that led him to his sainthood - were so touching and inspiring. So much so, that I saw some guests wiping their tears during the play.

Indeed, we got to know our first Filipino



The write thing

By: Ays Espiritu

Writing a play isn't easy as one may think. This is what the writers learned during the “write shop”. It needs a lot of research, brainstorming, criticism, deep thinking and tons and tons of patience. With the meticulous and keen supervision of the coach, Lando Velasco, it has made it even more challenging. It is somewhat like a thesis defense.

During the theater arts workshop in March, members were asked to research about the life of San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila, the Philippines and Japan during the 1600's. This is already a tough task because it requires detailed results since it is vital in writing the story. The gathered information was eventually used to help the characters portray their respective roles more effectively.

After the presentation of the researches, the pool of writers in TROPA, have started developing the characters. They had a hard time discussing the characters in the play, not only the profiles of each character but also

their possible physical attributes. The writers must give out reasons why a certain character must be this and not that. The brainstorming lasted for weeks.

When the characters were established, the next step is to assign the writing of the scripts for each act by one or two members of the Tropa. . Due to the heavy schedule of each member, at work and in school, they met stayed up late at night. The parts that had been screened were handed out to the artists.

It had been hectic since the script had to adjusted in terms of content and impact. It was really a tough job, a challenging and creative one though.

Through the write shop, the writers were not only able to develop their writing skills and to exercise their creative minds but they have also learned a lot from the life of our beloved San Lorenzo.



Landas ng Liwanag cast: Standing (L-R); Mark Bartolome (Mustafa), Nixie Portentado (nurse), Shiela Aquino (nurse), Leo Tanangco (Ibrahim). Seated (L-R); Zeny de Ramayo (Carrie dela Cruz), Grace Pastores (Laura dela Cruz), and Carmen Porz (Tonie dela Cruz)
Poster and photos by Gina and Gunter Flores (www.gpics.de)

saint, San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila, much better by watching the play. My deepest appreciation and thanks to the whole crew. May we have more of this in the future.

- Amy Abitong-Huetwohl

Nagustuhan ko ang play. Magaling ang mga gumanap na mga bata at mga matanda. Sa tagal ko rito sa Germany, mula pa noong 1984, ngayon lang ako nakapanood ng ganito kagandang play. May aral.... May history. Paano nila napagdikit-dikit ang kuwento ni Lorenzo at ni Laura ay nakakahanga. Mabilis ang props kumilos, kahit may pause, hindi nakakainip. Sulit ang binayad ko at kung

may pagkakataon na mapalabas ito ulit, e-enganyuhin ko silang panoorin ito. 'Yung isinama kong kaibigan, hindi rin nabigo. Magaling talaga.

- Gigi Bulaon

Dalawang beses ko napanood ang play at talagang maganda. Mahusay ang gumanap at talagang hindi mo akalain na makakaya nila ito. Kung matatag ang pananampalataya mo, makakaya mo ang lahat ng pagsubok sa buhay.

- Mady Roncal

Landas ng Liwanag

Two lives joined by their faith

By: Lando Velasco



Two lives centuries apart but joined by faith may be the best way of describing the play dedicated to San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila and Filipino overseas workers as depicted by the life of Laura. In the play, Fr. Dominic, a missionary priest, narrated the story of Lorenzo, who lived in the 16th century, and Laura, an overseas Filipina worker, as part of his parting message to his parishioners. The lives of Lorenzo and Laura inspired Fr. Dominic to answer the call to priesthood.

As told by Fr. Dominic, both Lorenzo and Laura left the Philippines for a foreign land. Lorenzo joined a religious mission that he thought would be heading to Formosa (Taiwan) to escape from authorities after he was accused of committing a crime or being an accomplice to a crime. The missionaries intended to go to Japan to encourage Christians to hold on to their faith in the midst of persecution. Laura, on the other hand, had to work abroad to support her family after her father was imprisoned. Lorenzo and Laura placed their trust in God as they faced the uncertainty of living in a foreign land far from their families.

As fate would have it, Lorenzo and the missionaries were arrested as soon as they landed in Japan. They were tortured for over

a year, because it was a crime to preach Christianity in Japan in the 16th century. They were offered freedom in exchange of renouncing their Christian faith. Lorenzo almost gave up, but in the end declared that he would not give up his faith, "because I am a Christian, and I shall die for God, and for Him I will give many thousand lives if I had them. And so do with me as you please." On 29 September 1637, Lorenzo and his companions died days after they were hanged from gallows by the feet with their body falling into a pit.

On the other hand, Laura was sexually abused while working as a domestic helper. The doctor advised her to take medicine to prevent pregnancy but as it was against the teaching of the Catholic Church, she opted to take the risk. Laura became pregnant but because of health complications, there was a possibility of death unless she stopped her pregnancy. In her decision to keep the baby, Laura died while giving birth.

Lorenzo Ruiz became the first Filipino Saint when Pope John Paul II canonized him and his companions in 1987. Laura, on the other hand, did not die in vain as her baby grew up to become a missionary priest.



16 June, 2007, Saturday, 10 a.m. onwards
Freilichttheater, Rheinauenpark, Bonn

After the success of TROPA's World Youth Day underconstruction project, "Fiesta ng Kabataang Pinoy and Living Rosary" in August 2005, many has been asking when the next fiesta would be. Due to the hectic schedule of the members and the stageplay "Landas ng Liwanag", TROPA decided to move the fiesta to 2007.

Tropa has once again teamed up with the Filipino communities in the Archdiocese of Cologne just as they did last fiesta. It would indeed be another "fiesta en grande" having this year's theme, "Celebrating the Filipino Spirit".

In commemoration of the 109th Independence of the Philippines, an on-the-spot poster-making contest will be held on 9 June, in St. Winfried church in Bonn. This is in cooperation with the Philippine Embassy in

Bonn. Submitted works will be exhibited in the fiesta as the winners will be announced in the afternoon programme. For further details, please contact the Philippine Embassy in Bonn or Edison "ays" Espiritu through 0162 352 1301 or e-mail noisierdispute@gmail.com.

The fiesta will start at 10 in the morning with a Santacruzian followed by the "Living Rosary". The Holy Mass will be celebrated afterwards, then a lunch break for the guests to enjoy the Filipino food and drinks offered by the different communities. Traditional fiesta games will also be played. The highlight in the afternoon is the search for "Little Miss Philippines 2007" and a cultural show.

More details to come in the next issues of Tinig ng Tropa. You may also send us an e-mail at tinigtropa@yahoo.de.

WAZZUP!?! WAS GEHT!?!

5 April
Magdamagang Pabasa ng Pasyon, 10 p.m.
Shalom Center, Bad Godesberg, Bonn

6 April
Stations of the Cross
Good Friday, 1 p.m.
St. Apolinaris Church, Remagen

6 April
Celebration of the Lord's Passion
Good Friday, 4:30 p.m.
St. Winfried Church, Bonn

8 April
Easter Sunday Mass, 12:45 p.m.
St. Winfried Church, Bonn

9 April
General Practice, Landas ng Liwanag
Caritas Internationales Zentrum, Köln

13 & 14 April
Landas ng Liwanag
Friday & Saturday, 7 p.m.
Caritas Internationales Zentrum, Köln

28 April
TROPA Choir practice

29 April
TROPA Choir services the Mass
at St. Winfried

19 May
TROPA Choir practice

20 May
TROPA Choir services the Mass
at St. Winfried

9 June
ON-THE-SPOT
POSTER-MAKING CONTEST
St. Winfried Church

16 June
FIESTA NG KABATAANG PINOY 2007
Freilichttheater, Rheinauenpark, Bonn

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