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ROBERTO BLANCO

Translated by Renán Prado and Filomeno Aguilar

Pedro Peláez, Leader of the Filipino Clergy

This article provides new information on the creole Filipino, Fr. Pedro Pablo Peláez, who, together with Fr. José Burgos, was the most outstanding clergyman in the nineteenth-century Philippines. It discusses Father Peláez's previously unknown activities in the *cabildo* of the Manila Cathedral, where he was its most distinguished member. It analyzes his reformist ideas, and explains his work and strategy to defend the Filipino secular clergy, whose rights were being violated by the royal orders of 1848 and 1861. Against the reactionary religious orders, Peláez had a detailed *modus operandi* to defend the legitimacy of native priests' control of parishes. Although his activities were cut short by his unexpected death in the earthquake of June 1863, Peláez served as an inspiration to be emulated.

KEYWORDS: SECULARIZATION CONTROVERSY · NATIVE PRIESTS · RELIGIOUS ORDERS · CHURCH HISTORY

It has always particularly called my attention as to how little known the figure of the creole Filipino priest, Pedro Peláez, is to most Filipinos. And even more because, from the nineteenth century when he lived and in the following century up to the present, several studies have referred to him, remembering his immense prestige, his superior education, and his undeniable influence, including his significance as a precursor in the birth of Filipino national consciousness during the Spanish period. These same ideas were expressed many years ago, with the professionalism that characterizes him, by the Jesuit historian, Fr. John N. Schumacher, S.J., in several of his books. Knowledge of Father Schumacher's work has impelled me to intensify the study of the Filipino-Hispanic church and to seek and carefully search in numerous archives everything that could be found about Father Peláez. This article gathers some of the results of my investigation; it provides unknown facts about the illustrious priest, offers some perspectives, and evaluates his significance in the history of the Philippines. At the same time it pays homage to Father Schumacher, for whose friendship I am grateful and from whose vast and rich knowledge I have benefited.

An Ecclesiastical Career with the Dominicans

We have very little data about the infancy and youth of Father Peláez. Only some scattered notes about his formation and studies exist, oftentimes without definite dates and some even confusing.¹ However, his personal records in Madrid's Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN) reveal some detailed information such as what I narrate below.

Pedro Pablo Peláez was born in Pagsanjan, province of La Laguna, on 29 June 1812. His parents were Don José Peláez Rubio, a native of the Principado de Asturias (Spain) and governor of the province, and Doña Josefa Sebastiana Gómez Lozada, a native of Manila.² Six days later, on 5 July, he was baptized by Fr. Francisco Villegas, a Franciscan, the parish priest of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Pagsanjan, and a former *definidor* (a religious who formed the council of the provincial). The assistant parish priest of the same parish, the *bachiller* (holder of a Bachelor's degree) Don Pedro Alcántara, stood as godfather.³ In 1817 he received the sacrament of confirmation and his godfather was Don Manuel de los Reyes, *oficial interventor* (official auditor) of the Office of the Royal Revenue from Wines.

Peléez was orphaned when he was still a young child, and soon after that he moved to Manila to study in the Dominican school of Santo Tomás. From 1823, and during the next twelve years, he enjoyed a scholarship and was prominent as an outstanding student.⁴ He first studied Latin grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, and sacred theology. From 1826 he studied arts or philosophy (logic, physics, and metaphysics) for three years after which he received a Bachelor's degree on 19 February 1829 with the overwhelming approval of his professors.⁵ He pursued further a four-year course in theology, graduating with a Bachelor's degree on 21 January 1833, *nemine discrepante* (without a dissenting vote). Two years later, he would establish himself in the academic world after passing in January 1835 the competitive examination for the faculty of full professors in the Philosophy Department of the Real Colegio de San José.⁶

In the following years, Peláez served as assistant to the chairs of the different faculties of Santo Tomás (1833–1836), where he obtained the degree of Licentiate in Theology on 5 December 1836, after taking the required examinations. Due to the respect and importance he had gained, in the span of eight years he became teacher to some interns at the Colegio de Santo Tomás, teaching Latin grammar, philosophy, and moral theology. As per appointment by the rector and chancellor of the Thomasian university, he served as substitute for the chairs of philosophy and theology, and temporarily handled for nearly one term the two subjects of Basic and Vespers of Scholastic Theology of the faculty. Likewise, he was oftentimes appointed examiner for the major and minor levels of the Faculty of Theology and, at the request of the *claustró* (senate) in plenary session, he was appointed as cojudge for two years in the same university. In 1837, after having received the tonsure, the four minor orders, the subdeaconate, and the deaconate—as prescribed by the canons—Pedro Peláez was ordained to the priesthood by the archbishop of Manila, José Seguí.⁷

His university formation would culminate in his obtaining the important degree of doctorate on 10 August 1844. Undoubtedly, these studies enhanced the path of a competent and extremely prepared ecclesiastic, a fact acknowledged by his own professors.⁸ All his life Peláez maintained intimate ties with the University of Santo Tomás, and between 1836 and 1862 he became part of the faculty, attending all the meetings regularly.⁹

The Man of the Manila *Cabildo*

The curriculum of Peláez seems to have prepared him a seat in the *cabildo* of Manila, the body of ecclesiastical capitulars in the cathedral, an institution coveted by any clergy for the seemingly relative ease of accomplishing its functions as well as the decent sustenance it guaranteed. During the period of Spanish dominion, there were no *cabildos* in the *diócesis sufragáneas* (suffragan dioceses, where the bishop was subject to an archbishop); it existed only in the archdiocese of Manila.

The first time that Peláez sought to obtain a position in the *cabildo* was in September 1837, when the young creole presented himself for the competitive examination for the *canonjía magistral* (magisterial canon), where a vacant post existed due to the promotion of the incumbent. In the short list of three candidates that proceeded with the examination, Peláez came in second. Winning the prebend was the licentiate Mariano García, legitimate son of illustrious natives, particularly because of his seniority, a view expressed by the royal assistant in the competitive examination, Fr. Francisco Ayala, a Dominican.¹⁰ The next opportunity took place two years later when the same prebend became vacant with the promotion of García. This time around, Peláez made it to the position, receiving the appointment to the prebend in an interim capacity in March 1839.¹¹ Consequently, he had to leave his position as faculty chair at the Colegio de San José.¹² Thus started his long and brilliant career in the *cabildo*, which would end only with his death.

From the beginning Pedro Peláez performed various functions, not only those related to his prebend, such as being administrator of the cathedral revenues, *conjuez de causas* (trial cojudge), or secretary.¹³ To these were soon added other functions of major importance, a reflection of the growing esteem he was acquiring because of his talents and erudition. In July 1839 the bishop of Nueva Cáceres, Juan Antonio de Lillo, a Franciscan, appointed him subdelegate judge of the Manila diocese. Peláez continued with these functions during the term of bishop-elect Tomás Ladrón de Guevara, a secular priest.¹⁴ However, where Father Peláez excelled was in his intellectual capacity and great oratory, which was received with “general acclaim” in his various sermons, be they commissioned, official, or extemporaneous.

In 1841 a competitive examination was held to fill the vacancy of *canonjía magistral*, which Peláez had occupied in an interim capacity since March of three years earlier. At the event that took place on 6 August, the creole and *cabildo* member Ignacio Ponce de León¹⁵ and the Spaniard, the licentiate

Pedro Nolasco Elordi (a recent arrival in the islands), presented themselves at the examination together with Peláez. During this competitive examination, Fr. Juan Zugasti, the Augustinian provincial, served as the examination’s royal assistant. What in the beginning seemed like a regular examination ended up becoming an event marred by grave irregularities as a result of important changes that were introduced in the examination process and the clear favoritism shown by some of the examiners and important persons toward the competitor Elordi.

The first alteration in the course of the exam took place in the cathedral’s sacristy on the same day of its announcement, when the dean, the Spaniard Pedro Reales, arbitrarily changed the method, practiced until then, of using *piques* (markers) on the *libro de sentencias* (book of judicial sentences) by Pedro Lombardo, which everyone had used in one of their dissertations. Reales tried to impede the use of any markings on the book, apparently for no reason except for the purpose—later discovered—of shamelessly favoring Nolasco Elordi. This change caused a serious dispute between the dean and Peláez, who vehemently protested the modifications introduced at the last minute. To this complaint was immediately added a challenge posed by Ponce de León, as well as the vote of Canon Juan Rojas in favor of the use of *piques* in the competitive tests, as commissioned by the *cabildo* for grading purposes.¹⁶ This confrontation collided with the dean’s aim to impose his scheme at all costs, which would allow him to avail himself of a double vote and deny the *cabildo* the right to intervene. Evidently, with this manipulation, Reales sought to have the election of Elordi to the *canonjía magistral* approved without any obstacle, so that Elordi as the first in the short list of three candidates could be presented to the vice patron, who as a friend and countryman would not hesitate to appoint Elordi to the prebend. As expected, the dean’s manipulation set him up against the majority of the *cabildo*’s members, who were already tired of his irascible character as well as the rapid promotions he had made previously, which bypassed the older members.¹⁷ As a result, the *cabildo* suspended the competitive examination until the release of a new order; it also included a petition made on 18 August to negate what Father Peláez had done.

As the days passed more irregularities were discovered, and new sensitive issues sprouted. Firstly Ignacio Ponce de León denounced the fact that the royal assistant chosen for the examination, the Augustinian Juan Zugasti, was not even a professor—as required by a royal order issued on 16 June

1739—and that, moreover, he was a friend of the competitor, Pedro Nolasco Elordi.¹⁸ In addition, it became known that the latter was the brother of the fiscal of the Audiencia, Gaspar Elordi, town mate and friend of the governor of the Philippines, Don Marcelino de Oraa. All of them were from Navarre. As if these were not enough, the most serious issue was the accusation of Ponce de León against Nolasco Elordi that the latter had been ordained a priest in Oñate when it was the capital of the Carlist pretender (Carlos María Isidro, brother of Ferdinand VII and contender to the throne during the so-called Carlist Wars), which presumably disqualified him legally from participating in the competitive examination.¹⁹ In the face of all these charges, on 21 November 1841 the cabildo raised before the regent of the kingdom a protest against the dean, requesting that Peláez be appointed to the canonjía without the need for any competitive examination.²⁰

Meanwhile, the old archbishop of Manila, José Seguí, feeling scandalized, sent an official memo to the cabildo; he lamented the negative effects of these disagreements and clamored for unity and fraternity.²¹ Moreover, the prelate who used to be very close to Father Peláez now blamed himself for disturbing the peace in the cabildo. This change in attitude—explained much later by the next governor, Don Francisco de Paula Alcalá—could be due to the fact that the mitred archbishop was ensnared by the dean, Pedro Reales, who lived in the same palace and served as the archbishop's sole consultant, and due to some dealings he had with the fiscal of the audiencia, Gaspar Elordi, brother of the competitor to the canonjía magistral.²³ In some way, he was under the control of the clique from Navarre, including Captain-General Oraa himself, who considered Peláez to be wayward, controversial, and stubborn.

In this situation, it was not a problem for the superior government of Manila to reject the challenge of Pedro Peláez and the cabildo and to permit the presence of the dean in the examination. Such being the case, a year and a half later, the competitive examinations for the canonjía magistral were again convened. The event took place on 6 February 1843, apparently without the use of piques, as the dean and his supporters had promoted. This time around, only Elordi and Peláez presented themselves for the examination; Ponce de León excused himself due to illness. During the course of the examination, Father Peláez displayed an obvious superiority over his rival, as judged by the professors who were in attendance. According to the records, he was asked to make a presentation in Latin of the legality of marriages and

the dogma of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His critical intervention stirred up praises from some of those who attended the literary exercise: Antonio Díaz de Rebato, commissioner of the Venerable Third Order and professor, applauded the speed of the responses of the examinee, adding that “his competitor Elordi cannot in any way equal him, not even by a long shot.” Domingo Treserra, a Dominican and full professor of theology at the University of Santo Tomás, talked about the most notable advantage of Peláez and of his “great talent and distinguished literary merit,” while other Dominicans like Francisco de Sales, a philosophy teacher, doctor of theology, and president of San Juan de Letrán College, and José Fuixá, chair of philosophy in the university, were amused by the “satisfactory and splendid” solution that Peláez gave to all the questions posed to him as well as in his “oratory in the pulpit.”²⁵ At the moment of the vote of the cabildo—then with five members present because the others were either absent or sick—four votes were in favor of Peláez and one for Elordi.²⁶ Evidently, the only vote for the native of Navarre came from his friend, the dean.

Even if Peláez had everything he needed to win the post, the reality was different. After the examination, the governor-general, in his capacity as vice patron, decided to hand over the canonjía to Elordi, not mentioning that Peláez came out first in the short list of three candidates.²⁷ The reasons that confirmed this injustice were already known and it was basically summarized in the nepotism of Dean Reales and Gov. Marcelino Oraa.²⁸ The dean's operating style was a shame because, with his character and manipulation, he altered unnecessarily the life of the organization, which until that time had functioned reasonably well. This problem arose not only because of the injustice committed against Peláez—already a victim on previous occasions—but also because of other scandals that the dean had already appeased. The unrest that resulted was great. For a while, the sermons of Peláez in the cathedral were applauded with passion whereas the gathering abandoned the temple when Elordi began to speak.²⁹

There had never been direct confrontations in the cabildo among Filipinos (creoles, mestizos, or indios) and Spaniards; rather it was the contrary, and in case there had been confrontations these had occurred among the Spaniards. However, since that time—not only because of Reales, who anyway would return to the Iberian Peninsula soon—things began to change. The unparalleled zeal to introduce peninsulars to the cabildo, from about the middle of the 1840s, provoked unexpected conflicts, especially among

the Spaniards themselves. One of the particularly serious conflicts occurred between the well-known Elordi and the acting vicar general, Antonio Torres Martínez, who had a doctorate in both civil and canon law and had just arrived from Spain to govern the church during the convalescence of Archbishop Seguí, then recuperating outside the capital. The confrontation between the two was such that Torres—with a certification from Gov. Narciso Clavería of his opponent's "mental derangement" (*enajenación mental*)—was able to incarcerate and put incommunicado the canonjía magistral Elordi, which provoked the resignation of the fiscal and members of the cabildo. The case ended with the clamorous dismissal of Torres as vicar general and his replacement by the Bachelor in Canon Law Joaquín Arlegui.³⁰

The intent to empower Spaniards in the cabildo for political purposes or for reasons of mistrust toward the natives in general was slowly being molded in the person of Gov. Marcelino Oraa.³¹ He had confronted an insurrection waged by Apolinario de la Cruz (1841) and an attempted rebellion of the Tayabas military (January 1843), the latter almost coinciding with the conflict between Peláez and Elordi. This intent to empower Spaniards clearly became stronger under the command of Clavería, and it would become a primordial objective during the 1860s, after the death of Peláez. However, from what has been said about this gradual separation of the native clergy, one cannot yet see any kind of national consciousness, the development of which would take many more years.

Aside from the injustice committed against Peláez, these events highlighted his invaluable instruction and great prestige, qualities that would continue to catapult him toward the leadership of the cabildo. After the ill-fated examination, he negotiated in the Peninsula to acquire whatever vacant prebend there was.³² For this purpose, he counted on the help of numerous agents or attorneys, among them, perhaps the most outstanding for his perseverance at that time, was his nephew Antonio Durán Peláez. Indeed, Father Peláez was a man of resources, which he certainly was, because of the importance of his father's position and his having maintained contact with his relatives in distant Spain.

From then on, his position in the cabildo would not cease to rise. In subsequent years, Peláez occupied the position of *a media ración* (assistant cathedral prebend, 1846) and acting canonjía magistral on the death of his old rival Elordi (1847). Moreover, he continued to occupy other outstanding positions, such as *comisario de cruzadas* (commissioner of crusades),

Synod examiner of the archbishop (1848–1863), *penitenciario* (confessor of the cathedral), and other commissions as appointed by the government or assigned by the city. From among his many responsibilities, it is only fitting to mention especially his being secretary capitular of Archbishop José Aranguren (1845–1850), with whom he maintained a close friendship.³³ By then Peláez was already a figure with enormous influence inside as well as outside the cabildo. Upon the death of the archbishop, as we shall see, he would occupy the important position of the vacant seat of vicar capitular and, lastly, that of treasurer of the cathedral. The exercise of these functions would offer the priest firsthand knowledge of how the church in the archipelago operated and the situation of the Filipino clergy, of which he would establish himself to be the fiercest and most capable defender.

Cavite as the Apple of Discord and the *Cédula* of 1849

On 9 March 1849, while Peláez continued his ascendant career in the cabildo, a royal order (*cédula*) was issued that mandated the handover of the parishes of Bacoor, Cavite Viejo (Kawit), and Silang to the Recollects and those of Santa Cruz (Tanza), San Francisco de Malabón (General Trías), Naic, and Indang to the Dominicans. The *cédula* surprised the archbishop of Manila and the secular clergy, composed overwhelmingly of native Filipinos, because a chain of parishes they had been administering for quite some time was expropriated from them for no apparent reason.

The measure came to be associated with other royal mandates, especially those of 8 June 1826, when Ferdinand VII ordered the return of the parish of Malate to the Augustinians and the restitution to the religious orders of all parishes given to the secular clergy since 1768 (Blanco 2004b, 54–64). The execution of the *cédula* of 1826 experienced difficulties and was marked with complications and tensions of definite relevance to all dioceses of the archipelago. Within the exceptional terms appropriate to the Filipino-Hispanic church (the Patronato Real, the rule of vicar generals, occasional ruptures of relations with Rome, poor education of diocesan priests), the *cédula* of 1826 could be considered a just measure, based on the principle of returning parishes to their founders. However, it placed the friar in a structural position that was canonically irregular, because the friar's original commitment was not to handle a parish, as the Patronato Real had desired.

Until the promulgation of the order of March 1849, the religious orders had agreed to handle almost 80 percent of the parish administrations that

were rightfully theirs, by virtue of the *cédula* of Ferdinand VII. (The process would end in 1870 with the handover of San Simón in Pampanga to the Augustinians.)³⁴ These “regularizing” commands—the handover of parishes to the regular clergy, as against retaining them in the control of the secular clergy—answered to the development of a philosophy that had been emerging, slowly but persistently, since the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, especially after the loss of the Spanish American colonies. It was consistent with the *sacralización* (elevation to a sacred principle) of the strategy of retaining colonies through the empowerment of the Spanish element in crucial areas of decision making, such as in administration, the army, and of course the control of parishes. In the development of this philosophy—evident in governors-general such as Pedro Sarrío, Rafael María Aguilar, Juan Antonio Martínez, Rafael Enrile, and Pedro Antonio Salazar—it acquired a primary role under Narciso Clavería, who exerted an enormous effort to apply it in practice.

Behind the 1849 royal order issued in the time of Gov.-Gen. and Count of Manila Narciso Clavería, one could detect the hand of the Recollect commissary-procurator (representative of the Recollect province of San Nicolás de Tolentino in Madrid), Guillermo Agudo, and the favorable attitude of the Spanish authorities. In March 1848, Father Agudo had asked for the handover of the parishes of Cavite, which were served by the native Filipino clergy, to his Recollect province whenever a vacancy would arise, in order to put in place *definidores* and reap the advantages that would accrue from the Spanish regular priests’ handling of parishes.³⁵ Agudo’s petition also sought to respond to a well-defined intention of the Recollect Order to gain control of parishes near Manila, precisely because of the proximity of these jurisdictions, and because of the guarantees they had received from high places in government. Without these guarantees one could not understand their demand for an entire province. Concretely, such as how Agudo himself explained in a letter to the Recollect provincial, the government was planning to augment the missionary colleges in order to increase the number of friars who would be available to take over the parishes of secular priests as these became vacant.³⁶ Aware of this scheme, Agudo would have received certain assurances from the minister of *Gracia y Justicia* (Grace and Justice) and from the Royal Council about his quest to acquire the secular parishes in the Philippines for the Recollects.

Asked for an opinion, Archbishop José Aranguren initially said that, in principle, the handover of parishes to the Recollects—a religious order to

which he belonged and of which he had been provincial—and also to the Dominicans could be beneficial because both orders had haciendas in Cavite (the Recollects in Imus and Bacoor; the Dominicans in Naic and Santa Cruz in Malabon). However, he opined that the handover should be rejected precisely because of the evil that it would cause the secular clergy of the diocese.³⁷ The prelate recognized that it would be a grave error to deprive the secular priests of the parishes that had belonged to them for eighty years during which they had notably improved the moral and material conditions of these communities. It was not the first time that he opposed this kind of measure in defense of his secular clergy: a while back, he had prevented the Franciscans from taking possession of the secular town of Quiapo (Schumacher 1981, 5). In fact, to support the request of Agudo would render meaningless the policy of his pontificate to promote the country’s secular clergy.³⁸ The archbishop was fully aware that government dispositions, like the one of 1826 and the recent one of 1849, would disturb the performance of a diocesan clergy in whom he had fervent faith.

The apprehensions expressed by the archbishop of Manila would not presuppose any problem for Narciso Clavería when he was informed about Agudo’s request. Because the measure was in line with the empowerment of the Spanish element, which he had firmly promoted since his arrival in the islands (within the religious orders there were no natives), there would be no problem in approving it, even if the most basic rights of the diocesan clergy were violated. There was also the recent precedent that saw the approval in identical circumstances of the handover of the island of Negros to the Recollects,³⁹ for an undeniably geopolitical reason. Cavite was one strategic province in its relations with Manila, so it was always thought proper that its administration be handled by Spanish religious rather than by native priests as what was happening up until then. Moreover, Clavería held a deep distrust of native priests. In his provincial visitations, he had criticized their indolence and abandonment of the churches, and had also begun to propose to “keep them away from this [ecclesiastical] career unfeelingly and whenever possible” in favor of other more practical courses. In all these, Clavería was totally in favor of the demand of Agudo, adding moreover that the measure could be extended to the Dominicans who had not made any request whatsoever. In this manner the royal order of 9 March 1849 was issued, based on Agudo’s request but with Clavería’s final reformulation and endorsement.⁴⁰

Pelaéz and Gómez, Leaders of the Clerical Protest

The arrival of the *cédula* in Manila began to arouse a profound uneasiness among the diocesan priests. As a result of the disposition signed by Isabel II, once the four parishes mentioned in the royal order would have been handed over to the Recollects and Dominicans, the secular priests would lose seven parishes and retain only four (Cavite Port, present-day Cavite City; Rosario; San Roque, a present-day district of Cavite City; and Marigondon, present-day Maragondon). The objective of the 1849 order was ominous because it was, plainly and simply, an expropriation in all senses. At least the 1826 *cédula* had tried to justify the takeover through assumed rights of previous ownership.

The secular clergy did not receive this injustice with indifference, for they began to organize themselves to mount a protest. The men chosen to lead were Fr. Pedro Peláez, a member of the *cabildo* and the archbishop's secretary, and Fr. Mariano Gómez, the parish priest of Bacoor and vicar forane of Cavite, a virtuous priest with vast influence among Caviteños (Arsenio 1955, 195–99). Evidently, it was not the first action of the secular clergy against an injustice concerning the administration of parishes,⁴¹ but unlike previous actions this one implicated a great number of priests. It was led basically by Filipino priests (a creole and a Chinese mestizo), and counted on a plan using greater means and the highest level (pressure from Madrid). As indicated by Father Schumacher (1981, 1–12), in this action could be glimpsed the first signs of national awakening, that is, the awareness of a growing number of secular priests—mostly natives—that the injustice directed at them owed only and exclusively to their being Filipinos.

The first movements of unrest among the secular clergy were registered a little after the arrival of the *cédula*. The epicenter of this discontent was the Cavite town of Santa Cruz de Malabón (Tanza), where some gatherings were held in October 1849. According to what the governor-general had heard, during the fiestas of this locality the parish priest had uttered “subversive words” from the church's pulpit. The events did not surprise the archbishop at all, and, although he lamented the senselessness and injustice of an order that would deprive the secular priests of good parishes, he preferred that whatever complaints there were should take place within the law. With almost total certainty, Monsignor Aranguren was informed that Peláez and Gómez were thinking of some kind of statement to defend the honor of the secular clergy and “to implore at the same time the reparation of the damages

inflicted on the secular clergy for depriving them of the seven major parishes that they possess in the archbishopric.”⁴² All these he would find out directly from his own secretary, Peláez, to whom he felt very close.

Peláez and Gómez eventually wrote a petition in the name of the Cavite clergy. It asked the Queen to abolish the *cédula*, or, if this was not possible, to make indemnification for the expropriated parishes. It affirmed the secular clergy's loyalty, in spite of the accusations gratuitously hurled against them by various sectors of colonial society. However, the archbishop insisted to Father Gómez on the need to obey government orders. The parish priest of Bacoor, for his part, denied any knowledge of as well as participation in any subversive act, and expressed that he was more anxious about the suspicions of treason against him than about the loss of parishes (Schumacher 1981, 6).⁴³

In the end the petition was not presented to the authorities, as initially proposed. It ended up being published anonymously on 8 March 1850 under the title “El Clero Filipino” in the Madrid newspaper *El Clamor Público*.⁴⁴ The text observed that out of the 168 existing parishes in the Archdiocese of Manila only one-fifth belonged to the secular clergy. Later, copies of the response of Guillermo Agudo appeared in the same paper as well as various counterreplies of Pedro Peláez. In this exchange, the Recollect procurator based his arguments on issues of deceptive historical legitimacy, such as reclaiming the parishes of Cavite because the Jesuits had founded them; in contrast, the creole priest used straightforward language loaded with canonical erudition and denunciations of the most common abuses of the regular clergy. From then on, Peláez did not stop to condemn the illegality of the friars' position as parish priests, because they could do so only, based on the Council of Trent, when there was a scarcity of secular priests, a situation that did not obtain in Manila at that time.⁴⁵

Another very important activity that Peláez and Gómez agreed on was to raise funds to maintain an agent in Madrid, who would work for the abolition of the *cédula* of March 1849.⁴⁶ The idea must have come from Peláez who already knew about the usefulness of having agents in the Peninsula to obtain prebends for the *cabildo*. Even if no direct sources point to specific persons undertaking the work, it would not be odd for his nephew, Antonio Durán Peláez, to have been involved in some way with these operations—as, in fact, he would be in the 1860s—or even a member of the *cabildo* or another person who was economically solvent. In any case, the only contemporary

source I have found alluding to the possible use of agents—the rich correspondence of Guillermo Agudo—speaks of a certain Romarte and a Mexía as “correspondents” of Peláez, names that match undoubtedly, well at least the second of these names, the one who should be Leoncio Mexía y Dávila, certainly an agent of Peláez during these same years.⁴⁷

The parish priests of Cavite were not the only ones that took up a collection but also those of Batangas, Manila, and La Laguna. All the collections would be used, according to the third article in the special instructions, “for those in Manila who manage this activity.”⁴⁸ It could be deduced that those people included, apart from Peláez himself, some of the parish priests who supported the collection in the capital. This strategy was of crucial significance because it represented the first concerted action of the Filipino clergy under the leadership of Mariano Gómez and Pedro Peláez, and because it signaled so relevant a step that would be imitated in later years in confronting problems of similar or greater scope.

Even if the cancellation of the royal order of 9 March 1849 was not achieved, we have some information that the secular clergy attempted to delay the handover of parishes to the Recollects and the Dominicans by all means possible (for example, by attempting to assign younger secular priests in parishes in order to delay its vacancy and eventual cession). This strategy that Peláez and Gómez devised was provoked in 1857 to put off the transfer of Naic to the Dominicans, to the latter’s apprehension and warnings by Gov.-Gen. Don Fernando de Norzagaray.

The Vicar Capitular during the Vacancy of the Archbishopric

In the succeeding years, Pedro Peláez was strengthening his position in the cabildo while receiving promotions over his companions. His training was renowned, his leadership applauded, and his oratory—his sermons in the cathedral as well as in Santa Isabel or in any other church in the capital—praised. At this time, he had also come to collaborate in projects of educational reforms planned for the Philippines, or as an inspector of the San Lazaro Hospital in Extramuros (Fabella 1960, 132–35). In the cabildo he discharged various roles as *medias raciones*: that of synod examiner of the archbishopric, *canónigo penitenciario* (canon confessor), and treasurer.⁴⁹ Given these previous experiences, five days after the death of Archbishop José Aranguren, on 23 April 1861 he was elected to the office of vicar capitular,

thus becoming the ecclesiastical governor of the archdiocese in the interim. In this capacity, Peláez sought to apply Canon Law strictly and to implement a series of reforms that had been gestating for some time.

The need for reforms in the Filipino-Hispanic church had emerged from past years and due to an objective change in circumstances. This yearning, it can be said, was brought about as much from inside the system proper as from outside, although from different perspectives. From the inside, it was brought about by the need for a number of measures to improve the proper functioning of the Patronato, such as improving the conditions of the clergy by reforming the endowments of the ecclesiastical organizations and studying the assignment of parishes. The latter was pursued by dividing the parishes into classes (as promoted by Don Narciso Clavería and Don Fernando de Norzagaray) or the 1852 plan of missions, which approved, among others, the creation of a Franciscan missionary college in Spain, the return of the Jesuits to the Philippines, and the sending of Vincentian Fathers to the colony to take charge of diocesan seminaries.

Still fresher air came from outside, thanks to the restoration of relations with Rome after the signing of the Concordat of 1851, which bridged the great distancing that prevailed between Madrid and the Italian capital in previous years (even greater than, in all aspects, its relations with Manila). The signing of this agreement implied a greater connection between the Filipino-Hispanic church and Rome, raising it far above the rigid margins of the Patronato. The crucial figures responsible for bringing about these closer ties were the Dominican Francisco Gaínza, a virtuous religious and a great canon, and Lorenzo Barili, a nuncio from Rome based in Madrid, who always looked for the unity of the insular episcopate (“one heart and one mind”) (Uy 1984, 203–4, 208, 257). Both of them studied the conditions of the Filipino-Hispanic church and expressed the need to end its more evident defects, such as the practice of the bishop-elect beginning to govern even before the arrival of the bulls; also crucial was the need to reform the regular clergy, and above all the urgent need to empower the dioceses, whose jurisdictions had been deeply eroded by the strong autonomy of the religious corporations. From this epistolary relationship as well as from the proper ecclesiastical conjuncture of that time, one can infer the existence of a certain state of crisis—or, alternatively, the need for reform—based on the persistence of certain faults or vices.

Peláez was part of this effort to effect change. In the performance of his privileged position as vicar capitular, he cooperated generously with Barili.⁵⁰ Moreover his excellent position gave him a broad perspective on the state and needs of the Filipino church and clergy, as well as a strong conviction of the need to implement reforms, or simply to guarantee that the canonical orders were carried out scrupulously. In addition, Peláez was, at this height, an unquestionable leader within the colonial church for the natives as well as for the peninsulars, something particularly obvious inside the *cabildo* itself.⁵¹

Peláez, as vicar capitular, together with his friend and professor of the University of Santo Tomás, Francisco Gaínza, founded the newspaper, *El Católico Filipino*, the maiden issue of which appeared in the summer of 1861 (Retana 1906, 3:1.542–1.543).⁵² Very important works such as *Estadismo* by Zuñiga⁵³ came to be published in this paper. Its life, however, was short-lived. A little after its birth, the publication suffered some setbacks with the *Diario de Manila*, apparently because of Peláez's criticism of the government's permissiveness toward the introduction of progressive publications like the bimonthly *El Español de Ambos Mundos*, or because of the censorship of some uncompromising friars. The fusion of *El Católico Filipino* and *La Oceanía Católica* was decided much later.⁵⁴

During the thirteen months that he was acting ecclesiastical governor, Peláez paid close attention to details and was very professional with all the functions proper to an archbishop. With the *cabildo*, he exacted great perfection in the daily duties, demanding great silence, attendance at chorus practices, and rigorous fulfillment of their functions. He lamented the pitiful state of the diocesan seminary, attempting to improve its condition and urging the sending of Vincentian Fathers, which had been approved since 1852. He expressed a growing concern toward the low morality shown by some members of the secular and religious clergy (except for the Jesuits and Dominicans), which was worse in the provinces than in the capital, as well as by some military employees from Europe. Even if he did not believe that immorality was widespread in the heart of the religious orders—with the exception of the clamorous case of the Order of San Juan de Dios—he believed he should act against it based on the laws of diocesan jurisdiction that, from his point of view, were more convincing and objective than the laws of the regular clergy. Anything that did not cover his scope of competence was set aside. Peláez controlled and studied thoroughly the operations

of the College of Tiples, the *ramos particulares* (special departments), the *obras pías* (pious legacies), the charitable organizations, and the parish funds. At the same time, he instituted measures to improve the temporary administration of the offices of the archbishop and his employees. When Gregorio Melitón Martínez y Santa Cruz became archbishop, he received from the hands of Peláez a detailed and thorough report of his archdiocesan district.⁵⁵

The Cédula of 1861 and the Secular Clergy's Struggle for Equality

The bitterest moment that Peláez and the diocesan priests had to bear was the issuance of a new government order that contravened the interests of the secular clergy. On 10 September 1861, a royal *cédula* ordered the Recollects to be indemnified with the “parishes in the province of Cavite, or others that have been served by the native priests, as they were being vacated,”⁵⁶ for the parishes in Mindanao that the Recollects were to cede to the recently restored Jesuits. Agudo had secured this *cédula* from his personal friend, Mr. Vida, who was Jefe del Negociado de Ultramar (a secretary's post in the Foreign Office), and it had been approved to satisfy the losses that the Recollect Order was to experience in their parish administrations in Mindanao, which had to be handed over entirely to the Jesuits by virtue of Article 13 of the decree of 30 July 1860.⁵⁷

The royal disposition of September 1861 did not consider in any way the rights of the secular clergy, who would be jeopardized, without any shadow of a doubt, by having to part with a great quantity of parishes all over the diocese. When the royal *cédula* arrived in Manila, Peláez, who was the secular clergy's official representative in his capacity as vicar capitular, requested that its implementation be suspended temporarily, an opinion that certainly was shared by Gaínza (Rodríguez and Álvarez 1998, 238).⁵⁸ As it happened, the first rumors of the arrival of the *cédula* were already provoking strong fears among the parishes of Batangas, the province where the secular clergy maintained parish administrations that had been saved from the execution of previous *cédulas*.⁵⁹

In spite of the objections that Peláez posed, and in disregard of the concerns of the vicar capitular, the Government Assessor Juan Pareja y Alba ordered the implementation of the *cédula*. Consequently, on 6 February 1862, the Recollects and the Jesuits were told officially to prepare the

necessary measures to comply with the royal order. At the same time, Gov. José Lemery elevated to Madrid the results of a series of consultations about the manner of its execution. As these consultations revealed, the text of the royal order of 10 September 1861 was terribly vague. Neither were the affected parishes identified nor the manner in which to proceed in the foreseeable case that the Jesuits—few in number in the country—would delay in assuming the parish administrations that were being vacated in Mindanao.⁶⁰ When Agudo became aware of what the governor did, he was enraged.⁶¹

Meanwhile, Peláez did not waste any time. Knowing the importance of taking a stand on such an onerous disposition, he began to gain support in the *cabildo* to draft a petition. Joining him in putting their signatures on the document were the creoles Juan José Zulueta, Juan Rojas, and Clemente Lizola (the first would die a few months later; the last two would die in the earthquake of 1863 together with Peláez); it is understood that the *cabildo*'s other members were either in the Peninsula, were sick, or simply did not want to get involved at that time. The result was the exposition of 14 February 1862, which asked for the revocation of the controversial *cédula*. To fully implement the order of September 1861, the secular clergy, which then had thirty-four parishes out of the existing 187 in the archbishopric,⁶² would lose up to twenty-seven administrations (the number of parishes in Mindanao that the Recollects would cede to the Jesuits), and end up managing only the most insignificant parishes, with most of them basically reduced to the position of coadjutors. (In the end, twenty-one parishes all over the archbishopric would be ceded.) The most outstanding feature of the *cabildo*'s letter was the eloquent and impassioned defense of the capabilities of the secular clergy. The letter sought to silence those who had always justified their expeditious measures by alluding to the ill preparedness of the native clergy.⁶³

The succeeding weeks passed with edginess and anxiety in the *cabildo*. Peláez was indignant and ready to carry his protest to its ultimate conclusion. If necessary, while he was vicar capitular, he would refuse to give to the Recollects the Cavite parishes, which would be their indemnification. His friend, Father Gaínza, tried to calm him down, but was only able to block a report addressed to the governor written in very harsh language. In its place, the Dominican wrote a more temperate report. Peláez had suspicions that Agudo, whom he already knew had a hand in the promulgation of the 1849 *cédula*, was also involved in the new royal order, and he would not let Agudo have it his own way again.⁶⁴

In March 1862, Father Peláez planned a forceful intervention. It was the *polvareda espantosa* (dreadful pulverizing) that Montero y Vidal (1895, 3:313) referred to in his well-known *Historia de Filipinas*. On 10 March he wrote an extensive petition detailing all the deficiencies of the *cédula* of September 1861. In it he defended Canon Law, which helped the secular clergy to fight the outmoded pontifical privileges claimed by the religious orders; he condemned the demand of the friars to perpetuate themselves in the parishes, to the neglect of their missions; he lamented the “vicious cycle” in which the native clergy remained entrapped, about whom it was said that they “are not educated well because they are destined to be coadjutors, and not given better positions because they are not well educated”; and he warned of the great animosity that was being created among the diocesan clergy, who were acutely aware of this injustice. The secular priests were left without opportunities for promotion, for which reason it was necessary to annul or modify the royal order.⁶⁵ Another letter signed on 22 March by practically all members of the *cabildo*—Spaniards, creoles, natives, and mestizos—echoed the ideas in Peláez's earlier letter. The document was another proof of the ascendancy and leadership of Peláez.⁶⁶ According to Agudo, various members of the Dirección de Ultramar (Overseas Department) commented confidentially that the text was a real “act of insubordination.”⁶⁷

The strategy established by Peláez connected somehow with a certain tradition of the *cabildo* during periods of vacancies, when the government would seize the opportunity to introduce changes in the hope that no one would object. This was exactly what happened, for example, at the turn of the century or in the 1820s when it rejected government efforts, firstly, with the *cabildo*'s iron will, to secularize some parishes belonging to the Dominicans and Recollects; and, secondly, with the fiery stand maintained by the Peninsular Vicar General Pedro León de Rotaeche, to keep Malate secular against the wishes of the Augustinians and the governor (Blanco 2004a, 54–64; 2004b, 119–43). Even if both situations were settled through dispositions partial to monastic corporations, the two examples were the best precedents of the action contemplated by Peláez, who certainly had some knowledge of them.

However, his plan contained some differentiating elements and a very distinctive significance, at least in terms of its future implications for the development of Filipino nationalism as well as its notable subsequent influences, which Father Schumacher (1981, 36–40) accurately pointed out,

on the ideological heritage of Father Burgos or on the generation of the Propaganda Movement. In 1849, just as in 1861, the royal orders concerning the parishes gradually made the secular clergy realize that the injustice had been committed against them exclusively because they were Filipinos (whether they be natives, mestizos, or creoles). (It was common knowledge that there was hardly any Spaniard among the secular clergy, in spite of the appeals made by Peláez.) Similarly, such dispositions had been perpetrated against an archdiocesan clergy that had been more comprehensively trained—educated in the colleges of the capital, as the seminaries at that time continued to be in a lamentable state—than the priests of the first quarter of the century, and more mobilized, such as what had been witnessed ten years earlier in the campaign orchestrated by Peláez and Gómez. Moreover, the fact of being the first creole Filipino leader in a position of great relevance to defend ecclesiastical questions, Peláez's high education, his working style, his argumentative firmness, his being Filipino, his innate pride were opening his mind to some kind of "nationalistic Filipino feeling," to a mentality—initially forged among the secular priests—that those born in the archipelago, when they received any instructions similar to those received by the peninsulars, were at least their equals.

In response to the petitions, the government assessor, Pareja, again refused the claims of Peláez and those of the ecclesiastical *cabildo*. His reasoning abounded with disqualifications based on racism and the belief in the European's superiority, along very similar lines to the philosophy that underpinned the imperialist pursuit of the Berlin Conference of 1885.⁶⁸ Pareja seemed to make unnecessary not only the most basic rules of Canon Law, but also the protest endorsed by some peninsulars. Governor Lemery was shocked to learn about the latest events. In agreement with his advisers, he disauthorized the capitular board to "maintain that untenable equality that they claim between the secular priests and the regulars." Fearful of the turn of events and of the *cabildo*'s opposition to the *cédula*'s implementation, he preferred to relieve himself of the problem by sending on 21 May 1862 all the proceedings to Madrid for a resolution.⁶⁹ The Recollect Procurator Guillermo Agudo, who with his influence attentively followed the turn of events from Madrid, promised his provincial to be implacable toward Peláez and the rest of the canons in the cathedral: "Just so there is peace, if they take away our capes, should we also give them our shirts?"⁷⁰

At this point, the archbishop, Gregorio Melitón Martínez y Santa Cruz, finally arrived in Manila, taking over the ecclesiastical see on 27 May, the

time when Father Peláez also ceased to be acting ecclesiastical governor. According to what would be known years later, upon his arrival the archbishop found the native clergy very stirred up and "everywhere they urged him to ask for the revocation of the declared Royal Order of 10 September."⁷¹ Among them the voice with the most authority was obviously that of Peláez, who was immediately updated on the status of the *cédula*. The creole trusted that the prelate, by virtue of being a secular priest, would have greater predisposition toward the needs of the archdiocesan secular clergy. As in many other cases, he was not led astray. In fact, we can say convincingly that, in all his propositions, Pedro Peláez drew to his side the archbishop, not only with respect to the injustices of the *cédula* but also in questions concerning diocesan jurisdiction, in which the Dominican Gaínza also exerted influence. Thus, initially, the archbishop was opposed to the canonical institution of the Recollect who had presented himself to take over the parish of Antipolo (province of Morong, now Rizal), the first in the archdiocese to be vacated after the Recollects turned over the town of Mainit in Mindanao to the Jesuits. Such were the reasons argued about that even the new governor, Rafael Echagüe, aware of the consultations made by Lemery whose attitude he also judged to have been imprudent, decided to suspend by decree of 9 August all the work undertaken until the arrival of the pertinent disposition from Madrid.⁷²

The success of Peláez and the archbishop was ephemeral. Only a week later, an explanatory royal order arrived, dated 20 June 1862, in response to the questions raised by Lemery with respect to the implementation of the *cédula* of 10 September 1861. The parishes included in the indemnification of the Recollects would be those belonging to the archbishopric. Only when there was a vacancy and only after a parish held by a Recollect was handed over to the Society of Jesus could the indemnification proceed by way of an archdiocesan parish formerly served by the native clergy and vacated in the stipulated manner. Behind this ruling were the government's unwavering will and certain measures taken by the Recollect procurator. The frightened provincial of the Recollects congratulated Agudo effusively for his actions: "I think the Royal Order of 20 June is, for you, a triumph over the secular clergy."⁷³ On learning about this ruling, the secular clergy became still more restless. Peláez even ignored the suggestions of Gaínza to desist from his insistence; worse, he started to act more independently of the Dominican (Uy 1984, 239).⁷⁴

Antipolo, “The Pearl of the Parishes”

Antipolo was destined to constitute the main contention between the secular clergy of the diocese and the Recollect province of San Nicolás de Tolentino arising from the implementation of the *cédula* of 1861. With the conclusive explanations issued by the Dirección de Ultramar, it seemed that the transfer of parishes in the archbishopric to the Recollects for the purpose of indemnification would proceed without any major problems. But it was not that way. Even if the archbishop respected the contents of the royal orders, he was opposed to the cession of Antipolo because it was not among the cases under consideration, and more so as it was prophetically close to Peláez’s forebodings. The latter, for his part, despite being satisfied with the prelate’s firmness, decided to pull strings in Madrid. He already had a similar experience in the years when he had tried to have the royal order of 1849 revoked. As in the earlier case, he made use of agents in the Spanish capital. Indirect but very reliable evidence speak of more than one person implicated. Among them were Juan Francisco Lecaros, a Filipino of Mexican ancestry born in Binondo and with a law background; his nephew, Antonio Durán Peláez; and some Spanish members of the *cabildo* who were in Madrid at that time. Apparently the archbishop did not know for certain about these actions. Perhaps at this point Peláez preferred to be largely autonomous. Presumably if Gregorio Melitón had been aware of the use of agents in Madrid and had he agreed to it he would have opted to contact his influential uncle, the Count of Cerrajería. Gaínza, either way, was afraid that Peláez would seriously implicate the archbishop: “because everyone sees [Peláez] as the personification of the children of the country and he is even called an insurgent with a full mouth, I am afraid that he will compromise the Archbishop” (*ibid.*, 100).⁷⁵

The fear of the Recollects to go through new delays made them do the utmost. Guillermo Agudo opened his notebook of contacts in Madrid. After fifteen years as procurator (the only one among the friars of that century who stayed in that position that long), he knew perfectly well those he needed to contact. The objective was to pressure the Dirección de Ultramar to obtain guarantees for the parish property. For this purpose, he began calling at the door of the former governor of the Philippines, Don José Lemery, who had recently returned from the archipelago; however, after his meeting with Agudo, Lemery declined to involve himself with the issue in order to not jeopardize his replacement. Agudo later called on the Estrada brothers,

Manuel and Luis: the first was a friend of the Recollects, the second had some political importance and some ties with the colony. Agudo secured a statement from both brothers denouncing before the Dirección de Ultramar the actions of the archbishop, extracting it in the case of Luis Estrada by means of lies and deceptions, as can be read in his arrogant correspondence with the provincial in Manila. Agudo also conducted high-level interviews with important personalities. One of the interviews took place with Don Tomás Hevia Campomanes, a member of the State Council, and another one with Don Faustino San Pedro, of the Ministry of Governance, for the purpose of putting an end to the petitions of the Spanish canon Ramón Martínez Laviaron, who had addressed these persons, at the request of Peláez, possibly to intercede for the secular clergy in the question of the Antipolo parish.⁷⁶

In spite of the actions that were pursued in Madrid, the first resolution of the proceedings was made in the town of Pasig. On 22 December 1862, the Real Audiencia of Manila, after the advisory vote of Misters Triviño, Vela, and Heras, decided to ask the Recollect provincial to present a short list of three candidates for the Antipolo parish for the purpose of indemnifying it for the handover, as it was now said, of the town of Santa Isabel de Basilan (Jolo archipelago) to the Jesuits.⁷⁷ It is not insignificant to say that the Antipolo parish was full of rancor and conflict. To the illegality of the move that Peláez, the secular priests, and the archbishop denounced could be added the actual condition of this parish. Antipolo was one of the richest parishes in the Philippines, the “pearl of the parishes,” in the words of the archbishop: as it was the sanctuary of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, the parish generated abundant alms and income to whoever managed it. “If all the native priests were killed, and not the natives themselves, it would not be felt as much as the taking of Antipolo and Santa Cruz,” someone from the Dirección de Ultramar had realized.⁷⁸

Even with the opposing opinion of the Royal Audiencia, Pedro Peláez decided to move ahead against all odds. Around the beginning of January 1863, the creole Francisco Campmas, acting parish priest of Antipolo, who soon after had to abandon the parish, protested because his parish could not be included in any of the *cédulas*. It would not be absurd to say that the whole text of his protest was inspired directly by Peláez. Antipolo, it affirmed, could not be turned over to the Recollects for the vacancy of Santa Isabel de Basilan because the royal dispositions prescribed that the indemnification

could take place only once the Jesuits actually had taken over the management of the parish left by the Recollects in Mindanao and with a parish in the archdiocese that remained vacant, not a parish that had been vacated earlier and filled, as was the situation in Antipolo.⁷⁹ In spite of the logical reasoning, Vice Patron Rafael Echagüe disregarded the complaint as well as the recourse to an appeal that Campmas immediately interposed. “My, aren’t they crazy!” exclaimed Agudo when he found out about the stubbornness of Peláez and the secular clergy.⁸⁰ Gregorio Melitón had no other choice but to give in and canonically appoint, on 26 January, a Recollect priest in Antipolo; but to show his disgust he did it with the caveat “under protest.”⁸¹

It was not known that, very confidentially, the archbishop continued working with great tenacity for Antipolo to be returned to the secular clergy. On 3 February 1863, he brought the matter before Governor Echagüe, using the same arguments wielded by Peláez and Campmas. On 21 August, with Peláez already dead, the archbishop through his uncle, the Count of Cerrajería, addressed the liberal politician Don Manuel Aguirre de Tejada (foreign minister in the 1880s) to intercede for him in the case of Antipolo.⁸³ In the following year and a half, while strong polemics against the same prelate intervened in the press, the case was settled in the official political organizations in Madrid. Even if Tejada started on the right foot and with data favorable to the secular clergy, Guillermo Agudo won by means of gratuities and bribes of up to P3,000, aside from an advanced payment of P300 to two members of the State Council. With this strategy he achieved the issuance of a royal order on 19 May 1864 regarding the property in Antipolo, as well as some very advantageous basis for the acquisition of suitable parishes in the archbishopric.⁸³

The Bishops' Proposal on *Amovilidad Ad Nutum*

The protest with respect to Antipolo became entangled with proposals for reform in the Philippine church initiated by some bishops in February 1863. Peláez, as a friend of Gaínza and one deeply implicated in the actions of the archbishop, was aware of all the movements in the diocesan hierarchy, which he would inspire with his thoughts and actions. In that month, three bishops of determined reformist resolve gathered in the capital: the archbishop of Manila, the only secular priest in that capacity in the entire nineteenth century; the bishop-elect of Nueva Cáceres, Francisco Gaínza; and the bishop of Cebu, Romulado Jimeno, who had come for the consecration of his companion of

the order, which finally took place on 22 February. It was a unique occasion. In various reunions, the prelates talked about the need to start the reforms that many had discussed by correspondence for such a long time. Everyone was aware that the insular church needed to institute definite changes. Gaínza had expounded on them in his letters to Nuncio Barili and in his writings (*Reflexiones sobre la reforma de los Regulares de Ultramar*); Jimeno had made them patent in his confrontations with the Augustinians of Panay; and Gregorio Melitón was in the Philippines after all as a guarantee on the part of worried authorities in the Dirección de Ultramar—like its director, Mr. Ulloa—to effect improvement in the ways of the regular clergy. Above all these, it should not be forgotten that Peláez, while he occupied the vacant seat, had also announced in *El Católico Filipino* his meetings with Gaínza and his communications with the nuncio in Rome. The moment to try to implement reforms was at hand.

Taking advantage of this excellent occasion, on 25 February 1863, the three bishops signed an exposition written by Gaínza. After lamenting the lack of discipline and the decadence to which the monastic corporations had fallen, the document proposed to cancel the royal order of 1795 regarding the tenure (*inamovilidad*) of the secular clergy and to establish the summary removal (*amovilidad ad nutum*) of regular parish priests whose tenure had been established by Benedict XIV. It meant that friars who were in charge of parishes could be removed by the provincial superiors or by the bishops—the power of the latter being superior to that of the former, in cases of conflict—with no need of instituting a canonical cause for the removal.⁸⁴ The petition for summary removal actually presupposed a last recourse to strengthen the dwindling diocesan jurisdiction of the Philippine church. The prelates were convinced that the regular clergy’s permanent tenure (*inamovilidad*), as conferred by canonical institution, was a serious reason for disobedience and the lowering of moral standards. With this system, it was very difficult to prosecute a wayward parish priest without stirring a heavy scandal: the canonically instituted priest could falsify the results of the investigation against him with his influence in the community—in fact, many accusations were withdrawn because of fear—and it could give rise to a sensational power struggle against one’s superior. At the same time, the prelates also planned other important reforms with regard to, among others, the life of the religious provincials, the endowment of the vicar general and fiscals, the respect by privileged ecclesiastics for the *alcaldes mayores* (provincial governors), the request for

the distribution of dioceses, the increase of the secular clergy, or the division of the larger parishes.

At around the beginning of March, the three bishops presented to the superiors of the regular orders their plan for summary removal and the reinstatement of the law of the cloister (the prohibition against women's entry to convents and parochial houses). Even if initially they showed a certain inclination toward these measures, except for certain parts that were modified by the archbishop in a new draft, ultimately the Franciscans, the Augustinians, and the Recollects opted not to take part (the Dominicans approved it, while the Jesuits did not have to take a stand because they already practiced what was being requested).⁸⁵ The presence of various unacceptable sentences in the text of the exposition, which its friar detractors exploited craftily, was especially unfortunate. Of these the most evident was a statement casting the burden for the state of immorality on the entire regular clergy, without mentioning at all the secular clergy. Even if it was the cornerstone of its opposition, one could undoubtedly detect behind their refusal to support the bishops' proposal the fear that, if it prospered, it would eventuate in the dreaded secularization of parishes.

Rewritten for a third time, the bishops' exposition was formally handed over to the Superior Government for its delivery to the Administrative Council, prior to its transmittal to the Ultramar in the Peninsula. In the succeeding months, the dispute proceeded via vox populi in Manila, where it became increasingly clamorous.⁸⁶ Between March and June 1863, the dynamics were that of interminable controversies, writings with different political colors, retorts and counter retorts, libelous but anonymous letters, tumultuous gatherings, and clandestine movements. Some thought the moment of change and of reforms had come; others thought of guaranteeing the status quo, the reaction. For everyone, religious and secular, it was living a crucial moment in the defense of their respective rights.

Prior to the Administrative Council's adoption of its report, the friars and the secular clergy sought to influence the council members. The first to do so was the Recollect provincial, Juan Félix de la Encarnación, who in his work entitled *Contestación razonada a la exposición de los señores obispos* made a passionate defense of the work of the religious orders and denounced, with calculated alarmism, the proposal on summary removal as an attack on the existence of the monastic communities themselves.⁸⁷ While the regular clergy—basically Augustinians and Recollects—planned their

strategy in Manila and especially in Madrid through their procurators, the Augustinian Celestino Mayordomo and the Recollect Guillermo Agudo, the secular priests led by Pedro Peláez had already initiated their actions in support of the bishops' petition. Peláez, then treasurer of the cathedral, made his own demands for reform that the insular hierarchy supported. As he had done a year earlier, he mobilized his agents in Madrid. Ignacio Ponce de León, his friend, member of the cabildo, and flat mate, worked with him very closely. Both had smooth relations with their agents in the Spanish capital: basically the lawyer Lecaros (the most active of all); the nephew of Peláez; the priest Agustín Puig; and a certain Miguel Plassard (the agent of Peláez at least in 1854 and at one time a business representative of the Franciscans and Dominicans).⁸⁸ Everyone had to be attentive to the instructions that they would receive.

The secular clergy tried to draw the support of the council members who deliberated on the exposition of the bishops through a printed leaflet, which would be published subsequently in Madrid by some agents of the secular clergy. Despite the problem of discrepancies pointed out by some scholars, the work is ascribed to Ignacio Ponce de León, who wrote, as inspired by Peláez, in defense of the proposed summary removal. It appears that the leaflets were brought by Ponce himself or by another priest to the private houses of the council members on 31 May, that is to say, four days before its author would die in the earthquake that jolted Manila.⁸⁹ Much later, it would get a fierce answer in the newspaper, *La Regeneración*, which attacked the article as an "echo of the liberal reformer"⁹⁰—undoubtedly inspired by Agudo—and by the Augustinians Francisco Cuadrado and Diego de la Hoz.⁹¹ Certainly the question of parishes had alienated Peláez deeply from, in general, the religious orders and, in particular, the Augustinians, with whom in the past he had maintained close and cordial relations, as evinced for example in the Augustinians' publication of the original manuscript of Zuñiga's *Estadismo* in *El Católico Filipino* (Rodríguez 1968, 351–53).

The next step of Peláez was to prepare a book titled *Documentos importantes para la cuestión pendiente de curatos en Filipinas*. In it were inserted a series of texts that were very favorable to the cause of the secular clergy: expositions of the archbishop Basilio Sancho de Santa Justa y Rufina (1768) with respect to the diocesan visitation, and an abundant body of writings, materials, and publications with respect to the rights of the secular clergy in the matter of parishes. Supported by proper documentation, Peláez derided

the futility of the regular clergy's excuses in claiming privileges that were already untenable in the eighteenth century. Above all, he defended the legitimacy and ability of the native clergy to work in the parishes against whoever claimed the contrary. However, even if the detractors did not see it then, the arguments brought against Basilio Sancho could have been refuted by simply recalling the change in his attitude that favored the regular clergy in the second part of his term. Nevertheless, Peláez succeeded in communicating in his work a strong sense of a century-old resistance to change in the ranks of the regular clergy.

According to reliable data found in the numerous correspondence of Guillermo Agudo, it can be deduced that in around April or the beginning of May, Father Peláez sent the manuscript of *Documentos importantes* to his agents in Madrid, possibly through his nephew, the manuscript arriving in the capital in June, or a little after the earthquake. A month later, Lecaros had printed around 1,900 copies through the printing press of *El Clamor Público*—where the secular clergy had published in years past some articles in relation to the royal order of 1849—and releasing copies anonymously.⁹² Much later, as explained by Recollect Provincial Juan Félix in a letter, the first copies—whose dissemination would be prohibited by the authorities—appeared in Manila posthumously at the end of October.⁹³ The priest, Agustín de Mendoza, future parish priest of the suburb of Santa Cruz and also implicated in the incident in Cavite, paid for the cost of the publication. The procurators Agudo and Mayordomo tried to reply to Peláez with the publication of two books in defense of the tenure (inamovilidad) of the regular clergy (Agudo and Mayordomo 1863a, 1863b).

While he worked on his book, Peláez also accomplished another work, an unpublished manuscript that was sent to the nuncio in Madrid on 22 May, or twelve days before his death, entitled *Breves apuntes sobre la cuestión de curatos en Filipinas*.⁹⁴ Peláez's real motivation, according to what can be deduced, was to avoid the native clergy's loss of almost all of their parishes. The demands he made in this manuscript were very similar to those he made in *Documentos importantes*, but in *Breves apuntes* he expounded on his thoughts and proposals in a more thorough and profound manner.

In the spring of 1863, in the period between April and May, the exposition of the bishops was studied in the Administrative Council in an atmosphere of growing uneasiness. At this time, two private individuals produced papers on this issue. The creole Filipino Félix Pardo de Tavera wrote in

support of summary removal, while the Spaniard José María Alix wrote against it. Meanwhile, there was no stopping the gossip columns, offices, and sacristies of Manila from exaggerating the opinions of some and of others already disseminated, whether anonymously or not. In the midst of it all, on 3 June a strong earthquake shook all the concrete buildings in the capital. Among the numerous fatalities were the treasurer, Father Peláez, and some members of the cabildo, among them Ignacio Ponce de León. They were crushed by the cathedral's falling debris as they attended the solemn vespers of the feast of Corpus Christi.⁹⁵

Peláez: "Oracle" of the Filipino Clergy

Even before the rubble was cleared, all the accumulated tensions in the preceding months broke loose. Those who had not dared denounce Peláez in life because of the great respect he commanded—"oracle" of the clergy, as he was called at one time by the archbishop—took advantage of his death by censuring him publicly and publicizing all types of unjustified accusations impugning his loyalty. For instance, an anonymous pamphlet entitled *Un verdadero español* affirmed that, had Peláez not died in the earthquake, he would have led on that day, together with members of the cabildo, an insurrection against Spain. Only the fears that prevailed at that time could explain how people, including those close to Peláez like the Dominican Treserra or the archbishop himself, would lend support to such preposterous rumors.⁹⁶ "Only under pressure of that nebulous and suffocating atmosphere brought about by the dust of the ruins of the earthquake can one fabricate and speak the way they did," ruminated Gaínza, who also had doubts about what had transpired.⁹⁷

The unkind attitude toward Peláez, his sharp resolve to achieve the amovilidad ad nutum in order to preserve some parishes for the Filipino clergy, made others contemplate the question as essentially antireligious and anti-Spanish. These fears were what would bring the magistrate Emilio Triviño to express a personal note against the famous exposition of 25 February, which in the end made the prime movers, Jimeno and Gaínza, withdraw their signatures from the proposal. In this manner, both Dominicans left the archbishop alone before the most critical moment, leaving him no other choice but to request on 3 September that the exposition be retained in the Administrative Council.

In spite of this development, the matter was finally taken up in the Administrative Council on 23 September. The matter was decided by twelve

votes against the exposition, as against two in favor. The fact that the votes against the bishops' exposition were from Spanish advocates and those supportive of it were from the (probably creole) Filipinos (Calvo and Padilla) provides an idea of how at the outset a point of canonical legislation acquired a racial tone. This is how the archbishop understood it: "the natives adopted the thoughts of the bishops, the peninsulars declared themselves their adversaries; and in this way what was basically a point of mere ecclesiastic disciplining was dressed in political robes tainted with political color."⁹⁸ In spite of the withdrawal of the exposition, the following year the procurators of the Recollects and the Augustinians, Agudo and Mayordomo, continuously attacked the archbishop and his program of reforms in various Madrid newspapers.

With Peláez dead, others, like the Spaniard Manuel Peralta, continued Peláez's campaign, but not with his efficacy or conviction. During the years that followed, his thoughts, his actions, and his writings, because of their fortitude and determination, would end up becoming the best endorsement of the propositions of the church and the reformist sectors, and of the strategy of the archbishop himself and his heirs in the secular clergy, principally Fr. José Burgos.⁹⁹ The archbishop, Gregorio Melitón, made the amovilidad ad nutum and the cancellation of the royal order of 1861, among other reforms, the battle cry of his entire term, just as his correspondence with the authorities of the Ministerio de Ultramar in the next ten years would continuously show him harping on the same issue. In spite of the fears that he had initially entertained about Peláez, after the earthquake he finally understood that all of Peláez's demands were just and necessary. Better than anyone else, Gregorio Melitón saw how the whittling down of the parishes of the secular clergy was increasing class antagonism and even anti-Spanish sentiments. Undoubtedly, in these controversies had begun to forge, slowly but inexorably, the national spirit, that of "being Filipino," properly speaking. Even if Peláez did not have any determined resolve in this—his initial action being strictly disciplinary and canonical—what is certain is that, with his passionate defense of the abilities and the equality of the native priests (creoles, mestizos, or natives), he inevitably ended up being one of its principal protagonists. Nowadays, it is undeniable—as Father Schumacher (2006, 202) himself acknowledges—that there exists a thread that unites Peláez with Rizal through Father Burgos and Paciano Rizal. That is why Peláez and the priests of the 1860s were in some way a species of a generation that immediately preceded the generation of the *ilustrados*.

Peláez, definitely, was a gust of fresh air in the hermetic Filipino-Hispanic church, one on whom you could wager for his modernity and future in consonance with the times. His conscience and actions made evident the need to introduce changes in the church of the islands, by means of a return to the ordinary legislation and the unavoidable reform of the powerful regular clergy, as well as the denunciation of the more ultramontane Patronato. After he passed from the scene, Peláez would become a force to emulate, an example to follow, a dream to achieve.

Abbreviations

AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
AM	Archivo de Marcilla, Navarre
APPSJ	Archives of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, Quezon City
APSR	Archivo de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario, Ávila
doc.	document
exp.	<i>expediente</i> (record)

Notes

- 1 Some essential biographical data about Peláez are found in Artigas y Cuerva 1916, 439–41; Quirino 1973; Schumacher 1981, 6–12; Uy 1984.
- 2 Some authors have reported the Filipino origin to some degree of Peláez's mother. Without denying such statements, what is certain is that the documents I encountered in the archives always referred to Peláez as a "Spaniard of the country" (a creole).
- 3 A copy of the baptismal certificate is included among the personal documents in: exp. 12, Gracia y Justicia 2201, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 4 I am grateful to Fr. Fidel Villaruel, O.P., for all the data related to Peláez's entry to the school (1823), as well as other data about his studies and formation obtained from the University of Santo Tomás Archives.
- 5 The Dominicans were proud to have as their student someone like Peláez. In 1840 Fr. Francisco Ayala, a doctor of theology and canon law, rector and chancellor of the Royal and Pontifical University and Colegio de Santo Tomás in Manila, said that the young man from La Laguna had distinguished himself in obtaining a Bachelor's degree "over the others whether in the examinations or in various literary events of this University so much so that he deserved to be commended for his accomplishments, his clarity of ideas, and wealth of knowledge" and for always having had "an exemplary and an impeccable behavior during his twelve years as a student of this establishment (where he entered at a tender age), thus meriting . . . the love and affection of all his superiors, without the slightest compliant about his behavior coming to my attention." Letter of Francisco Ayala, 30 Mar. 1840, exp. 12, Gracia y Justicia 2201, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN. Another laudatory testimony is found in the letter of Francisco de Sales, also a Dominican professor, philosophy teacher, doctor of theology, and president of San Juan de Letran College. Letter of Francisco de Sales, 18 Feb. 1843.

- 6 He was appointed to the position by superior decree of 30 Jan. 1835, signed by Gov.-Gen. Pascual Enrile, found in exp. 12, Gracia y Justicia 2201, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN. The position of full professor of philosophy of the Real Colegio de San José was endowed with an annual salary of P400 taken from the revenue of the college. In this same file, the previously cited Father Ayala, who attended the competitive examinations in philosophy at San José, said that Peláez “was exceedingly outstanding over his competitors in erudition and eloquence of discourse and firm in his responses and arguments.”
- 7 Peláez received the tonsure on 7 Dec. 1827 from the hand of Francisco Albán, bishop of Nueva Segovia; the four minor orders on 16 June 1832; the subdeaconate on 13 June 1835; the deaconate on 24 Sept. 1836; and the priesthood on 28 Oct. 1837; all conferred by archbishop José Seguí. Information extracted from the credentials of Peláez found in *ibid.*
- 8 The exact dates of his graduation, with licentiate and doctorate degrees—to which no author has referred previously—have been taken from different credentials of various religious personalities. They are all in the file previously cited (*ibid.*). Concretely, those used here come from credentials written by two Manila archbishops: José Seguí (10 Mar. 1841) and José Aranguren (20 Sept. 1853).
- 9 I am grateful to Father Villaroel for this completely unedited information found in the Archives of the University of Santo Tomás.
- 10 This is how Father Peláez himself explained it in an undated letter, but possibly written in 1840: “although my performances in academic life and in the pulpit were judged and graded at par with those of my competitor, the royal assistant reports so much in my favor that in his judgment the precedence of García in the short list of candidates (*terna*) was due solely to his seniority and not to any superiority shown by him in the actual competitive examination.” Exp. 12, Gracia y Justicia 2201, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 11 On 27 Feb. 1839, the governor of the Philippines proposed that Peláez, being the first in the short list of candidates, temporarily occupy the position of magisterial canon. The superior decree of his appointment was signed in Manila on 1 March. *Ibid.*
- 12 As specified by Father Villaroel, there is a document in the archives of the University of Santo Tomás signed by Peláez in 1848, wherein he requested “on account of his commitments” that he be excused from teaching in San José. It can be concluded that somehow Peláez continued to be connected to this institution after 1839, when he became the acting magisterial canon.
- 13 These minor positions were those of administrator of the revenues (*mayordomo*) of the cathedral vestry and associate cojudge for capitular trials (7 Jan. 1840; he was *mayordomo* until January of the following year); and secretary capitular (19 Aug. 1840; he held this post until June 1844). *Ibid.*
- 14 The appointment under Bishop Lillo was made on 23 July 1839 and the one under Ladrón de Guevara on 7 June 1843. *Ibid.*
- 15 The personal files of Ignacio Ponce de León can be consulted in: exp. 10, Gracia y Justicia 2200/2, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 16 The personal files of Rojas, a creole, can be consulted in: Gracia y Justicia 2161, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 17 Of this Gov.-Gen. Francisco de Paula was well aware. In a confidential letter sent to the secretary of state from the office of Grace and Justice, he stated of Dean Pedro Reales: “It is true that the dean cannot count, in this entire town [Manila], on a dozen friends, because of his generally unpopular and abhorrent character. Even among the Spanish priests (meaning to say among the regulars, since there were few Spaniards among the seculars) many preferred, in this case, to see themselves under some priest of the country rather than be under the dean.” F. de Paula Alcalá, confidential letter no. 13. For the governor, on the dean as the root of all the discontent in the *cabildo*, Manila, 6 Oct. 1844, exp. 12, Gracia y Justicia 2201, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 18 *Ibid.* The government assessor and fiscal, Elordi, did not admit the challenge in a letter dated 20 Aug. 1841.
- 19 Ponce de León had obtained this confidential information from the secretary of the *cabildo*, which greatly bothered the dean since it dealt with secret documents. In this way, and amid the fears of the rest of the capitular board members, the denouncer ended up being left alone with his objection. For his part, Elordi would present his accredited documents, validated by the Oñate senate in the Basque country on 11 June 1842.
- 20 General Espartero was the regent when Isabel II was a minor.
- 21 The archbishop’s official memo was dated 4 June 1842. The *cabildo*’s reply sought to fulfill his wishes. Exp. 12, Gracia y Justicia 2201, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 22 *Ibid.* In a private correspondence, the archbishop expressed that he felt deceived by the attitude of Peláez and feared that the latter’s attitude would continue in case he became the magisterial canon.
- 23 *Ibid.* This is how Paula Alcalá expressed this suspicion: “It is believed that he is interested in favoring Elordi; it seems that, if the fiscal would favor the archbishop in his disputes with Father Bueno, Seguí would do the same with the brother of the fiscal in the matter of the magisterial canon. This is how the esteem Seguí had earlier expressed for Peláez as well as how Elordi’s election as secretary beforehand dismissing the incumbent changed.”
- 24 Superior decree, 26 Nov. 1842, in *ibid.* Evidently both Governor Oraa and Fiscal Elordi did not hesitate in favoring Mr. Reales, no doubt the best guarantee within the *cabildo* to secure the vacant post of magisterial canon. For its part, the *cabildo* declared on 1 July that the challenge of Peláez had been tried sufficiently.
- 25 All these notarized testimonies were gathered by Peláez himself. The interventions had the following dates for the year 1843: Antonio Díaz de Rebato, 6 Feb.; Domingo Treserra, 9 Feb.; Francisco de Sales, 18 Feb.; and José Fuixá, 20 Feb. *Ibid.*
- 26 The interim assistant prebend of the cathedral and pro-secretary, Cipriano García, testified to the results on 20 Feb. 1843. *Ibid.*
- 27 Elordi officially occupied the post of the magisterial canon on 14 Nov. 1844. *Ibid.*
- 28 The successor of Oraa, Don Francisco de Paula y Alcalá, criticized the attitude of the chief executive from Navarre in a confidential letter, no. 13, 6 Oct. 1844, in *ibid.* Certainly during the competitive exam an irregularity of the highest degree was committed in the appointment of the Augustinian José Marcos to the post of royal assistant. It was no secret that the latter had invited Elordi to the country house of the Augustinians several times during vacations.
- 29 This news was furnished by Francisco de Paula Alcalá in his letter, filed as confidential letter no. 13, Manila, 6 Oct. 1844, in *ibid.*
- 30 N. Clavería to the secretary of state of the Office of Gracia y Justicia, confidential letter no. 34, Manila, 4 June 1845, Gracia y Justicia 2158/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.

- 31 On 15 Apr. 1844, knowing of the dispute between Peláez and Elordi, the section of the Ultramar came to suggest the possibility that all or at least most of the prebends of the *cabildo* be given to Spaniards without the need to take any competitive exam. The petition was signed by Manuel García Gallardo and Ventura González Romero. Exp. 12, Gracia y Justicia 2201, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 32 Some of the instances of prebends contained in this file (*ibid.*) were pursued by the following agents (within parenthesis are indicated the place, date, and what was solicited): José Romero (Madrid, 20 Apr. 1842, magisterial canon); Antonio Domínguez de Autilón (Cádiz, 26 Nov. 1843, magisterial canon); Carlos Mendoza de Cisneros (Cádiz, 6 Feb. 1844, request for a prebend that would be vacated); and Antonio Durán Peláez (Jerez, 22 Sept. 1844, *media ración* or any position that was vacated; Jerez, 29 Apr. 1845, vacant medias raciones of the cathedral; Cádiz, 8 Jan. 1846, precentor or any that was vacated). Other agents were Leoncio Mexía y Dávila and Miguel Plassard, who as we shall see had other ties.
- 33 Peláez occupied a *media ración* on the promotion of Arlegui (his appointment was made on 29 Jan. 1844), and much later he had another *media ración* on the death of Romualdo Alberto (superior decree of 30 May 1846). His appointment as acting magisterial canon was contained in the superior decree of Narciso Clavería dated 11 Dec. 1847. Other appointments were that of *comisario de cruzada* (23 Jan. 1846), capitular secretary of the archbishop (from Aug. 1845 to May 1850, when he resigned), and confessor of the cathedral (18 Oct. 1845; he assumed the position on 25 Jan. 1855). Data are found in: exp. 45, Gracia y Justicia 2161; exp. 12, Gracia y Justicia 2201; exp. 5, Gracia y Justicia 2178; exp. 2, Gracia y Justicia 2192; exp. 32, Gracia y Justicia 2197; exp. 25, Gracia y Justicia 2198; exp. 26, Gracia y Justicia 2199; all in Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 34 Details are found in Blanco 2004c.
- 35 Guillermo Agudo, Recollect procurator to the Queen, Madrid, 27 Mar. 1848, exp. 2, Gracia y Justicia 2164/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 36 This is how the cited communication put it: "Through the previous dispatch, I communicated to your Highness that the government has a formal obligation to establish colleges bigger than the existing ones, with the end of having the parishes administered by the secular clergy (as they are vacated) taken over by the religious. This project, based on the explanations of the minister of Gracia y Justicia, and of the gentlemen of the Royal Council whose sessions I have attended, will undoubtedly be carried out. At this time, I am obliged to suspend the work of the college until I see the resolution of this proceeding." Guillermo Agudo, procurator to the provincial, and Recollect *definitorio*, Monteagudo, 10 Sept. 1847, no. 1, file 87, AM. One must relate the context of this letter to the development of a series of missionary projects, from which would result, among others, the launching of a new Franciscan novitiate.
- 37 J. Aranguren to N. Clavería, Manila, 15 Nov. 1848, exp. 2, Gracia y Justicia 2164/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 38 J. Aranguren to N. Clavería, Manila, 30 Oct. 1848, doc. 13 C, volume II, Ordenes Religiosas, APSR.
- 39 The request to hand over the island of Negros to the regular clergy had started with the bishop of Cebu, Romualdo Jimeno, who had been affected by the condition of the priests in the diocese after the pastoral visitation. In spite of the fact that the islands had been initially offered to the Dominicans and Recollects, Narciso Clavería decided to have them ceded entirely to the Recollects, who would take charge of the parishes as they were vacated (superior decree of 20 June 1848). With respect to this preference of the Recollects, it has been said that the friendship and the closeness among the military and the religious owed to the family ties of the governor in the Peninsula (Sanz del Carmen 1948, 136). Negros up to the time of its handover had been the only territory in the extensive diocese of Cebu that had been exempted from the royal order of 1826. Cf. Martínez 1973; Sa-onoy 1976.
- 40 Royal order of Isabel II to N. Clavería, Madrid, 9 Mar. 1849, exp. 2, Gracia y Justicia 2164/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 41 On the protests of the secular clergy against the royal orders for being harmful to their rights, see Blanco 2002, 53–64; 2004a, 35–46; 2004c, 119–43.
- 42 J. Aranguren to N. Clavería, Manila, 8 Oct. 1849, exp. 66, Gracia y Justicia 2211/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 43 The response of Mariano Gómez was made on 11 Oct. 1849.
- 44 The text was reproduced by Pedro Peláez—with all certainty the author of the same work—in *Documentos importantes para la cuestión pendiente sobre la provisión de Curatos en Filipinas* ([Peláez] 1863). A copy of this exists in: exp. 30, Gracia y Justicia 2214/2, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 45 All the documents are reproduced in Peláez 1863, 78–102. There exists in them, aside from the exposition, a letter of Guillermo Agudo dated 13 May 1859, and two of Pedro Peláez's of 3 and 12 Aug. 1859.
- 46 Marcelino Gómez, nephew of Father Gómez, explained in a memoir first published in 1922 that it was his uncle who first initiated the mobilization activities that sought to rescind the *cédula*, later joined voluntarily "and without anyone's insinuation" by Father Peláez, Don José Tuazon (Tuason), and Don Juan Lecaroz (Lecaros)—the last two, it is understood, acting as their agents (Gómez 1972). During the 1850s we could not admit the participation of Lecaros as an agent of the secular clergy, having found him in Manila as a conciliar of the Banco Hispano-Filipino; likewise we could not deny that of Tuason, for disavowing any knowledge, if he really was implicated. What is certain is that Gómez's nephew cited for the first time—using first and last names—the intervention of these two personalities. Of the two, I was able to confirm, with abundant data found fundamentally in the rich correspondence of the Recollect Procurator Guillermo Agudo in the Recollect archive of Marcilla (Navarra), the participation of Lecaros as an agent of the secular clergy in the 1860s. Therefore, the explanation of Marcelino Gómez (1972) regarding the role of his uncle as a pioneer in the movement against the *cédula* of 1849—setting aside the hagiographic character it might contain—cannot be totally disregarded. I am grateful to Father Schumacher for sending me this material. (Salustiano P. Macatangay, Sr. translated this note from Spanish to English.)
- 47 The paragraph that was transcribed is the only one, among the hundreds of documents that I have read up till now in the Archivo de Marcilla, which provides some information about the agents of the secular priests in Madrid in 1850 (for the 1860s, in contrast, there is so much information). This source explained that Mexía—whom Agudo at that time did not know well—and a certain Romarte had brought a letter possibly from Peláez of which the Recollect procurator himself had no knowledge. Without a doubt, the letter that Romarte and Mexía carried was the one sent

- from Manila by Peláez and Gómez, which ultimately was published in *El Clamor Público* on 8 Mar. This fact is easy to deduce because Agudo wrote a letter giving an account to his provincial, Fr. Juan Félix de la Encarnación, precisely on 14 May 1850, that is, a day after his response to the letter from Manila was published in the same newspaper. "Because of the [Dirección de Ultramar], they attribute the letter to various persons, but according to my suspicions, even if the material has no author, the one who edited the material is Romarte; this is not my suspicion alone, it extends to a certain Mejía o María [Leandro Mexía y Dávila]—a correspondent of Peláez—whose [correspondent] a cleric I believe is of the *cabildo* who was not unfamiliar with these materials." G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 14 May 1850, 18v, no. 6, file 67, AM.
- 48 The instructions have been reproduced in Schumacher 1972, 48–54.
- 49 Data from Gracia y Justicia 2171/1; exp. 27, Gracia y Justicia 2192/1; exp. 32, Gracia y Justicia 2197/2; exp. 25, Gracia y Justicia 2198/2; Gracia y Justicia 2199; all in Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN; *Guía de Forasteros en Filipinas* 1863, 1865; Quirino 1973; on page 39 this author confuses "gracioso" for "gracia."
- 50 Barili conveyed to Father Peláez the Holy Father's satisfaction at his obedience to the Holy See. L. Barili to Fr. Peláez, Madrid, 4 Aug. 1861, pp. 5–6, II–7–023, APPSJ. I am grateful to Father Schumacher for sending me this material.
- 51 G. Melitón to the minister of War and Ultramar, Manila, 22 June 1863, Gracia y Justicia 2251/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 52 Gaínza was very close to Peláez, having dedicated to him several of the many books he had written throughout his life.
- 53 The prologue to this work was published under the title *Viajes* by Peláez and Azaola, which was unknown to Retana when he finished reediting Martínez de Zúñiga in 1893. See Rodríguez 1968, 351–53.
- 54 "It seems—explains Retana—that in the shadow of religious ideas *El Católico* would give itself away politically; I mean, not all its ideas fit the criteria of being genuinely Spanish" (*El periodismo filipino* 1859, 12). Gaínza complained to the nuncio about the situation, blaming the governor for his indolence. Barili thanked Peláez for all the issues he was sending him at this time, which he made available to the pope. For his part, the vicar capitular lamented the fusion of *El Católico* with *La Oceanía Católica*, which, at one time, he attributed to the diversity of the priests' "interests and ideas." Pp. 35–36, 37, 39–40, II–7–023, APPSJ.
- 55 Fr. Peláez to G. Melitón, Manila, 1862, pp. 2–21, II–7–024, APPSJ.
- 56 Exp. 66, Gracia y Justicia 2211/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 57 In sending the Jesuits to Mindanao, with the initial condition of occupying the whole island and without any indemnification to the Recollects, a determining factor was the opinion of the bishop of Cebú, Romualdo Jimeno, whom various Recollect historians have blamed for the events that took place subsequently. However, behind the sending of the Jesuits, there was also an overt intent by certain people of the administration to cancel whatever influence the native clergy had, as seen in the tenor of certain confidential communication of the magistrate, José Aguirre Miramón, or that of captain general, Fernando de Norzagaray, with the Government. In the end, it dealt with the same spirit that had inspired the *cédulas* of 1826 and 1849. Concomitantly the return of the Jesuits in the Philippines coincided with the new objective of Madrid to strengthen Spanish rule in the Visayas and Mindanao, which was reflected in the creation of new politico-military governments in these parts of the archipelago (decrees of 30 July 1860).
- 58 The response of Peláez was signed on 18 Dec. 1861.
- 59 This little known news was provided by Peláez in a letter to the Recollect provincial, Juan Félix de la Encarnación, in which he explained the disgust the secular priests in Batangas felt for the *cédula* of 10 Sept. 1861 (Agudo and Mayordomo 1863b, Doc. 25:18).
- 60 The report of Pareja and Alba is of 18 Jan. 1862 (Rodríguez and Álvarez 1998, 241–42).
- 61 G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, no. 2, file 88, AM.
- 62 This information was stated specifically in a letter by Peláez to the archbishop of Manila, Gregorio Melitón Martínez, before the latter assumed his post: pp. 2–21, II–7–024, APPSJ.
- 63 A copy of this exposition is found in: pp. 18–21, 839, APAF. Among the secular parish priests who were mentioned in the text as models of virtue were Frs. Juan Zita, parish priest of Lubao; Hermenegildo Narciso, of Antipolo; and Modesto de Castro, of Naic.
- 64 It was Francisco Gaínza who supplied some of the news in a letter to the nuncio dated 21 Feb. 1862 (Martínez 1983, 343). Certainly Gaínza, with the "report," was referring to the letter of Peláez dated 18 Dec. 1861. To my understanding, rather than writing the letter in its entirety I think the Dominican introduced some modifications in style, which were not always taken into account by Peláez (for as Gaínza himself recognized, "my plan has not turned out well"). Initially Gaínza was fully aware of Peláez's plans, and on more than one occasion he intended to orient him. One example is the *Dictamen sobre la cuestión de curatos en Filipinas de 27 de marzo de 1862*, written by Gaínza on Peláez's request. On the suspicions of Peláez implicating Agudo, see Agudo and Mayordomo (1863b, Doc. 25:18–19). The reproduction of this letter in a collection sponsored by Agudo himself and the Augustinian procurator Celestino Mayordomo confirmed the suspicions of Peláez.
- 65 A copy of the exposition is found in: exp. 66, Gracia y Justicia 2211/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 66 The signatories and their ethnicities based on diverse documents found in the Archivo Histórico Nacional: Creoles: Pedro Peláez, Ignacio Ponce de León, Ramón Fernández, Juan Rojas, Juan José Zulueta, and Clemente Lizola; Spaniards or peninsulars: Manuel Peralta, Agustín Puig, Francisco Gutiérrez Robles, Ramón Martínez Laviaron, and Calderón; Mestizos: José Sabino Padilla and Feliciano Antonio (Chinese mestizo); other Filipinos without clear identification (they could be *indios*, but they could also be creoles or mestizos): Félix Valenzuela (a native of Santa Cruz de Bay) and Cipriano García (a native of Zambales).
- 67 G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 3 July 1862, no. 2, file 88, AM.
- 68 J. Pareja y Alba to J. Lemery, Manila, 27 Mar. 1862, no. 1, file 48, Cavite, AM.
- 69 Lemery to the minister of War and Ultramar, confidential letter no. 579, Manila, 21 May 1862, exp. 66, Gracia y Justicia 2211/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 70 G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 3 May 1862, no. 2, file 88, AM.
- 71 G. Melitón Martínez to the regent, Manila, 31 Dec. 1870, Gracia y Justicia 2255/2, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN. A reproduction is found in Schumacher 1972, 194–218.
- 72 Exp. 66, Manila, 9 Aug. 1862, Gracia y Justicia 2211/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 73 J. Félix de la Encarnación to G. Agudo, Madrid, 19 Oct. 1862, no. 2, file 88, AM.
- 74 Cf. Letter of Gaínza to Barili dated 20 Aug. 1862. Likewise, on 8 Oct. the response from the Dirección de Ultramar, signed in Madrid on 31 July, arrived in Manila regarding the petition of

the ecclesiastical *cabildo* to suspend or modify the royal order of 10 Sept. 1861. It ordered that everything about the said disposition and the Ultramar's explanation issued on 20 June be understood (Agudo and Mayordomo 1863a, Doc. 7: 34).

- 75 Letter of 5 Aug. 1862. Gaínza also explained in this same letter to the nuncio that the archbishop was facing a dilemma about either using the services of Peláez or to free himself from him; well, if we are to believe the letter writer, he was consulted by Melitón Martínez about the possibility of appointing the priest as "bishop of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, etc., in order to move him away from here."
- 76 The contacts of Agudo with the Estradas began at the earliest in Sept. 1862. The meeting with Lemery was in the beginning of November and the intercession before the State Council and the Ministerio de la Gobernación (Interior Ministry) occurred between November and December. G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 3 Nov. 1862; 19 Nov. 1862; and 3 Dec. 1862; no. 2, file 88, AM.
- 77 R. Echagüe to G. Melitón, Manila, 31 Dec. 1862, exp. 66, Gracia y Justicia 2211/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 78 G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 3 Dec. 1862, no. 2, file 88, AM.
- 79 Antipolo had been vacated in Jan. 1862 and Santa Isabel de Basilan had been assigned to a Jesuit in Sept. Clearly, therefore, Antipolo—surely because of an error in the writing of the royal order—was not included in the indemnification scheme. A copy of the protest of Campmas is in Peláez 1863, 118.
- 80 The Recollect provincial, J. Félix de la Encarnación, thought that Peláez was also thinking of the possibility of bringing the complaint to the nuncio, Monsignor Antonelli, and even to the pope. G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 19 Mar. 1863, no. 3, file 88, AM.
- 81 In the Dirección de Ultramar, it was also thought that the archbishop was under the influence of Peláez. This was how Don Miguel Sanz, an officer of the said organization, expressed it to the Recollect procurator: "he is a pitiful man and they would make him sign the most important agreements." G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 19 Apr. 1863, no. 3, file 88, AM.
- 82 G. Melitón to Manuel Aguirre de Tejada, confidential letter of the archbishop concerning the curacy of Antipolo, Manila, 21 Aug. 1863, exp. 64, Gracia y Justicia 2204/2, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 83 One of the letters that inform these disputes is that of: G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 3 Nov. 1863, confidential letter, unnumbered record, no. 3, file 88, AM. It is important to emphasize that this document has been miraculously preserved, since in the letter the Recollect procurator expressly asked the provincial to destroy it.
- 84 There is a copy in exp. 41, Gracia y Justicia 2205, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 85 Gaínza explains these details in his *Amovilidad de los curas regulares de las Islas Filipinas*. A copy is found in 909/2, APAF.
- 86 When the exposition of the bishops reached the Administrative Council on 20 Mar., Gov. Rafael Echagüe observed that the dispute was known all over the city "for reasons unknown to the offices." Manila, 17 May 1864, unnumbered, Gracia y Justicia 2205, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 87 A copy is found in *Documentos interesantes acerca de la secularización y amovilidad*, Doc. 9:36–54.
- 88 We know about these agents from information Agudo gave to his provincial. The procurator knew about all of them because of his many connections in the offices of the Ultramar. G. Agudo to J.

Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 3 Feb. 1863, no. 3, file 88, AM. For his part, Plassard appeared in the personal records of Peláez previously cited. The only mention of Lecaros in the documents pertaining to Peláez was in one correspondence of Barili to Peláez, narrating that the nuncio had received through Lecaros some donations for the pope sent by Pedro Peláez. Barili to Fr. Peláez, Madrid, 5 Dec. 1862, p. 36, II–7–023, APPSJ.

- 89 There are very few copies of this text. It was published anonymously under the title: *Papel volante que un sacerdote del clero secular llevó en persona a domicilio del Consejo de Administración, para que en su vista fallasen la exposición de los Señores Diocesanos, como se pide* ([Ponce de León] 1863). However, as regards documents found in the APAF (215–3–a; together with this text appears the handwritten signature of Ponce as its author as well as the manner it was handed over to the advisers "four days before his death") as well as those found in AHN (2205)—through information given by the archbishop himself in a letter dated 22 Apr. 1864—we know that the author was the mentioned member of the *cabildo* of the Manila Cathedral.
- 90 Pp. 136–37, 120–21, 839, APAF. The published answer in *La Regeneración* is dated 5 Aug. 1863.
- 91 The works of Cuadrado and de la Hoz were published anonymously. The one of Cuadrado, first appeared under the title *Refutación al manuscrito de un Sacerdote Indígena de las Islas Filipinas acerca de la amovilidad de los Curas Regulares*, 1863. It then appeared in Agudo and Mayordomo (1863, 34–43), where it was signed with the initials P. L. C., suggesting Padre Lector Cuadrado. There is a copy in 215/3, APAF. The text of de la Hoz appears in 215/3, APAF, and in Rodríguez and Álvarez (1998, 286–96).
- 92 For its authorship see Retana 1906, 2:1030.
- 93 Information about the nephew's participation as provided by Agudo is found in G. Agudo to J. Félix de la Encarnación, Madrid, 19 Dec. 1863, no. 3, file 88, AM. Information about the circulation of the pamphlet in Manila came from the Recollect provincial's letter to his procurator in Madrid dated 24 Oct. of the same year found in Carceller (1962, 582).
- 94 A study on *Breves apuntes* is found in Uy 1984, 242–45; cf. Flores 2001. Peláez informed the nuncio about the sending of the text in a letter dated 22 May 1863, pp. 42–43a, II–7–023, APPSJ.
- 95 For the effects of the earthquake, see Giraudier 1863.
- 96 G. Melitón to the minister of War and Ultramar, Manila, 22 June 1863, Gracia y Justicia 2255/1, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN; Uy 1984, 246, 248.
- 97 Gaínza, *Amovilidad de los curas regulares de las islas Filipinas*, 909/2, APAF.
- 98 G. Melitón to A. de Castro, minister of Ultramar, Manila, 22 Apr. 1864, unnumbered exp., Gracia y Justicia 2205, Filipinas, Ultramar, AHN.
- 99 Father Burgos, along with others, was implicated somehow in the writing of the famous manifesto of the secular priests dated 27 June 1864, published in the newspaper *La America* on 12 Sept. It was the most important event after the death of Peláez, and Burgos was a direct heir to Peláez's thoughts. See Schumacher 2006.

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