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Persons of a Common Destiny Become Brothers: Documenting Narratives of the Second World War in Kidapawan

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The present study sought to demystify the historiography of Kidapawan City, Cotabato Province, during the Second World War. It gathered surviving oral accounts of the War from some of the city's oldest residents and families, recording them before they are lost to posterity. Together with information gathered from both local archival text and published references, these narrative accounts were then presented to tell a general picture of Kidapawan and its people during the War, from occupation to liberation. Some sections were dedicated to incidents of note: tribal resistance and the Kollut poisonings in Maliri and Kamasi, the kidnapping of Juan Sibug, the assassination of Eliseo Dayao Sr., the escape of Lorenzo Saniel from death, the forced leadership and symbolic incarceration of the hostage-mayor Filomeno Blanco, the torture of Patadon Tungao, and the romance and tragedy of Hayao Nakamura. In particular, the last incident is important to Kidapawan history, as Nakamura's love affair and subsequent marriage with his secretary, Rosalina Madrid, led to a general "mellowing" of Japanese treatment to locals in Kidapawan. Many of these incidents and accounts see print for the first time with this study, and it is hoped more attention is given to them now that they have been recorded.

Keywords: Kidapawan, Local History, Second World War, Oral History, Tribal Resistance, Mindanao Guerrilla Movements

INTRODUCTION

In Kidapawan, the past is always hidden, as if shrouded in the fog that perpetually lingers over this city's highlands. To learn about it, one has to

go on a quest for it, almost always through the thickets of obscurity, following a labyrinthine trail of lead after lead, often just before it is forever forgotten. Sometimes, it is too late.

Memories of the Second World War are particularly hard to catch. Local archiving is poor, with the city government's archival documents dating only to 1948. And with its population concentrated in the 5 to 24 age group^[1], Kidapawan is seeing fewer and fewer citizens old enough to recall the town's experiences during one of the world's most significant historical upheavals. The lack of local historiography has contributed to and is perpetuated by the glaring absence of local history in local education. Even a World War can be forgotten in Kidapawan.

But stories of the Second World War linger, largely as oral tradition passed down among some of the city's old families (some families even have aging elders who lived through the period). There is a real danger; however, of these stories being lost forever as younger generations of the town's population show a lack of interest in local history. Transmission is becoming more and more unlikely, and if not appropriately recorded, accounts of war-time experiences will be lost to posterity.

The present study aimed to document these narratives directly from informants, adding to the still scarce body of Kidapawan City historiography, as well as to present literature about the Second World War in Mindanao.

A total of 17 informants were interviewed on varying dates over a span of three years, with informants coming from all three of Kidapawan's tri-peoples. Also, local archival documents were used as reference, and the details of many of them appear in publication for the first time in the present study.

These narratives, cross-referenced with one another and with local archival documents (and with other published sources), were then used as bases to present a general account of the Second World War as it unfolded in Kidapawan. Major incidents, especially those recounted by multiple informants independently and involving specific communities and important historical personalities, were given a section.

The ultimate aim of this study – part of a larger ongoing effort to write Kidapawan's history – was to save a town's collective memory before it was lost, and to start building a clearer picture of how the greatest war known to mankind unfolded in this town which has long ignored its own experiences.

1 As of 2017, the city's latest census

Brief Introduction to Kidapawan City

Kidapawan City is the provincial capital and the only city of the Cotabato Province (otherwise known as North Cotabato). It is part of the province's second congressional district and is one of five component cities of the SOCCSKSARGEN Region (Region 12).

With a population of 140,195 as of 2015, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Kidapawan is the third most populous unit of the province (after Pikit and Midsayap), and the sixth most populous town in Region 12. It has a population density of 390 people per square meter, above the average in the province.

To the city's east is Mount Apo, the tallest peak in the country. Kidapawan is one of the seven local government units that share Mount Apo, and its history, cultures, and industries are all intimately intertwined with the mountain.

There are several proposed folk etymologies to the toponym 'Kidapawan.' Most of them are spring-related: 'tiddopawan,' according to the late tribal historian Salomay Iyong (literally 'flowing over,' implying a spring) is one proposed etymology. Others are marriage-related, with another tribal source, Meding Ligue Mampo, citing the Monuvu wedding ritual of Lopawan (literally 'surmounting,' describing the series of ceremonial trials the groom must overcome) as the root of the town's name^[2].

Kidapawan's territory has been greatly reduced over the decades. The original area of Kidapawan, when it was created a municipality in 1947, extended from the Pulangi river in Kabacan to the west, the Matanao river bordering Davao to the east, Bukidnon province to the north, and Buluan to the south. By 1954, it was described as being "bigger than the province of Antique,"^[3] and "as big as Cavite and Rizal provinces"^[4].

This vast area was partitioned bit by bit, with the municipalities of M'lang carved out from its territories in 1951, Makilala in 1954, Matalam in 1961, Magpet in 1963, and President Roxas in 1967. Following further partitions from these breakaway towns, Kidapawan's historical territory is now composed of nine towns in the province: Kidapawan itself, M'lang, Makilala, parts of Matalam, Magpet, President Roxas, Tulunan (which was

2 The author has another forthcoming paper which discusses the topic in detail, 'Origins of the Toponym "Kidapawan": A Re-evaluation.'

3 Municipal Council Minutes, 19 June, 1954

4 Municipal Council Minutes, 18 December, 1954

formed from the territory taken from M'lang in 1961), Antipas (whose territory is taken from Matalam in 1980) and Arakan (with territory taken from Magpet in 1991). More than half of present-day North Cotabato Province was once part of Kidapawan, the province's capital since the province was carved out of the undivided Cotabato Province in 1973.

Its place in Region 12 (the Philippines' most linguistically diverse region) and North Cotabato (the second most linguistically diverse province in the country) gives Kidapawan an equally diverse population, with Cebuano being spoken as a lingua franca by a community that includes Tagalogs, Ilonggos, Ilocanos, Obo Monuvu, Maguindanaon, and Meranaw.

Kidapawan's City Planning and Development Office puts the tribal population of Kidapawan at 15,258, with 12,823 of that belonging to the Obo Monuvu tribe. Documentary evidence confirms that Kidapawan was originally an Obo Monuvu domain before colonization by the Americans in 1908 and remained largely so well until the Second World War outbreak. Founded as Municipal District in 1914, Kidapawan became a Municipality in 1947 and was converted into a city in 1998.

The Japanese Occupation of Kidapawan

There is a little local record of the Japanese coming into Kidapawan during the Second World War, and national and American records barely mention Kidapawan at all.

The first act of Japanese aggression in Mindanao was the air raid of Davao on 8 December 1941, barely a day after the bombing in Pearl Harbor. By 20 December, the Japanese had occupied Davao as the 101st Infantry Regiment offered little resistance^[5].

However, it seems there was limited expansion westward, as the occupation of Cotabato would not start until April of 1942^[6]. The Kawaguchi Detachment landed in Cotabato from Cebu on April 29, but this initial wave of Japanese invasion was repelled with the 2nd Infantry Regiment's efforts in Cotabato under the command of Lt. Col. Calixto Duque. Japanese reinforcements came to Cotabato and to Malabang on May 1. However, the resistance would be abruptly interrupted when on May 10, 1942, General

5 Explained briefly by Kent Holmes in *Wendell Fertig and His Guerrilla Forces in the Philippines: Fighting the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945*

6 Andrea Villano-Campado, in *The Tuna Country at the Southern Edge of Mindanao: General Santos City, 1939-2000*, offers a useful explanation of the movements of the Japanese in the Cotabato region.

William Sharp, commander of the American forces in Mindanao, was ordered by General Jonathan Wainwright to surrender Mindanao to the Japanese. Sharp complied with the directive, but on top of his subordinate Wendell Fertig's refusal to obey the surrender, dozens of independent guerrilla outfits also emerged throughout the Cotabato region. These guerrilla movements were particularly strong in North Cotabato, and so as the Japanese entered the province, they were never fully able to take hold of any locale for long or keep their hold of it stable^[7]. What is known of the operations of those guerrillas in Kidapawan will be discussed in another section later.

Datu Basinon Ebbooy of Meohao, who was a young boy^[8] when the War reached Kidapawan, recalls that the Japanese entered Kidapawan from the direction of Cotabato, consistent with this movement. He and many other respondents recall how, as Kidapawan remained remote and largely rural, Japanese penetration into Kidapawan was very limited.

Kidapawan was nevertheless occupied, as briefly recorded in Uldarico Baclagon's 1988 history of the guerrilla movement in Mindanao. By 1942, according to Baclagon's account, Kidapawan and M'lang had already been occupied, although what followed is constant tergiversation between the hands of the belligerent forces^[9].

The Japanese reorganized Philippine governance when they took control of the islands in 1942, implemented by a precarious allegiance between Japanese forces and the local elite that did not escape with Quezon (either as Japanese sympathizers with anti-American inclinations or leaders staying behind under orders from the Quezon government). This allegiance was formally organized into the Philippine Executive Commission in January 1942. The Japanese initially proposed to set up Artemio Ricarte as dictator, but the Executive Commission managed to negotiate the establishment of a republic instead. The Second Philippine Republic was inaugurated on October 14, 1943, with Jose P. Laurel as President^[10].

Like the 1935 Constitution of the Commonwealth, the 1943 Constitution did not contain too many provisions about local government. All that is mentioned in it is the power of the President to appoint mayors

7 Holmes' book on Wendell Fertig offers a more detailed account of the guerrilla movements in Mindanao and how Fertig sought to consolidate them under the Allied forces. At the same time, Uldarico Baclagon gives even more detail on how the guerrillas (especially those under the Pendatun-Matalam alliance) operated in Cotabato.

8 Datu Basinon, whose exact date of birth is not recorded, estimated his age was 83 when he was interviewed in 2017

9 This tergiversation, it must be noted, was not passed down in the town's oral history.

10 There is no shortage of sources on the administrative changes to the national government under Japanese Occupation. The work of Teodoro Agoncillo serves as helpful introduction.

and other local government offices and his power of supervision over all local government units.

Much of the local government reorganization was enacted by the Philippine Executive Commission before the declaration of the Second Republic. The Executive Commission released executive orders and department circulars while they were drafting the 1943 Constitution.

In particular, the PEC's Executive Order 43 of 1942 defined the organization, jurisdiction, powers, and duties of Municipal Governments and officials. Section 2 of this EO abolishes all extant municipal districts and elevates them to the municipality's status by merging them or annexing them with the nearest extant municipality. All records indicate that when the War came, the Cotabato province had only three extant municipalities, Dulawan, Midsayap and Cotabato, and the rest of the province was composed of Municipal Districts. It is unknown whether Kidapawan was elevated to a municipality, or was merged with a nearby municipality (Cotabato being the nearest). Indications from local accounts are that it had been elevated to municipality, as a reference to war-time leaders are as "mayors" or "alcalde," and not "district presidents," but G.R. No. L-49070, which documents the case of Valentin Turtal and is dated July 5, 1944, refers to Kidapawan as a Municipal District. Kidapawan's administrative status remains uncertain.^[11]

Section 9 of EO 43 provided for a municipal board with several councilors corresponding to the class of the municipality (four members for first to third class municipalities, only two members for fourth and fifth class). The boards were to be composed of the mayor of the municipal government and members appointed by the Commissioner of the Interior. There is no record as to what class Kidapawan had been as a municipal entity, nor are there any known informants who could identify any local figures appointed members of the municipal board.

Uldarico Baclagon's account of the guerrilla movement in Mindanao offers contradictory accounts on the administrative status of Kidapawan and its future territory of M'lang. Baclagon describes Kidapawan as a municipality with its own Japanese (and later Allied Forces) sponsored civilian government, but documents in his appendices refer to Kidapawan as a Municipal District. He also describes M'lang as its own Municipal

11 The inclusion of the barrio of M'lang, before 1947 was part of the Municipal District of Buluan, to Kidapawan's territory when Kidapawan became a Municipality, may have started in some form during the chaos of administrative arrangements during the War. I speculate M'lang's position as a guerrilla stronghold was a big factor in its addition to Kidapawan's territory after the War.

District with its building during the Japanese occupation, but Executive Order No. 82 of 1947 describes it as “a territory of the Municipal District of Buluan.” The informants consistently described the Japanese’s near-total control in the local governments they established, especially in the early days of occupation. If there were any locals appointed by the Second Republic, nobody paid much attention to them. The Japanese soldiers ran the town they occupied.

All accounts from the memories of the locals indicate that the Japanese garrison in Kidapawan was located in Barrio Lanao, centered in the current location of the Kidapawan City Water District (the corner of the highway leading to the Municipality of Magpet). Datu Basinon Ebbo additionally recalled that the camp extended to the current location of Manuel Hospital and occupied both sides of what is now the Davao-Cotabato road. Before the Japanese came, local sources indicate that the barrio of Manongol had served as the Municipal District seat [1], while elder informants describe Lanao as a pre-War center of trade and concentration of the Settler population.

Several names of commanding Japanese officers in Kidapawan are remembered. The first seemed to have been a Col. Ishikawa, identified by four independent sources (Magdalena Saniel Cruz^[12], Rosita Blanco Cadungog^[13], Erlinda Villanueva Asuelo^[14], and Bonifacio Madrid^[15]). Ishikawa, according to informants, was followed by a Captain Hayao Nakamura. According to Bonifacio Madrid, only these two ever led the Japanese in Kidapawan, but Rosita Blanco Cadungog also recalls a certain Capt. Ono. Datu Lamberto Delfin of Mua-an, while recounting the tribal resistance in modern-day Antipas from what has been transmitted to him by late tribal elders, also mentioned an “Otaka Makuti.” To date, no archival documents were found which could provide more specific pictures of the Japanese leadership.

Tribal informant Abad Ladday of Indangan^[16] indicated that the Japanese could not speak the local languages nor English, and were reduced to pointing. In contrast, Rosita Blanco Cadungog and Bonifacio Madrid recalled that the Japanese communicated with the Filipinos in English

12 Who was 94 when interviewed in 2017

13 Who was in her 80s when interviewed in 2018

14 Who was 82 when interviewed in 2018

15 Who was 85 when interviewed in 2018 and who died five months after being interviewed

16 Like Datu Basinon his date of birth is not known, but his family estimated his age at 93 when he was interviewed in 2017

(Madrid saying that this is the case particularly with Hayao Nakamura, who spoke it fluently¹⁷). Cadungog also recalled how the Japanese became so friendly with the locals that some took willing Filipina lovers (the case of Hayao Nakamura's romance with Rosalina Madrid, which will be discussed later, was particularly significant).

From Rosita Blanco Cadungog's, Magdalena Sanieel Cruz's, and Bonifacio Madrid's accounts, and from other sources, it seems that there was a pattern of "mellowing" with regard to the treatment of the locals by the occupying Japanese forces.

Under Ishikawa (who led the Japanese in their first days in Kidapawan), locals experienced frequent violence and cruelty: Eliseo Dayao and Bitoy Encarnacion were liquidated when he was the commanding officer, and Lorenzo Sanieel was nearly killed under his orders (the account of this incident will be discussed later). On top of the killings, forced labor and theft were the norms. Bonifacio Madrid described Ishikawa as a "savage," a man from the mountains in Japan.

Datu Melchor Bayawan interviewed an Ishikawa family in Pangao-an, in what is today the Municipality of Magpet, earlier this year. The Ishikawas of Pangao-an claim descent from a 'General Ishikawa,' whom they recall was one time stationed as an officer in Davao and who had the same reputation of cruelty as the Ishikawa described by informants in Kidapawan. The family can no longer recall if this Ishikawa was ever assigned in Kidapawan, so whether this is the same Ishikawa described by Kidapawan informants is still subject to further verification (the family is in Magpet because of the woman Ishikawa married, a Tagabawa woman whose family had property in Pangao-an).

It is not known how the Japanese in what is today Antipas were administratively related to those in Lanao, but the accounts of Datu Lamberto Delfin from there also indicate cannibalism might have taken place: the Obo Monuvu used the term "Okinawa" to refer to particularly barbaric soldiers, described as hairier than the others, and who were feared because they ate human livers. The Ishikawas of Pangao-an Magpet also recount that their ancestor, who was known to have been assigned in Davao, once ate a human being's ear. More research is needed to verify these bits of oral tradition from the War, and to see how frequent and how widespread cannibalism among

17 Madrid was the last person alive to have met Nakamura.

the Japanese might have been in North Cotabato.

Aside from these Japanese officers, Magdalena Saniel Cruz cited one name as the Filipino leader of the local government under the Japanese, Filomeno Blanco. How Blanco became mayor of Kidapawan will be discussed later.

In Uldarico Baclagon's account of the guerrilla movement, it is implied that Kidapawan had to be retaken by the Japanese in 1943. On October 10, 1942, Salipada Pendatun's forces retook M'lang without much resistance, and from there the guerrillas proceeded to Kidapawan, first arriving in Amas, where Victoriano Valle, described as the 'chief of police of Kidapawan,' met them 'with 17 rifles^[18],' and by 15 October, 1942, Pendatun would enter Kidapawan and raise the American and Philippine flag. But three days later, he would depart to respond to reports that there were Japanese forces on the border with Davao (then still part of Kidapawan), and on his return from the border to Kidapawan, he and his men had an encounter with Japanese forces, implying that the Japanese were still in Kidapawan despite losing control of the territory. When Pendatun departed from Kidapawan to Kabacan on October 23, 1942, he left Fransisco Buyao in charge of Kidapawan, but nothing is known of Buyao's fate after this. Thereafter, Kidapawan is described as a direction from where Japanese forces would come, implying that by early 1943, they had retaken it from the guerrillas.

M'lang remained for the most part in guerrilla hands since it was liberated on October 10, 1942 (but for a period starting from December 1, 1943, when it was retaken and the guerrillas had to move to Dungoon). The Japanese retaking of M'lang started on March 9, 1943, when eight bombs were dropped, leading to one civilian dead^[19]. The Japanese would hold M'lang until some time in 1944 when Baclagon records vaguely that the guerrillas had retaken it and made it into a sanctuary for civilians from Buluan. By September 9, 1944, M'lang was secure enough for Pendatun to deliver a speech in its market and lead a 'public forum' in its municipal building^[20].

The eastern barangays in what is today Makilala were constant battlegrounds. Kisante, which saw a guerrilla company outpost established on October 21, 1942, would be the site of frequent encounters (one at the end of

18 It is not mentioned if this led to an encounter or if it was reinforcement, what is known from the account of Magdalena Saniel Cruz is that Valle would later be a guerrilla leader

19 Magdalena Saniel Cruz recalls such a bombing when she was in M'lang, and mentions that the first husband of Esparanza Sabulao was the casualty. It is not known if this was that bombing.

20 M'lang's local historians should ascertain if this is the same municipal building of the town today.

February 1943 involving the unit of a Lt. F delos Santos which saw 15 Japanese soldiers killed, and another on June 18, 1943 involving the company of a Lt. Mauro Villanueva, who killed 46 Japanese soldiers while being holed up in a chapel). Lamitan, what is Makilala's Poblacion today, also saw air bombing by the Japanese on February 25, 1943, injuring one civilian. This became the picture throughout much of 1943 with guerrillas ambushing Japanese forces (mostly coming from Kidapawan) and the Japanese conducting airstrikes in retaliation. Aside from modern-day Makilala, Baclagon records an ambush in Lanao by guerrillas on February 4, 1943 (killing seven Japanese soldiers) and six bombs being dropped by the Japanese in Mateo ten days later, with no damage.

Aside from the aforementioned acts of conflict, which Baclagon records, there is a very poor record of the Japanese occupation, so little is known of the total damage inflicted by the Japanese in their apparently intermittent stay in Kidapawan. In Post-War Municipal Council Minutes, the newly elected first Municipal Council repeatedly petitioned the War Damage Commission and the Provincial Board of the Cotabato Province to provide funds for the repair of several buildings. Resolution 80 of 1949 called the attention of the Provincial Board of the then undivided Cotabato Province to the as yet unclaimed War Damage Claim of the municipal building. Resolution 96 of 1949 made representation to the War Damage Commission to facilitate claims on schools in the barrios of Lanao, Saguing, M'lang, Paco, Amas, Lamitan, Malasila, Bulatucan, Tagbac, Malasila, Mua-an, Indangan, and the Kidapawan Elementary school (what is today Kidapawan City Pilot Central Elementary School), and so these schools are presumed to have also been destroyed by the Japanese.

There are also very poor records on the casualties of the War, although Datu Basinon Ebbay recalls that the Japanese forced locals, Monuvu and settler alike, to work in the vegetable fields they set up (the Sibug family recalls that this also included a wide Abaca plantation, stretching from the road leading to Magpet all the way to the Saguing river). Locals who failed to work as hard as the Japanese expected, according to Datu Basinon, were routinely killed, many in the current location of Gaisano Grand Mall in Barangay Lanao (which informant Magdalena Sanial Cruz said was a favored execution area by the Japanese).

More research is needed to give a clearer death toll, and a list of casualties,

in Kidapawan during the War. Only two names have been gathered from informants as of those killed by the Japanese: Bitoy Encarnation and Judge Eliseo Dayao Sr.

The only source to remember Bitoy Encarnation was Datu Basinon Ebbo, who recalls that Encarnation was from Saguing and was part of a group of voluntary civil officers who ransacked the Japanese camp. This group stole goods from the camp, with Encarnation stealing a sack of salt. When the Japanese soldiers caught him in possession of the salt, he was beheaded.

The only person to have been killed in Kidapawan by the Japanese during the War whose murder was recorded (albeit casually) in a contemporary document was the father of Celerina Sabas, in the case involving Sabas' murdered husband. His name, however, is not recorded.

This case, G.R. No. L-49070, also recorded how due process still seemed to have been somewhat observed in Kidapawan, specially in the later days of occupation. The case, dated July 5, 1944, involved the murder of Luis Edlawan in Mateo, with Valentin Turtal, the leader of a guerrilla outfit who surrendered to the Japanese on April 22, 1943, having been convicted by the Court of First Instance in Cotabato of the murder. The conviction was made on the basis of the victim's widow, 19-year-old Celerina Sabas, who also claimed that Turtal was her lover and Turtal's own confession. But the Supreme Court, under Chief Justice Jose Yulo, overturned this verdict, citing the inconsistencies in Sabas' testimony and Turtal's confession being made under torture – Turtal was recorded saying he signed the confession for fear he would meet the same fate as Eliseo Dayao and Sabas' father. The mentioned constabulary members (presumably under the supervision of the Japanese) involved in the case were Corporal Asisclo Gimenez (who headed the squad that first responded to the murder) and Inspector Leopoldo Puno (who was described as the company commander and who oversaw Turtal's confession).^[21] The case offers a glimpse of what seems to be the maintenance of due process under the Japanese Occupation, but also the torture and frame-up that may have been the norm at the time.

Caves and the Kollut Poisonings: The Obo Monuvu during the

21 The names of Puno and Gimenez are also the only ones recorded of local men working for the constabulary under the Japanese.

War

One sector of society, one which until recently actually composed the majority of Kidapawan's population, did not experience this due process: the indigenous Obo Monuvu people.

The experiences of the Obo Monuvu during the Second World War have been transmitted to posterity almost entirely in oral form, with very few written accounts documenting it. There are certainly no documentary accounts of what the tribe experienced contemporary to the War. What they recount are stories of fear, forced labor, theft, and murder by the Japanese soldiers.

According to the account of Paniki Falls Eco-Park Tourguide Renante Canlas^[22], whose mother belongs to the Monuvu Adang clan of the upland Ilomavis-Balabag area, the Monuvu in the area of Sitio Mook in Baranggay Balabag (location of the Paniki Falls Eco Park) hid in Paniki Cave upon the coming of the Japanese. This case was confirmed by Datu Melchor Umpan Bayawan (citing his own parents)^[23], who added that the Monuvu also hid in the cave because the American aircrafts often flew too close to the ground. The Japanese hardly reached the Ilomavis-Balabag area, with the few reaching so far upland often ending up being killed by the bohani (tribal warriors) of the villages there.

Down in the plains, the picture was different for the Monuvu. As mentioned previously, Datu Basinon Ebboy recounted the forced labor of Monuvu by the Japanese, although many Monuvu were able to evade this by fleeing deep into the woods or going upland.

This is not to say there was no indigenous resistance. In fact, the most clever such act in this guerrilla haven perhaps actually came from the indigenous peoples: the Kollut Poisonings.

The primary source for the Kollut Poisonings is Datu Lamberto Delfin of Mua-an^[24]. Datu Delfin recounted an incident in Maliri and Kamasi, in what is today the Municipality of Antipas, in which the natives took advantage of Japanese barbarity.

22 Interviewed in 2019

23 The Adang and Umpan families both descend from the semi-legendary Apao, who in tribal memory was the first Monuvu to climb Mt Apo and whose descendants now hold the Ancestral Domain title of the uplands of Kidapawan.

24 Another tribal leader, Datu Melchor Bayawan, conducted the actual interview and sent me transcripts

The Japanese soldiers - whom Datu Lamberto described as being under the command of an Otaka Makuti^[25] – had the habit of stealing all the root crops that the Monuvu would carry as they travelled.

Seeing this, the natives decided to one day bring Kollut instead of sweet potatoes.

Kollut (*Dioscorea hispida*) is a poisonous yam that can only be eaten after being subjected to several tedious processes. In the 2005 book *A Voice from Mt. Apo*, the late tribal ethnographer Tano Bayawan describes Kollut as a famine food, eaten only when the rice harvest fails. Bayawan listed different ways to make this wild root crop edible: a combination of soaking the sliced roots in running water, drying it in the sun, and burying it in ash for up to a week.

The proper preparation of Kollut was unknown to the Japanese soldiers, who as usual took the root crops from the passing Monuvu and ate them unprocessed. As the soldiers collapsed and stopped moving, the natives took the opportunity to hack them to death.

Datu Lamberto gives the names of Datu Dumakon and Datu Somaliray as some of the bohani who led in the killing of Japanese soldiers.

In his 2014 book *Davao Cuisine: Recipes of the 10 tribes of Davao City*, the historian Macario Tiu records a similar anecdote by the Obo Monuvu in Davao, although unlike the anecdote recounted by Datu Lamberto, his account is not as detailed. The idea of deceiving the Japanese soldiers during the War may have arrived independently in different places in Mindanao.

Near the end of the War, recounted Datu Melchor Bayawan from tribal memory, the Americans and the Japanese engaged in aerial combat over Mua-an. One uncle of Datu Melchor, Linsay “Ommow” Umpan (now in his 70s), was months old during this encounter. In the panic, the baby Linsay was squeezed between a closing door. This trauma, the tribe believed, caused the baby’s tongue to contract (“*niok-ok ang dila*” in Cebuano). His nickname, “Ommow,” is Monuvu for mute, and he remains unable to speak to this day.

E. Arsenio Manuel’s account of the Monuvu during the War

The little documentary information on the life of the Monuvu during the Second World War comes from Espiridion Arsenio Manuel’s 1976 book *Manuvu Social Organization*. The anthropological book, whose scope of the

25 The name does not seem to fully conform to Japanese phonology, so it is most likely a mishearing.

study was in the Dallag-Basyaw-Lumut area (an area then at the northernmost reaches of Kidapawan), includes accounts of cases in tribal customary law. Several of these cases took place under Japanese occupation. From them, a vague picture of life during the War for the Monuvu could be pieced together.

The Philippine military and guerrillas used the area of Manuel’s study as a hideout during the War, and there they were accommodated by the Monuvu under the leadership of Datu Duyan Suhat (one of the main subjects of Manuel’s study). “It is estimated,” writes Manuel, “that about a thousand of them [soldiers and guerrillas] received hospitable treatment for three years.” The Japanese on the Davao side made roads to the area, and when the Americans landed in Davao in 1945, they fled to this interior.

As is demonstrated in Manuel’s Case No. 28, Manuel notes how the coming of the Japanese became a marker of time for the Bilangan, the pre-calendar system of ethno-historical reckoning, which involved counting the number of years that passed from major events in the past. The case was identified as happening “six years before the Japanese came [ca. 1936].”

Manuel recorded major changes to the lives of the Monuvu following the War: a marked decline in the inter-village warfare which once dominated life for the tribe, a disappearance of divisions of functions in the tribal leadership (and a decline in the martial role of the datu), the increased politicization of the datu as the tribe negotiated its place in the Post-War Republic, and an overall increase in the complexity of the social organization. Although he notes these developments because doing so was not his research concern, he does not make detailed discussions as to how the War influenced them^[26].

One change that Manuel observed was that the War brought in settler “squatters,” complicating tribal land ownership. Kidapawan Councilor Lino Madrid echoed this decade before Manuel in his 1952 brief history of Kidapawan, in which he described people who evaded the Japanese in Davao decided to stay permanently in Kidapawan after the War.^[27]

Manuel also notes that the Japanese “decimated” many Monuvu families,

26 Historical accounts in such sources as Boi Era España’s *Poovian woy Gontangan* indicate that many of these changes happened before the War in other places, such as in the seat of the Municipal District. Manuel made the mistake of assuming the conditions he documented in his area were uniform across Monuvu country. The incorporation of tribal leadership in the colonial political structure during the establishment of the Municipal District is a rich subject for future anthropological study.

27 The use of the term “squatters” here to refer to Settlers arises from the Manila government’s ignoring of ancestral domain and titling of lands in Kidapawan before the War without consulting the Monuvu who originally owned them. These “squatters” actually entered into bona fide transactions with these Monuvu, recognizing indigenous land ownership. How the War complicated the concept of imminent domain in Kidapawan is the rich subject of another study.

although it was also beyond his research scope, so he did not document their names and the cause of their slaughter.

Three of the 50 cases Manuel recorded happened during the War (in actuality this may be more, as many of the cases are undated).

In Case No. 3, Manuel records that the couple Ondag Pion of Saaysay and his wife Boning Imbak fled Tambuvung (in Davao) when the Japanese came and evacuated to Kidapawan.

Case No. 19 notes that the Japanese still occupied Ipuan, Magpet, in 1944 (though the personality in the case, Manga-an Mavayyang, was able to avoid them, nevertheless suffering from economic difficulty).

Case No. 26 records how Sumin of Kidapawan^[28] evacuated to Kiyaab (today in the Municipality of Antipas) to flee the Japanese. There, his brother-in-law Duyan Batu killed Sumin's wife Batooy, prompting Sumin to hire his son-in-law Sumok Tumanding to kill Duyan in 1944. The resulting panavuk (restitution) for Duyan's murder, Manuel records enigmatically, was then delivered by Sumin "to the alcalde of Kidapawan who fixed the case" (the involvement in a customary law dispute implied this "alcalde" was a Monuvu datu, Datu Siawan Ingal). This case, along with the details of Datu Duyan Suhat's life during the time, implied that although major changes were ongoing, many aspects of life during the War continued as before and well after the Japanese left.

The Kidnapping of Juan Sibug

A significant incident involving the Monuvu people, which remained hitherto unrecorded, involved one of the tribe's most important historical figures, the last Monuvu mayor of Kidapawan, Atty. Juan Sibug. The primary information on this incident is sourced from Juan Sibug's widow, Erlinda Aresgado Sibug^[29].

Juan "Johnny" Sibug was born in Manongol on June 26, 1932, the eldest of eight children. On his father's side, he was a Kapampangan, while on his mother, he was Monuvu. His father, Arsenio, sat as a councilor on Kidapawan's first Municipal Council, while his mother Lourdes, named Limpayen, before she was baptized, was the daughter of Datu Guabong, and through her, he was related to a large clan of tribal chieftains.

28 In archival documents in Kidapawan, the name is Datu Sumin Ugok. He is one of three datu who serve as namesakes for a Kidapawan barangay, Sudapin.

29 Who was interviewed in 2017

A Sillimanian, Sibug passed the Bar in 1956 (when he was twenty-four), becoming the first person of Monuvu descent from Kidapawan to become a lawyer, and to date, the only lawyer to ever serve as Mayor of Kidapawan^[30].

According to the family of the late mayor, Juan’s father Arsenio worked as a merchant during the War, maintaining what could be described as a cordial relationship with the Japanese authorities. The specifics of this relationship are lost to time, but the Aresgado family – neighbors of the Sibugs in barrio Lanao and family of Juan’s wife Erlinda – recalls that at some point, it turned sour (also for reasons now unknown).

One day the Japanese came looking for Arsenio, and when he could not be found, they took Juan (then still a boy) and held him hostage, telling his family to let Arsenio know they had his son. The Sibug family believes Juan Sibug may have been the youngest prisoner of war during World War II. He would have been then when the Japanese came in 1942 and would be in his early teens when they left in 1945.

Sibug’s family described him as saying he was taken as a young man by the Japanese to Padada, Davao del Sur, where he was forced into labor. He was there in Padada when the Americans bombed it as part of the liberation of Davao (records show there was an air bombing in Padada on February 3, 1945).

In the chaos, a Monuvu man recognized the young man as a grandson of a tribal chieftain in Kidapawan, and so the man took him to safety. When Juan and the Monuvu man who saved him reached Bansalan, they met Arsenio, who was startled to see his son all the way in Davao.

Tribal sources such as Boi Leticia Mijarez Lumanog of Nuangan^[31] say that later in his life, Juan would repeatedly try to learn the name of the Monuvu man who saved him but was ultimately unable to know the man’s identity.

The Assassination of Eliseo Dayao Sr.

Sibug was lucky to have survived the incident, for as previously mentioned, not everyone was equally fortunate. The tragic case of Eliseo Dayao Sr., in

30 Information on Sibug’s academic background and career comes from his surviving curriculum vitae, typewritten at an uncertain date by Sibug himself and in the possession of his widow. Arsenio’s and Juan’s careers as politicians (as well as that of Juan’s brother Joseph, who would serve as vice mayor in the 1970s) are well documented in the surviving minutes of the Municipal Council sessions.

31 Who was present when Erlinda Aresgado Sibug was interviewed in 2017

particular, was especially well known. Among all the casualties of the War that remain largely undocumented, perhaps none were as prominent as his.

The primary information on the details relating to Eliseo Dayao's life and death comes from his last surviving daughter, Elma Dayao Yaoto^[32], who recounted information as transmitted to her by her now deceased mother and siblings.

A Tagalog, Eliseo Dayao grew up in Malolos, Bulacan and studied at the University of the Philippines College of Law. He became a lawyer in 1924. Ten years later, in 1934, he was made a Justice of the Peace and was assigned in Mindanao. Administrative Order 60 of 1938 lists his jurisdiction as "Pikit, Pagaluñgan, Silik, Carmen, Kabacan, Balatican, Danisilan, Kidapawan, and Kitubud, Province of Cotabato."

Elma Dayao Yaoto recounted how he was based in Pikit during his tenure, but at some point was given land by one of Kidapawan's tribal chieftains, Datu Angud Icdang. The land given is today much of Kidapawan's commercial area, including the Mega Market.

At some point in his stay in Pikit, Dayao met Manuela Velarde, who was a daughter of one of the settlers' families in the agricultural colony founded by the Americans there. They married and had fifteen children.

In 1936, Eliseo's brother Pablo had been involved in a case of robbery against the Deputy Provincial Treasurer and was accused of stealing 30,000 pesos (a very large amount at the time). Eliseo had refused to intervene and was accused of coaching his brother how to defend himself in court, "and further advising Pablo Dayao not to make any oral or written declaration except through his attorney." For giving his brother this advice and refusing to perform his duties by arresting his brother, Eliseo was dismissed at the urging of then Governor Capt. Dionisio Gutierrez in 1938 (via Manuel L. Quezon's Administrative Order 60).

There is no record as to what Eliseo had been doing after his dismissal. His family does not remember that he was ever dismissed, but they maintain that he was still serving as a judge when the Japanese came. A full decade after he was dismissed, the street that was built on his land was still named "Judge Dayao Street," indicating the dismissal might not have ended his career.

It is certain, however, that he continued to play an important role in the local community. As the case of the murder of Luis Edlawan indicated,

32 Who was 79 when interviewed in 2016

Kidapawan maintained a judicial system, so it would be reasonable to speculate that he may have been reinstated as a jurist.

When the Japanese came, recounted Elma (citing her mother Manuela), Dayao secretly gave aid and information to the guerrillas fighting the Japanese. This implied that he was in a position prominent enough to be able to gather information.

Then, on an undated day in 1942, Dayao was said to have been seen handing a note to a known guerrilla from his left chest pocket. This act was evidently reported to the Japanese. On November 19, 1942, he was on his way from Pikit when he was ambushed in barrio Lanao. He was never found again, and it became consensus in the town that he had been executed. Dayao's body was never found.

As the previously mentioned case of Valentin Turtal indicates, Dayao's death became notorious, a byword for the atrocities of the Japanese. Other informants, such as Magdalena Sanial Cruz, independently confirm the notoriety of the incident.

In the aftermath of the murder, Dayao's family was taken away by the guerrillas and hidden for their own safety. Manuela and their children would survive the War, and Manuela herself would later remarry. One of Dayao's sons, Eliseo V. Dayao Jr., would serve as Municipal Councilor in 1989.

The memory of Dayao was forgotten throughout much of Kidapawan history until 2018 when he was posthumously granted the Medal of Honour under the Kidapawan Heroes Award by the local government.

The Torture of Patadon Tungao

Not all casualties during the War were deaths. The case of the war hero Datu Patadon Tungao shows that the Japanese also routinely engaged in torture. Like most personalities in Kidapawan history, published information on Patadon is scarce. But he left behind several documents which shed some light on his colorful life.

Born in Dulawan (what is today Datu Piang, Maguindanao) in 1900^[33], Patadon was the son of Tungao, a scion of the Sultanate of Linantangan. Through Tungao's father Sandigan, Patadon is descended from Rajamuda Abpel (who fought the Spaniards with Anwaruddin Utto), and through him

33 The exact date of his birth is not known. His personal details are recorded in the surviving personal record that remains in the possession of his family.

ultimately to the Royal Houses of Buayan and Maguindanao^[34]. Saladong Piang is listed on his surviving personal record as his wife, although it is known that he had other wives.

Patadon was not actually in Kidapawan during the War, but according to the local historian Ferdinand Bergonia, he already had links to Kidapawan in 1937, and he would settle in the town after the War with his family. Today a barangay in Kidapawan is named after him.

During the War, Patadon became a 3rd Lieutenant of the Infantry, first serving in Davao in January 1942 under the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE)'s 101st Division. In September 1943, he was stationed in his birth town of Dulawan under the 2nd Battalion of the 119th Infantry Regiment. Patadon's personal record notes that at the time, Dulawan was under enemy territory. He was recorded working "as the undercover man for the USFIP against the Japanese Forces and the Puppet Republic."

There is abundant information on Patadon's arrest and subsequent torture, sourced directly to him, as an July 8, 1945 letter he wrote to then Captain Gumbay Piang^[35] survives and is still in possession of his family.

While in Dulawan, Patadon reports, a fellow anti-Japanese agent, Pindalilang Piang, was arrested by the Japanese. Patadon sought to negotiate his release, but while there, he himself was arrested on December 25, 1943 by a Filipino named Borja and a Japanese officer named Major Matsumoto.

When he was taken to the jail in Cotabato City, a Captain Kobayashi showed him documents he had written in his time with the USAFFE in Davao (including a letter in which Patadon reported abuses by the Japanese in Paidu-Pulangi), then he was tortured to make him confess to writing the documents. "Captain Kobayashi slapped me on my head, face, nose, and ears, which bled profusely," wrote Patadon, "it was worst on my eyes, which swelled for ten days." He never confessed.

More of his letters and documents were shown to Patadon as 1944 started, and again he refused to admit writing them. He was then subjected to further torture: he "whipped in the mouth" (losing four of his teeth),

34 A tarsila (genealogy) of the Sultanate of Linangtangan was recently made public, citing Tungao as the great-great grandson of Papanok Mupat Batua sa Balt, first Sultan sa Linantangan. The genealogy of the Maguindanaon sultanate recorded by Najib Saleeby (and expanded by Amir Baraguir), plus genealogies made available online by the current members of the Royal House of Buayan, lists Papanok as the great-great-grandson of Rajah Baratamay of Buayan as well as a great-grandson of Putri Milagandi, daughter of the first sultan of Maguindanao Shariff Kabunsuan.

35 The letter was written as Patadon's report to Piang, his superior, as he reported back for duty. I obtained a copy through the Kidapawan City Tourism Office, which received a copy after the Patadon family nominated him for the Kidapawan Heroes Award.

hanged by the hands while a ballot box – containing an iron ball inside – hung from his neck, and had his beard dabbed with oil and set on fire. Dirty water was pumped into his mouth before spiked shoes were used to kick his stomach (leading him to vomit the dirty water with blood). Then a piece of coconut midrib taken from a walis tingting was embedded into his urethra. The torture started in December of 1944 and continued until May 1945. In March of 1945, Patadon and other political prisoners were transferred from Cotabato to Muntinlupa in Manila, but the worse of the torture continued in the capital.

Aside from writing the documents, Patadon was also forced to confess to other things: serving as a spy for Gumbay Piang, killing Japanese spies in the Allied camp in Dalican (today in the Municipality of Datu Odin Sinsuat), and burning a Japanese controlled sawmill and other essential supplies in Tamayong Sirib (now in Davao City). He was also forced to tag Ugalingan Piang as a guerrilla. He never confessed to anything.

In his letter, Patadon mentions how Kobayashi, and later a Captain Nakano, repeatedly cite Datu Sinsuat (presumably Sinsuat Balabaran) and Duma Sinsuat (Sinsuat's son)^[36] as sources for the information they want Patadon to confirm. He recounts the deplorable living conditions under incarceration both in Cotabato and in Manila (they were frequently put in isolation and darkness and fed nothing but dirty water with cassava pulp). He also reports how he saw prisoners were put in front of the firing squad every day, almost on the whim of the jailer.

The Japanese sentenced Patadon to ten years and hard labor in Manila, but he was repeatedly threatened with death. In one instance, he was among a group of prisoners sent to be shot before the warden changed his mind and replaced him with someone else.

Liberation came in Manila on February 5, 1945, and the Japanese abandoned the prison in which Patadon was detained. From Muntinlupa, Patadon was taken to the hospital by the Americans and given regular meals. In his letter, he waxes lyrical about chocolate and cigarettes.

On June 1, 1945, when Patadon had completely recovered, he sailed from Manila to Cebu on a ship named Thomas Liberty. From Cebu, Patadon traveled down south on his own, making stopovers in Argao, Siquijor,

36 The roles of the Sinsuats and other Maguindanao leaders during the Second World War are discussed in detail by Thomas M. McKenna in *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines*.

Misamis Occidental, before arriving in Iligan. From Iligan, he traveled to Marawi (staying for a while in Camp Keithley, where he met Sultan Batu Ali) before heading to Cotabato.

Patadon took this journey leisurely, and in his letter, he described in detail the generosity he received from people when they learned that he was a prisoner of war. Most of his travel back to Cotabato was free, and along the way, he received many gifts and much money. “Perhaps,” Patadon reflects in his letter to Gumbay Piang, “persons of a common destiny or misfortune become brothers.”

But he was saddened to learn upon returning to Cotabato that one of his wives and three of his children, as well as his guerrilla brother Lt. Hadji Guimaludin Tungao, had died during his absence.

According to Ferdinand Bergonia, Patadon and his family settled in Kidapawan in 1946, in the land bequeathed to them by Datu Siawan Ingal. In his post-War life in Kidapawan, he became a leader of the Muslim community, encouraging many of the city’s Muslim families to move to Kidapawan and even campaigning in 1955 to have more Muslims in the local police force.

The area where Patadon’s family lived became a barrio named after him, and he became its first barrio lieutenant, a position he held until his death on April 22, 1961. On his death, the Kidapawan Municipal Council paid tribute to him through Council Resolution No. 16 of April 24, 1961, a resolution which described him as “one of those few brave and adventurous men who founded the Municipality of Kidapawan.” Like Dayao, Patadon’s memory would be forgotten by much of Kidapawan outside his family, until he was posthumously granted the Medal of Honour under the Kidapawan Heroes Award by the local government in 2018.

One of Patadon’s grandchildren, Rukaya Patadon, would become Kidapawan’s first and to date only Muslim Councilor when she represented the Kabataang Baranggay in 1980.

Filomeno Blanco, The Hostage-Mayor

Not everybody was like Dayao and Patadon, who went against the Japanese. Perhaps Kidapawan’s most prominent “collaborator” was its Japanese-backed mayor, Filomeno Blanco Sr.

Although independent sources (such as the city's extant short historical profiles and the account of Magdalena Sanial Cruz) mention him as a War-time mayor, the primary source of information on the life and appointment of Filomeno Blanco Sr. was his daughter (and last surviving child), Rosita Blanco Cadungog. It was from her that the major facts of Blanco's life presented here are taken.

According to Cadungog, Filomeno Blanco Sr. was born on November 22, 1905 in Roxas, Capiz. A farmer, Blanco sought a better life in Mindanao with his wife, Adoracion Fajardo, first landing in Parang before arriving in Pigcawayan in 1937, whereupon Rosita was born. Shortly before the War came, the Blancos then moved to Kidapawan, settling in Barrio Saguing in what is today the Municipality of Makilala.

When the Japanese came, recalled Cadungog, the Blancos were among the majority of local families in the town who sought to flee from the Japanese, in the case of the Blancos hiding in the PAMDEVCO (Pamintuan Development Corporation) estate^[37]. This did not prove to be a good idea, as the Japanese forces quickly caught them.

Although only being able to finish his first year of high school, Blanco was described by his daughter as an articulate man, and the Japanese also observed that he commanded some respect among the locals. So the Japanese command gave him a position of responsibility. The position has been identified by Cadungog, as well as by Magdalena Sanial Cruz and by extant attempts by past local governments to write Kidapawan's history, as "mayor," although I have yet to get hold of documents which confirm and give detail to Blanco's appointment as such.

Cadungog characterized her father's appointment as mayor as practically a case of hostage-taking. Locals who were rounded up by the Japanese for suspected subversion were brought to Barrio Lanao. But owing to the lack of any place in which to detain them, the Japanese allowed them to live freely in Kidapawan instead of keeping them in place by threatening to behead the entire Blanco family if they ran away. The captives obeyed out of concern for the Blancos, and so the Blancos were left untouched.

Cadungog also gave a glimpse into the day-to-day workings of Kidapawan under the Japanese. She recalls the family being given several houses: a house in Lanao where her father worked and a 'safe house' in what

37 I have yet to determine the exact location of this estate.

is now Baranggay Sudapin. Near the latter, she recounts, was a Japanese school, where the Japanese taught Nihonggo and calisthenics, a school she had to attend (Bonifacio Madrid, though recalls another school, perhaps an earlier one, set up near the Japanese garrison in Lana). Everyone – including the children – had to follow a rigidly timed daily routine.

How the nominal mayor of Kidapawan at the time functioned in the management of these schools and of the whole town is now lost to Cadungog's and the town's memory. What is certain is that I could not find any informant who would put culpability on Blanco for any atrocity the Japanese soldiers committed in the town.

Documentary evidence is scarce at best, but Cadungog put her father's time as mayor of Kidapawan under the Japanese for the entirety of their occupation of the place, and he was only relieved when Kidapawan was liberated by Allied forces. The historical feature on the 1989 Municipal Fiesta Souvenir Program (one of several attempts by the local government to write the town's history) puts his term from 1943 to 1944, although it does not cite its source for these years.

Upon liberation, Cadungog recalled, Filomeno was convicted of sedition by the restored Commonwealth government. But Cadungog and the Blanco family saw this as a largely symbolic conviction, as Blanco was merely made to sleep in incarceration in Pikit for a night. Cases of such symbolic one-night convictions of local war criminals after liberation would be an interesting subject for future studies.

By Cadungog's account, Filomeno lived a very productive life after the War, though he never sought to return to public life. He continued to prosper as a farmer, first setting up a farm that included abaca, rice, and corn, as well as setting up a rice and corn mill (indeed, the 1952 Cotabato Guidebook lists Filomeno Blanco as owner of a mill in Saguing). The business was successful enough for him to be able to raise two of his five children to pursue careers as engineers, with Cadungog working as a teacher, migrating to California in 1991. Filomeno's only return to public life would be as the first manager of the Farmers Cooperative Marketing Association (FACOMA) in Kidapawan. He died at the age of 63 on August 25, 1968 and was buried in his house in Saguing.

The Escape of Lorenzo Saniel

While Blanco was the nominal head of the local government under the Japanese, another local leader (who would in later years succeed him as Mayor of Kidapawan) managed to escape death from the hands of the occupying soldiers: Lorenzo Saniel.

The primary source for the life and escape from the death of Saniel was his last surviving daughter, Magdalena Saniel Cruz, who had lived through some of the most dramatic moments.

Lorenzo Abear Saniel was born in Argao, Cebu on October 29, 1890, the son of Jose Saniel, who had been gobernadorcillo in Argao under the Spanish twice. Lorenzo was a scion of Argao's network of political families, and it was unsurprising that he would continue the family tendency towards politics when he moved to Mindanao.

Although only finishing high school, Saniel was intelligent enough to work as a teacher, and in 1913 he and his wife Julianna (also a teacher and a relative of Argao politicians) moved to Pikit as part of the American government's agricultural colonies project in Mindanao. By the time he arrived in Mindanao, Lorenzo already had two children (the first two of a total of thirteen). The youngest among his children, Magdalena Saniel Cruz, recalled how her father continued the family's links to politics in Pikit, where Lorenzo had served as a councilor. While working as a politician and teacher, Saniel also cultivated sugarcane in the colony.

The Saniels had to leave Pikit because of a devastating locust infestation that destroyed their sugarcane crop, moving to Pantukan in what is today Davao de Oro before finally settling in Kidapawan in 1935 (he had bought land from Datu Siawan Ingal).

Magdalena Saniel Cruz claimed that Lorenzo continued his political activity in Kidapawan and was already a councilor in Kidapawan's Municipal District before the Second World War. However, there are almost no extant archival documents dating from Kidapawan's days as a Municipal District to confirm his appointment or give exact dates for his term.

In any case, his position in public life proved prominent enough to put him and his family in danger when the War came, as the Japanese would almost certainly target Commonwealth-era officials. Saniel fled with his growing family to the settlement of Peidupulangi (today part of Pikit), only

to find the Japanese arriving there first. The Saniels fled again with the aid of paid Moro guides, but in the middle of the wilderness, their guides grew agitated and began extorting the family. Lorenzo began to grow homesick for Kidapawan, and so decided to face the Japanese and brought his family back home.

The family stayed in what is today Barangay Balindog to be far from from the Japanese in Lanao, but Cruz recounted how this decision did not spare Saniel from almost being shot by the Japanese soldiers.

One day, Cruz recounted, her father was summoned by the Japanese officer, which she identified as a certain Ishikawa. Saniel was ordered to recruit a spy in barrio Sikitan against the guerrillas there. Lorenzo was friends with Victoriano Valle, who had land in Sikitan and was among the guerrillas, so this was a difficult order for him.

Fearing for Valle's life, Lorenzo delayed giving any names to Ishikawa, and eventually, Ishikawa grew impatient. Cruz narrated how the Japanese officer slapped her father across the face before ordering seven of his men to take Saniel to "go look for chickens" (which, according to Cruz, was a subtle way of implying an execution). Saniel was taken to where the Gaisano Grand Mall in Lanao is now, but Saniel was able to persuade the Japanese soldiers to go instead in the direction of Paco, where the present location of the DPWH is.

The group came across a stream, bridged only by several bamboo posts. Saniel was made to cross it first, then, one by one, the seven soldiers crossed after him. When the last soldier was crossing the makeshift bridge, Saniel saw that the attention of the other six was focused on the crossing soldier, and he saw a chance to escape. He ran for his life into the brambles, and after much walking, reached his family in Balindog.

Hurriedly the family fled into the wilderness, wandering into many of the remote barrios but going into the general direction of Davao, where Saniel intended to hide his family. At some point in their wandering, a host of guerrillas had found them, the host having been explicitly ordered by the guerrilla leader Udtog Matalam to search for them (Saniel had been one of Matalam's teachers). The guerrillas took them to M'lang, the guerilla stronghold.

In M'lang the Saniels lived with relatives of Jacinto Paclibar, who had been the resistance group's supplies officer. The War ended while the Saniels were in M'lang, and they would return to downtown Kidapawan shortly

after, with Cruz remembering the Americans parading into town and the Japanese forces being escorted out.

Saniel would survive to be one of the Municipality of Kidapawan's founding politicians, sitting as a councilor on its first Municipal Council. In 1955 he would be elected Vice Mayor, then when Mayor Gil F. Gadi resigned in 1957, he became Kidapawan's third Municipal Mayor, the first Vice Mayor to assume the post and the first person to hold all of Kidapawan's Municipal elected offices.

Saniel died in his home at the age of 90 on November 23, 1980. One of his sons, Amado, would serve as Councilor in 1964.

Kidapawan as Haven from the Japanese

As can be observed in preceding accounts, Kidapawan both saw many Japanese-perpetrated atrocities and instead paradoxically served as a haven against the Japanese, becoming a guerrilla-dominated place and a sanctuary people fled to in order to escape the invading army. As mentioned previously, E. Arsenio Manuel's Case No. 3 records the couple Ondag Pion and Boning Imbak fleeing Tambuvung in Davao to evacuate to Kidapawan.

After the war, Lino Madrid further writes how many from the Davao region fled to Kidapawan during the war, increasing the town's population (and causing complications in land ownership as squatting proliferated). As opposed to other settlements, which saw mass evacuation with the coming of the Japanese, Kidapawan, in contrast, saw a massive influx as these evacuees entered Kidapawan. Most of these evacuees come from nearby Davao. Madrid describes them as squatters, with many occupying lands already applied for by settlers who fled. Upon arrival in Kidapawan, they planted abaca "because Kidapawan's volcanic soil and its very well-distributed rainfall make it a natural habitat of this plant." Oral accounts confirmed this trend. Abdulrahman Abubakar, a boy when the War happened, also recounts how the entire Bagundang-Abubakar family fled from the home of his mother's family in Maa, Davao to Kidapawan to evade the Japanese there. The family walked the distance, with some of the possessions they brought with them still surviving today.^[38]

38 The head of the Abubakar family, Sheik Abubakar Guiama, would end up joining the Bolo Battalion and, after the War, become Kidapawan's first Hadji.

There also seemed to have been several instances of internal evacuation, mostly from populous downtown areas to more remote and rural or forested parts of Kidapawan. The accounts of Renante Canlas and Datu Melchor Bayawan indicate that the upland barangays were challenging to penetrate, Manuel's Case No. 25 records Datu Sumin Ugok fleeing to Kiyaab. In contrast, the cases of Lorenzo Saniel and Filomeno Blanco imply that even barangays close to the present day Poblacion, barangays like Balindog and Sikitan, were remote enough for people to flee (I have yet to determine the location of the PAMDEVCO estate, but from Rosita Blanco Cadungog's account, it may be somewhere in the vicinity of Barangay Singao). Through my great uncle Eugenio Galay Jr, the author's own family still recalls that the Galay and Dizon families sought refuge in the Dizon family's farms in barrio Manongol (Eugenio was born there). The account of Magdalena Saniel Cruz, confirmed by the Paclibar family through Emmanuel Paclibar, indicates that the barrio of M'lang (today the Poblacion of the Municipality of M'lang) was a guerrilla stronghold. At the same time, Manuel records that his area of study, then Kidapawan's northernmost border with Bukidnon and Davao, was also a base for guerrilla activity.

These internal evacuations give a sense of how forested and rural a large part of Kidapawan was during the Second World War, and although the Japanese had a presence in much of the Municipal District, they had minimal actual control over the territory.

This was understandable: when they came to Kidapawan, the presence of the national government they had taken over was still negligible. The Municipal District President, Siawan Ingal (first appointed by the Americans in 1914 and continuing well into the Commonwealth era) had practically maintained an Obo Monuvu micro-state in the Municipal District by presiding over a council almost entirely composed of tribal leaders, issuing Polinta (literally "counsel") as administrative decrees, and appointing Bohani to serve as policemen to enforce Pooviyaan woy Gontangan (customary law). Manongol served as the pre-War seat of the Municipal District government, and that the Galay and Dizon families were able to retreat there demonstrates how weak the Japanese hold on the town was.

Nevertheless, perhaps another factor why Kidapawan became a haven against the invading army, particularly for those coming in from Davao and especially in the last days of the War, was Captain Hayao Nakamura's leadership.

The Tragedy of Hayao Nakamura

Hayao Nakamura, the last known commanding officer of the Imperial Army detachment in the Municipal District, was central to the last days of Japanese occupation in Kidapawan. He may well be one of the most important historical figures in Kidapawan history.

As of this writing, I could only find personal accounts in Kidapawan that could be used to give a picture of Hayao Nakamura's final years. What emerges from these accounts is a romantic and near-heroic figure, whose tragedy is worth remembering the world over but is now on the verge of being completely forgotten.

Four independent sources confirm Nakamura's existence: Magdalena Saniel Cruz, Erlinda Villanueva Asuelo, Rosita Blanco Cadungog, and Bonifacio Madrid. Because the only sources available are accounts, I could not put exact dates on the events, and Nakamura's life is still largely unknown.

Bonifacio Madrid, in particular, the last living person who met and talked to Nakamura, gave the most detailed account of the man's life. I was able to interview him just months before his death.

Hayao Nakamura, a Captain (Tai-i in Japanese) in the Japanese Imperial Army, was assigned to head the local detachment of the Japanese forces in Kidapawan (the identity of this detachment is also not known, but the 166th Independent Infantry Battalion of the 100th Division of the Imperial Army held the Cotabato-Malabang area at the time of Liberation). According to Madrid's account, Nakamura succeeded Captain Ishikawa and was the last Japanese military officer in Kidapawan. In contrast to Ishikawa's well-attested cruelty, the coming of Capt. Hayao Nakamura ushered in more humane treatment to the locals in Kidapawan, and Madrid claimed that under Nakamura not a single local was executed. If Madrid's account is to be believed, Nakamura, whom he described as a more educated Japanese officer, was liked by the locals. Erlinda Villanueva Asuelo recalled how Nakamura was still strict enough to have slapped her mother in the face in his early days in Kidapawan after Anicia Villanueva had been rude to him, but Asuelo agreed that later, the Japanese captain had become much more mellow. By Madrid's account, Nakamura led many infrastructure efforts, many of which would survive the War and would benefit the young Municipality.

As previously mentioned, Rosita Blanco Cadungog's and Madrid's accounts indicate that Hayao Nakamura's assumption of command in Kidapawan led to the more humane treatment of the locals' town. Madrid attributed this partly to Nakamura's background. In contrast to Ishikawa, whom Madrid described as a 'savage,' Nakamura was an educated man – he was a civil engineer and took a degree in a university in the USA (the Madrid family cannot recall which university), so he was fluent in English. The fact that he could go to a university in another country implies that he was either an excellent student enough to qualify for a scholarship, or came from a wealthy family enough to afford to study abroad.

"The Japanese are just like the Filipinos," Madrid recalled Nakamura saying when asked about Ishikawa's and other Japanese soldiers' cruelty, "some are civilized, and some are barbarians."

Nakamura's status as a civil engineer manifested itself in the series of infrastructure efforts he had led during his command of Kidapawan. Roads, bridges, and public buildings were built during his time, but of all his projects, the public work the Madrid family most remembers was a wooden bridge in the Saguing river, the earliest known bridge constructed in Kidapawan as of this writing. The bridge was made of wood, and according to Madrid, was instrumental in connecting the Japanese forces in Davao with those in Cotabato. The Madrid family remembers it mainly because Nakamura himself took part in its construction, helping the local laborers nail and saw wood. This act of humility and willingness to work with the locals left a lasting impression on the Madrids.

On top of the roads and bridges, Nakamura was also behind the setting up of the Japanese school, which Madrid said not only provided education to local children (the post-liberation administration's education system seemed to have credited coursework taken under the Japanese occupation), it even offered employment as the teachers were locals.

The Madrids also recall several stories of Nakamura's good relationship with the locals.

From most accounts, the occupying Japanese required Filipinos to show obeisance to any Japanese soldier present, characteristically with the Japanese bow (o-jigi in Japanese). Failure to pay this respect often meant severe punishments for locals, even death.

However, under Nakamura, Kidapawan saw a relaxing of the rules, and a general shift in Japanese attitudes towards kindness. Madrid himself recalled how, as a young boy, he experienced this first hand. Driving a cart pulled by a carabao somewhere in what is today downtown Kidapawan, the young Bonifacio found a Japanese soldier up ahead. Protocol dictated that he stopped the carabao, alighted from the cart, and bowed before the soldier. Nevertheless, seeing as the road they were on was very muddy, Bonifacio instead opted to whip the carabao to walk on while lying down inside the cart to hide from the Japanese soldier. When the cart had passed by, Bonifacio took a peek at the soldier, and was surprised to find the man laughing: the soldier saw him hiding, and instead of being angry, was very amused.

Nakamura himself seemed to have prioritized good relations with the locals over enforcing deference. In one incident recalled by the Madrids (one which Erlinda Villanueva Asuelo did not recount), Ceferino Villanueva found himself unable to bow before a Japanese soldier. Finding this unacceptable, the Japanese soldier slapped Villanueva in the face and scolded him. Infuriated, Villanueva (the former principal of the Rural High school, and who later served as the post-war transition mayor before being elected as a councilor) went to Lanao to see Nakamura about the incident. Upon hearing Villanueva's complaint, Nakamura ordered all his men to line up in front of him and asked Villanueva to identify which among the soldiers was the one who slapped him. When Villanueva identified the soldier, Nakamura himself slapped the soldier and gave him a dressing down.

In one incident that the Madrids recall, several passing merchants, among them, Bonifacio's brother Ebenezer Madrid, and two Muslim traders, were caught in an encounter between Japanese soldiers and guerrillas somewhere in what is today the Municipality of Matalam, and having been caught by the Japanese, were incarcerated in Pikit. Nakamura heard of this incident that evening, and immediately set out to Pikit. As he was preparing his horse, Bonifacio Madrid's mother Felicidad (by then, it seemed Nakamura had become a family friend) told Nakamura to wait until the morning. Nakamura wryly responded that Felicidad's son Ebenezer would not have his head on his neck anymore if he waited until the morning. In the dead of night, Nakamura traveled to Pikit, and upon arriving at the Japanese garrison, argued with the stationed officer, insisting that these were merchants they arrested. The Madrid family recalled from Ebenezer's

account how Nakamura tore to open the cell's door himself and bellowed at the incarcerated locals that they may go.

Japanese-local relations were so amicable (at least according to Madrid's account) under Nakamura that known guerrillas were allowed to go to the markets and other public venues in Kidapawan so long as they did not bring firearms. Indeed, many guerrillas frequently met with Japanese soldiers on the street without any incident occurring. There had been rumors that at some point, Nakamura had gone secretly to M'lang to have a conference with Udtog Matalam and other guerrilla leaders. The veracity of these rumors could not be proven, and if true the topic of this conference is now lost to time.

Bonifacio Madrid attributes Nakamura's benevolence to his educated background. Nevertheless, Rosita Blanco Cadungog speculated that the main reason was Rosalina Madrid. Bonifacio Madrid, Rosalina's brother, indeed agreed that it was a significant factor.

Rosalina Madrid was the daughter of Zacharias Madrid and Felicidad Urbanoso. Ilocanos from Pasuquin, Ilocos Norte, the Madrids arrived in Kidapawan in the 1930s (Zacharias' brother Lino had arrived earlier after being assigned as a teacher in Kidapawan, and was instrumental in his family's migration to Mindanao). Rosalina was the elder sister of Ebenezer, the merchant detained in Pikit, and of Bonifacio, the primary source today on Nakamura's life.

At the time of the War, Rosalina was one of the few educated young women in Kidapawan. This led her to be appointed as the personal secretary to the Japanese soldiers' commanding officer in barrio Lanao. The Madrids recall that she was secretary only by the time Nakamura took command of the Kidapawan detachment.

From there, as the Madrid family recalls, Nakamura and Rosalina fell in love. The two started a relationship.

While they regretted that no record of it survives, the Madrid family confirmed that Nakamura ended up marrying Rosalina, exchanging vows before Pastor Julio Aragon of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of the Philippines (Rosalina's religion). They had planned to have it recorded in the civil registry, but the succeeding turmoil of the Liberation prevented this.

Nakamura's relationship with and subsequent marriage to Rosalina seemed to have been well known in Kidapawan, as Rosita Blanco Cadungog

and Magdalena Sanial Cruz both recalled a word of it spreading in town. Bonifacio attributed the soldier's bemusement at his hiding in the carabao cart to the soldier, knowing that he was the brother of the captain's romantic interest. Whatever the case, the relationship would most likely have endeared the locals to Nakamura more.

It certainly endeared the man to the locals – Nelly Madrid recalled how, as a young girl, a family friend, Iping Alvaro, picked her up, kissed her on the cheek, and told her mother "I owe my life to this girl's father!"

Because the relationship would bear fruit: Rosalina would be pregnant during Nakamura's last months in Kidapawan. Taking leave of her duties as a secretary, she lived with her parents to carry Nakamura's child. It is thanks to this pregnancy that Bonifacio was able to talk to Nakamura on a near-daily basis: even though the concept does not exist in Japanese culture, Nakamura seemed to have been influenced by the Madrids on the concept of paglililihi, as he had mangoes delivered to Kidapawan from as far away as Pikit. Bonifacio would go to Lanao and pick the mangoes up from Nakamura himself. Nakamura doted on his wife throughout her pregnancy.

Sadly, Nakamura would not live to see his daughter born. At some point in the War, the Japanese command in the Philippines ordered reinforcements from all over the country, and the detachment in Kidapawan was among those ordered to move. Nakamura led his men as they made their way to Davao.

From the Madrid family's account, Nakamura was convinced several times by the locals to leave the Imperial army and go into hiding, especially considering how he now had a family in Kidapawan. Among those who offered him a place to hide were the Pamintuan, with whom Nakamura became friends.

However, Nakamura rejected these offers and insisted that as a commanding officer, he could not leave his men behind, and if that meant he was to march to his death, then he would die with his men.

Rosalina and her family never found out where Nakamura died – all they had were rumors that he and his men were somewhere in Mt Apo, waving a white flag at the American raid planes, which subsequently bombed them in spite of their surrender. There were also rumors that some of his men died as their carrier ship was torpedoed by the Americans. In any case, the Madrids never found his body. His daughter Nelly, who was born on August 24, 1944,

never knew her father's face, and she had to carry her mother's surname as there was no father to give legal permission for her to use his surname on her birth certificate^[39].

Today, Hayao Nakamura lives on in Kidapawan only in the memories of a few elderly citizens (his daughter Nelly herself already growing old). With the death of Bonifacio Madrid, a few months after he was interviewed for this study, there is now no one in Kidapawan left who met Nakamura personally.

Guerilla Outfits and Kidapawan's Liberation

As is consistent with its history, Kidapawan, and North Cotabato was never fully occupied by the Japanese during the Second World War. Resistance ensued from the moment the Japanese entered and would be relentless until they were driven out.

The occurrence of individual and sporadic acts of defiance to the Japanese like the previously mentioned Kollut poisoning in Maliri and Kamasi not only characterized Kidapawan but the whole of North Cotabato in general, making it one of the cradles of the resistance movement in Mindanao and the resulting liberation.

The surrender to the Japanese of General William Sharp, commander of the American force in Mindanao, on May 10, 1942, nominally put Mindanao under Japanese control. However, since most of his men and much of the island refused to surrender, Mindanao remained, as it always was, a stage for continued resistance.

One of Sharp's subordinates, Lt. Col. Wendell Fertig, evaded capture and eventually emerged as the leading figure of the remaining American forces. Fertig managed to consolidate the myriad guerrilla outfits all over Mindanao into a coherent – if loose – organization.

A major such outfit that had achieved considerable organizational sophistication was the Bolo Battalion, led by Salipada Pendatun and Udtog Matalam, and operated in the Cotabato region. Many veterans in Kidapawan belonged to this outfit such as Patadon Tungao, Abubakar Guiama, and Paidu Dumacon (who would later serve as the first barrio lieutenant of Kidapawan's Poblacion). Moreover, this outfit instigated those described above short-lived

39 On a side note, Nelly and Bonifacio, like many other members of the Madrid family, were Sillimanians

retaking of Kidapawan in 1942, which Uldarico Baclagon recorded.

The Cotabato area, according to Kent Holmes in *Wendell Fertig and His Guerrilla Forces in the Philippines: Fighting the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945*, fell under the 106th Division of what would become the 10th Military District of the United State Forces in the Philippines (USFIP). This is consistent with Emmanuel Paclibar's recollection that his grandfather Jacinto was attached to the 118th Infantry Regiment, one of the 106th's component units. This Division was largely composed of the Bolo Battalion, which had been absorbed by the Allied Forces under Fertig^[40].

Because no documents on Kidapawan contemporary to the Second World War could be found, like the specifics of the Japanese presence in the town, it is difficult to paint a clearer picture of the arrangements of the resistance movement in the three or so years that Kidapawan was under Japanese occupation.

The extant documentation in the town has only been written after the War, most written much later and documented from the oral recollections. It is difficult to verify these accounts, and subsequent unwritten accounts, in the absence of contemporary records^[41].

The most reliable documentary source on the resistance administration says precious little about the War in Kidapawan. The 1952 Cotabato Guidebook contains an account of the resistance movement in Cotabato written by Capt. Pedro C. Morales, who narrates how Salipada Pendatun and his brother-in-law, Udtog Matalam, organized the resistance in the province, establishing their headquarters in Maridagao.

Morales does point out that the province had many independent guerrilla outfits, and it took time to organize them. It seems that the area of Pikit, Kabacan, and Kidapawan fell under the direct control of the Matalam-Pendatun forces, as Morales describes a respite for their troops after the campaigns there (Uldarico Baclagon's account of the brief liberation of M'lang and Kidapawan fill in where Morales does not elaborate). At some point, Pendatun besieged Bukidnon and was able to build a defence line in Linabo. "The Salipada-Udtog forces," writes Morales, "were now in control of the whole

40 Prior to the absorption, the Bolo Battalion had proclaimed Pendatun a Brigadier General. Holmes discusses the negotiations between Fertig and Pendatun.

41 Relying on such sources has its perils. In the 1989 Souvenir Program, for instance, there is a list of mayors, the first five of whom were supposedly appointed during the War. But sources who were alive during the War, both verbally and in documentary form, have since refuted some of these details – Erlinda Villanueva Asuelo, for instance, says her father Ceferino Villanueva was mayor until the 1947 elections, contrary to what the 1984 Souvenir Program says, which only gives his term at 1945.

territory from Linabo in Bukidnon to Kidapawan in Cotabato.” When the forces were reorganized as the “Bukidnon-Cotabato Force,” Pendatun was made Brigadier-General by its staff of officers. In February 1943, this force was accepted as a unit of Fertig’s 10th Military District.

As mentioned previously, the resistance movement established a “Civil Emergency Administration” in M’lang, headed by Jacinto Paclibar. The nature of this Administration remains unclear. The 1952 Cotabato Guidebook contains a directory of prominent personalities in the then-undivided Cotabato province. Among them is Paclibar, who is indeed cited as the head of this Civil Emergency Administration. However, in the director is Alfonso Angeles Sr., listed as having served as “Mayor of Upper Cotabato Sector” in 1942. As the other primary source on the War, Uldarico Baclagon does not mention Angeles (or any civilian official for that matter), I have yet to clarify what this position or this sectoring system entailed, how it related to the Civil Emergency Administration, and who the other officials were. In general, the resistance movement’s local government arrangements – organized in opposition to that set up by the Japanese and the Second Republic – remain poorly understood.

The directory of the 1952 Cotabato Guidebook also identifies several personalities in Kidapawan who played important roles during the War: Froilan M. Matas, a member of the US Navy who organized a guerrilla outfit (he would later serve as the deputy governor of Cotabato and the founding mayor of the Municipality of Magpet), Primo B. Balatayo, who was an investigator for the Enemy Property Custodian of the US Army before he joined the guerrillas under Fertig (he was Kidapawan’s Municipal secretary at the time of the guidebook’s publication, a post he would hold for many years), Amador A. Anque Sr. of M’lang, who was a First Sergeant in the guerrillas before becoming the detachment commander in M’lang (he would be the first elected mayor of M’lang).

In the same guidebook is Madrid’s essay on Kidapawan, which says a little about what happened to the town during the War (Madrid, whose niece Rosalina was married to Hayao Nakamura, was a contemporary to the War). As mentioned, Madrid discussed the War in terms of evacuees.

What is revealing about Madrid’s very brief account is what can be inferred from it: he mentions that most of the evacuees brought by the War were from Davao, “which was wholly occupied by the Japanese.” I suspect

that this implies contrast to Kidapawan, consistent with my speculation that Kidapawan, with its many guerrilla strongholds, was poorly held by the Japanese.

Indeed, according to Morales' account of the war in the 1952 Guidebook, there were few Japanese forces in Cotabato by the time the liberation forces landed in Parang on April 17, 1945. From Cotabato, they proceeded inland. Morales ends his account of the liberation with the arrival of the forces in Kabacan on June 24.

As mentioned, Uldarico Baclagon recorded Kidapawan being initially liberated in 1942, but again being retaken by the Japanese in 1943. The varying accounts on the liberation of Kidapawan (which imply that Kidapawan was liberated much earlier than the rest of the region), Pedro Morales' account of the movements of the Bolo Battalion, accounts of continued Japanese presence in Lanao and Poblacion, and the hint given by the recorded case of Valentin Turtal, all corroborate this picture. The Japanese detachment in the center of Kidapawan – and the local government it propped up – would continue functioning in one form or another until the end of the War, with the resistance concentrated for the most part in M'lang.

Oral accounts indicate that the Japanese, under Hayao Nakamura, offered little resistance when this happened, partly due to the pullout order on the Japanese to reinforce the siege in Leyte.

According to Erlinda Villanueva Asuelo, the Americans stayed in Kidapawan for a few months after the Liberation, setting up garrison on the property of Ceferino Villanueva in Poblacion (an area along the highway that stretched from the current Diamond Street eastward to the old Shell gasoline station). Villanueva Asuelo names the commanding officer of that garrison as a Major Finney^[42].

Villanueva Asuelo recalled how the American soldiers were then reassigned to Davao. She recounted how, as a token of gratitude for allowing the American soldiers to set up garrison in their property, Finney had the Villanuevas brought to Davao, where they were hosted to dinner.

After the War, Ceferino Villanueva would be appointed as the interim mayor, serving for an indefinite period of time (and with other officials whose names are now lost to the town's memory) until the election of 1947, Kidapawan's first municipal election. During the election, the mayor

42 I have yet to identify who this Major Finney was.

of the enigmatic “Upper Cotabato Sector,” Alfonso Angeles Sr., would emerge as Kidapawan’s first elected mayor. At the same time, Datu Siawan Ingal, the municipal district president since 1914 (and whose role during the war remains unclear) became Kidapawan’s first ever vice mayor.

CONCLUDING NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The people of Kidapawan had diverse experiences during the Second World War, just as the town itself saw different realities at different points in the brief duration of Japanese occupation. These diversity of experiences, ranging from suffering to romance, have equally shaped the people of Kidapawan in different ways.

Kidapawan had the character of being a haven for guerrillas and a place where people from elsewhere sought refuge. The large influx of refugees led to a marked increase in population and land ownership complications as squatting proliferated, a problem that dominated local politics in the years just after the War. This increase in population, mostly by Settlers, accelerated the original tribal political structure’s decline, which characterized Kidapawan’s local government since its founding as Municipal District. By the end of the War, the tribal people had been marginalized as Kidapawan became a predominantly colonial town.

The Obo Monuvu people nevertheless resisted the Japanese just as much as the Settlers did, most notably in the form of the clever Kollut poisonings, but mostly by members of the tribe making themselves scarce.

Atrocities by the Japanese were recounted, ranging from murder to theft of crops and forced labor. Notable cases included the assassination of Eliseo Dayao, the hostage of puppet mayor Filomeno Blanco, and the Japanese’s reports of cannibalism in Kamasi and Maliri recalled by Datu Lamberto Delfin. The torture of Datu Patadon Tungao, which happened in Cotabato and Manila, reveals that a better understanding of a town’s local history often reveals historical details about other towns and locales. Patadon’s detailed account of his torture offers useful information to any historian seeking to form a clearer picture of the Second World War as it unfolded in Maguindanao.

The atrocities in Kidapawan (as informants recalled them) were concentrated in the early periods of occupation, and various informants observed a trend of Japanese “mellowing” in their treatment of locals. Central

to this shift in attitude was Captain Hayao Nakamura, whose love affair and subsequent marriage to local Rosalina Madrid played a significant role in his subordinates’ better treatment of locals. It would be no exaggeration to say that many people in Kidapawan today would never have been born if not for this love affair, as the Japanese may have well killed their ancestors. However, the tragic end that Nakamura met reveals that even the Japanese were victims in the War they instigated. War, to quote Patadon Tungao, was the common destiny and misfortune which made all the people of Kidapawan brothers and sisters.

Overall, the Japanese had a fragile hold over Kidapawan and, at a relatively short time, lost it as early as 1942 and never entirely held it as the guerrillas remained so near in M’lang. This is partly due to Kidapawan’s large rural or forested area and the still weak presence of the national government in what was then an Obo Monuvu dominated Municipal District. Japanese hold was so weak that, although the Japanese set up a puppet local government headed by Filomeno Blanco, resistance-backed local governments were recorded, in the form of a “Civil Emergency Administration” and the appointment of a “Mayor of Upper Cotabato” in the person of Alfonso Angeles Sr., (the details of which, however, were not adequately recorded and remained unclear). When the War ended, there was not much to liberate in Kidapawan.

These diverse effects of the War on Kidapawan’s peoples would be felt long after the War, shaping local politics and society for decades. Many war veterans would go on to pursue political careers, while the dynamics between the indigenous Obo Monuvu and the Settlers would be permanently altered. The details of these changes are the subjects of further study. Implications on the concepts of Imminent Domain and Right of Conquest, as well as inter-ethnic relations, are of particular interest.

Most of the accounts in the present study were sourced from local oral memory, with one instance recounted just months before the informant died. It is my hope that more local history (not just in Kidapawan and not just during the Second World War) will be recorded, that we may have a better understanding of our communities and their developments.

It is my further hope that the incidents recorded here are taken up by artists – writers, visual artists, filmmakers – as material for their art to popularize and deepen the discourse into these incidents. The act of

collective remembering is a constant process; it only begins with recording. It hope that this process begins for Kidapawan's memories of the War.

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KEY INFORMANTS

Abad Ladday
Abdulrahman Abubakar
Bonifacio Madrid
Datu Basinon Ebboy
Datu Lamberto Delfin (through Datu Melchor Umpan Bayawan)
Datu Melchor Umpan Bayawan
Delia Dumacon Hassan
Eugenio Galay Jr
Elma Dayao Yaoto
Emmanuel Paclibar
Erlinda Aresgado Sibug
Erlinda Villanueva Asuelo
Leticia Mijarez Lumanog
Magdalena Saniel Cruz
Nelly Madrid (Nakamura)
Renante Canlas
Rosita Blanco Cadungog

PICTURES



Figure 1: Kidapawan in Mindanao and in North Cotabato (Map courtesy of Kidapawan City Tourism Office)



Figure 2: Eliseo Dayao Sr (Photo courtesy of Elma Dayao Yaoto)



Figure 3: Filomeno Blanco (Photo courtesy of Kidapawan City Tourism Office)



Figure 4: Sheikh Abubakar Guiama Al-Haj, with wife Hadja Halima Bagundang
(Photo courtesy of the Abubakar Family)



Figure 5: Datu Patadon Tungao (Photo courtesy of Mike Piang-Llanillo Patadon)