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The

# PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION



By  
*Gregorio F. Zaide*

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# THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION

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By

Gregorio F. Zaide, Ph.D.

Author of *History of the Katipunan*, *Philippine Political and Cultural History* (2 vols.), *Philippine History For High Schools*, and *Philippine History For Elementary Schools*.

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By

GREGORIO F. ZAIDE

## PREFACE

This book is a general history of the Philippine Revolution. The term *Philippine Revolution*, as commonly used in the annals of the Philippines, means the arduous and stirring libertarian struggle of the Filipino people, first, against Spain, and, secondly, against the United States. It covers a brief, but colorful, period—from 1872 marking the martyrdom of Fathers Gomez, Burgos, and Zamora and the emergence of the Propaganda Movement to 1902, the year of General Malvar's surrender symbolic of the end of the War of Philippine Independence.

This revolutionary period, spanning only a narrow chasm of twenty years, is the Golden Age of Philippine history. It is a thrilling epoch written in the blood, sweat, and tears of a liberty-loving Asian nation. It is a pageant-tric tale of freedom, aflame with a people's burning zeal for independence; an unforgettable story of the First Philippine Republic, the first Asian democracy to loom in history's limelight; and a picturesque drama of Filipino heroes and martyrs, true apostles of Asian liberty.

The author has spent more than twenty-five years of laborious research and patient study in the preparation of this book. Most of the materials have been taken from primary sources—the memoirs and letters of the protagonists, the documents and newspapers of the times, and the documentary compilations, such as Taylor's *Philippine Insurgent Records*, Teodoro M. Kalaw's *Documentos constitucionales sobre Filipinas*, Maximo M. Kalaw's *Philippine States Papers*, Retana's *Archivo del bifliofilo filipino*, *Congressional Record* (Vols. 32 and 35), *House Documents* (56th and 57th Congress), and *Senate Documents* (56th and 57th Congress). To a certain extent, needed materials have been obtained from reputable secondary sources, such as Ataviado's *Lucha y Libertad* (1941, 2 vols.), T. M. Kalaw's *Philippine Revolution* (1925), LeRoy's *The Americans in the Philippines* (1914, 2 vols.), L. H. Fernandez'

*The Philippine Republic* (1926), E. de los Santos' biographical sketches of Bonifacio, Jacinto, and M. H. del Pilar (1918), M. M. Kalaw's *The Development of Philippine Politics* (1926), Manuel Artigas' *Andres Bonifacio y el Katipunan* (1911), and Jose P. Santos, *Buhay at Mga Sinulat ni Emilio Jacinto* (1935).

The first draft of this book was originally finished in December, 1941 shortly before the Japanese invasion of the Philippines. And during the three dark years of the enemy occupation, the author leisurely revised it and enriched its footnotes by additional readings. When liberation came, further alterations and additions were made on the original manuscript, and brought the discussion of the revolutionary events and personalities as up-to-date as humanly possible. History is, indeed, a dynamic study. From time to time, more and more historical facts about the past are discovered by indefatigable researchers and scholars. It is, therefore, to be expected that more things pertaining to the Philippine Revolution will appear in the future. This book, at least, is a sincere attempt to furnish the Filipinos and the foreigners a general, harmonized, humanized, and interpretative history of the Philippine Revolution as known to date, with copious footnotes and biographical sketches and a good working bibliography.

The author is especially grateful to General Emilio Aguinaldo, General Artemio Ricarte, General Pantaleon Garcia, General Juan Cailles, Dr. Pio Valenzuela, Gregoria de Jesus (widow of A. Bonifacio), Esperidiona Bonifacio (sister of Bonifacio), Atty. Teodoro Gonzalez (Katipunan member), P. Briccio Pantas (another member of the Katipunan), Macario Masangkay (Bonifacio's friend), Marina Dizon (President of the Katipunan's women section), Teresa Magbanua (only woman general in the Visayas), Lt. Col. Agapito Zialcita, and other participants of the Revolution for furnishing him with valuable information and unpublished anecdotes.

Grateful acknowledgment is also expressed to his associates and friends—Mr. Jose P. Santos, Professor Esteban

A. de Ocampo, Professor Filemon Guerra, and Professor Faustino Bugante—for their kind suggestions and constant interest during the writing of this book.

And to his wife, the author can find no appropriate words to express his deepest appreciation for inspiring him to finish the manuscript and for helping him in proof-reading the chapters and footnotes during the printing stage.

For any error in fact or judgment that may be found in this book, the author is solely responsible.

In conclusion, the author sincerely requests the fastidious and discerning readers for constructive suggestions which may further improve the book in subsequent editions; and for such helpful assistance the author will be eternally indebted and will, most assuredly, remember them in his prayers to Divine Providence. For if man is often-times ungrateful, God is always grateful.

—G. F. Z.



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# THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION

## CHAPTER I

### PRELUDE TO REVOLUTION

*"The noble Spanish people, so jealous of their rights and liberties, cannot bid the Filipinos to renounce their own. A people who boast of the glories of their past cannot ask another, trained by them, to accept abjection and to dishonor their own name."*

—Jose Rizal

By the nineteenth century, the once proud mistress of the world, Spain, fell into a state of apathy and decadence.<sup>1</sup> The glamour of her dashing conquistadores, the crusading zeal of her missionaries, and the effervescence of her hidalgic culture which formerly bloomed amid imperial splendor—all had vanished on the wings of time. Naught but poignant memories of her glorious past remained like haunting echoes of an old song to remind mankind of the grandeur that was Spain.

**Twilight of Spanish Empire.** At the height of her power, Spain exulted over the fact that "the sun never set on her soil." There was justification for such a grandiloquent assertion because her far-flung colonies girdled both the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres. Sunrise in Madrid was early afternoon of the preceding day in Manila, halfway around the world. In area and extent the Spanish Empire "far surpassed anything the world had then seen."<sup>2</sup>

In the long course of time, Spain's might and glory faded and the slumbrous shadows of decadence darkened her realm. Gradually she slipped into a second-rate power because of the exhaustion of her naval and military strength, the ineptitude of her monarchs and statesmen, and the impoverishment of her people. One by one, like falling beads from a broken rosary,

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<sup>1</sup> E. W. Latimer, *Spain in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, 1897), pp. 9-13. Vide also A. Ramos Oliveria, *Politics, Economics and Men of Modern Spain* (London, 1946, translated from Spanish by T. Hall), pp. 7-16.

<sup>2</sup> Edward G. Bourne, "Historical Introduction," Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands* (Cleveland, 1903), Vol. I, p. 22.

her overseas possessions separated from her crumbling empire. Paraguay became independent in 1811; Argentina in 1816; Chile in 1818; Colombia and Ecuador in 1819; Mexico, the Dominican Republic, the Central American republics (Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua), and Venezuela in 1821; Peru in 1824; and Bolivia and Uruguay in 1825.<sup>3</sup>

The loss of the Latin American colonies should have taught Spain a lesson. She should have awakened from her Quixotic lassitude, revitalized her decadent people, and liberalized her colonial policies in order to conserve her remaining ultramarine territories—Cuba and Puerto Rico in the New World and the Philippines, Carolines, and Marianas in the Pacific. Apparently, she was beyond saving; she continued to browse in the twilight of her imperial glory, and thus she disintegrated as a world power.

**Decline of Colonial Administration.** Spain's decadence was felt keenly in the marked decline of her colonial administration. The officials she sent to the colonies, especially to the Philippines, were mostly corrupt and incompetent. The colonial government, including the courts and the civil service, was honeycombed with inefficiency and graft. The natives suffered oppression and repression from tyrannical Spanish authorities. They had no freedom of speech, of the press, and of religion; neither were they free from fear and from want. Any colonial patriot who dared champion his people's cause was immediately liquidated, because death, exile, or imprisonment was the fate of anyone who opposed the sacrosanct will or caprice of the government officials.

The system of financing was archaic and unscientific. The government levied taxes based on **persons** rather than on **property**. It taxed necessities and exempted luxuries, laying the burden of taxation principally on the poor. Of the revenues collected annually, the salaries of the officials and the support of the Church consumed the lion's share, while little was appropriated for education, health, and public works.

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<sup>3</sup> J. Fred Rippy, *Historical Evolution of Hispanic America* (New York, 1941), pp. 133-160; Hutton Webster and Roland D. Hussey, *History of Latin America* (Boston, 1941), pp. 125-135; and Tom B. Jones and Donald Beatty, *An Introduction to Hispanic American History* (New York, 1950), pp. 260-277.

Colonial economy was in a state of pathetic neglect. The country, potentially rich in natural resources, remained undeveloped. Commerce, trade, industry, transportation, and communication begged for a boost from colonial administrators. Foreign traders were unwelcomed, and progressive economic ideas were tabu. Although foreign commerce was permitted by law, the colonial officials made feeble attempts to promote foreign markets for exports.

Colonial life was pastorally dreamy amid Arcadian rustic air and simple Christian atmosphere. On the surface, it appeared quiet and contented. The arrogant Spanish masters and their mestizo satellites strutted everywhere—in churches, offices, and the streets, and enjoyed a baronial life of ease and comfort; while the brown natives, who labored in farms and mills, relieved the monotony of their hard life only with colorful fiestas, drinking sprees, and *pintakasi* (cockfights). Beneath such outward langour of colonial life, however, seethed the forces of discontent and restlessness nurtured in oppression, racial discrimination, and bad government.

**Instability in Philippine Affairs.** The last decades of the 19th century revealed brewing storms in Spanish politics as shown in the rise and fall of ministries, the adoption of several constitutions, and the periodic debacles of political parties. From 1834 to 1862, Spain adopted four constitutions, organized twenty-eight parliaments, and installed 529 ministers with portfolios, only to be changed and reshuffled in succeeding years by frequent revolutions and party strifes.<sup>4</sup>

Frequent changes in the Madrid Government adversely affected Philippine affairs because of constant shifts in colonial policies and officialdom. From 1835 to 1897, for instance, the Philippines had had fifty governors-general, each serving an average term of one year and three months.<sup>5</sup> At one time, from December, 1853 to November, 1854—a period of less than a year—there had been four governors-general, two of whom were regularly appointed and the other two on temporary assignment.

<sup>4</sup> Feodor Jagor, *Travels in the Philippines* (London, 1875), p. 388, note.

<sup>5</sup> James A. LeRoy, *The Americans in the Philippines* (Boston and New York, 1914), Vol. I, p. 52.

A story was told of a Spanish jurist who was appointed as *oidor* (justice) of the Royal Audiencia of Manila.<sup>6</sup> He left Spain with his family, taking the longer route via the Cape of Good Hope. Upon arrival in Manila in 1850, he was surprised to find another jurist occupying his position. During the time he was leisurely voyaging via the Cape, the ministry fell in Madrid and another one which succeeded it named his successor, who traveled by way of the Isthmus of Suez and reached Manila earlier.

Indefiniteness of tenure in colonial officialdom, especially as regards the office of the governor-general, hampered the political and economic development of the Philippines. No sooner had one governor-general laid down his programme than another was appointed to take his place. No executive, no matter how good he was, could accomplish anything under such condition.

**Corrupt Colonial Officialdom.** Added to the uncertainty of office tenure which caused impotency in the administration, the colonial officials, from the governor-general down to the office clerk, were rotten to the core—a far cry from their able predecessors of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.

Many Spanish governors-general of the 19th century symbolized Spain's decrepitude; they were tactless and venal executives who bungled the colonial affairs and elicited the odium of the native subjects. Governor Rafael de Izquierdo (1871-73) was a boastful and fanatical reactionary who aroused the ire of the whole country for the execution of Fathers Gomez, Burgos, and Zamora. His successor, Admiral Jose Malcampo (1874-77), though a successful Moro fighter, was an inept and weak administrator. General Fernando Primo de Rivera, governor-general for two terms (1880-83 and 1897-98), enriched himself by tolerating graft and gambling in Manila.<sup>7</sup> General Valeriano Weyler (1888-91), a cruel and ruthless governor-general, came to Manila a poor man and returned to Spain a millionaire.<sup>8</sup> To the

<sup>6</sup> Jagor, *op. cit.*, p. 338, note.

<sup>7</sup> According to Frederic H. Sawyer, an Englishman who resided in Manila from 1877 to 1892, General Primo de Rivera received bribes from the gambling houses in Manila which he scandalously permitted to operate. (*The Inhabitants of the Philippines*, London, 1900, p. 17.)

<sup>8</sup> Sawyer, *op. cit.*, p. 20.



Filipinos, he was a "tyrant" because of his ejection of the Calamba tenants, including the Rizal family, at the point of the bayonet and the burning of their homes. He was the very Weyler, whom the Cubans odiously called "Butcher" for his inhuman "reconcentration policy", during his brief governorship in Cuba in 1896 which caused the death of thousands of Cubans.<sup>9</sup> General Camilo de Polavieja (1896-97), another Spanish governor-general, won the eternal displeasure of the Filipino people by signing the death sentence of Rizal.

The rest of the colonial officials were just as corrupt and degenerate as the chief executives. With the loss of Mexico and other Spanish colonies in the New World, job-seekers and penniless sycophants from Spain flocked to the Philippines to grab lucrative positions as those of provincial governors, district judges, and bureau chiefs. Most of them were relatives or protégés of influential grandees and high-ranking officials in Madrid. Although ignorant, profligate, inexperienced, and incompetent, these impecunious men from Spain were given important offices in the colonial government for no other reason than their Spanish lineage, white skin, and political connections. They came to the Philippines bent on amassing a fortune, which aim they generally accomplished through grafts or marriages with rich Filipino heiresses.

As early as 1820, Tomas de Comyn bewailed the fact that ignorant barbers and lackeys were appointed provincial governors, and rough sailors and soldiers were named district magistrates and garrison commanders.<sup>10</sup>

**Filipinos Denied the Blessings of Democracy.** With the exception of three brief periods—1810-13, 1820-23, and 1834-37—the Philippines was unrepresented in the Cortes, the Spanish parliament. The Spanish Constitution of 1876 granted both Cuba and Puerto Rico representation in the Cortes, but not the Philippines. The Filipinos held this as a great grievance against Spain.

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<sup>9</sup> Fitzhugh Lee, Joseph Wheeler, Theodore Roosevelt, and Richard Wainwright, *Cuba's Struggle Against Spain* (New York, 1899), pp. 129-132.

<sup>10</sup> *Estado de las Islas Filipinas en 1810* (Madrid, 1820), p. 134.

All laws emanated from the king, many of which were good only on paper. The governors-general, sabotaging in many cases the royal wish, were indifferent to those laws. The Spaniards in Spain enjoyed freedom of speech, of the press, of association, and other human rights which were denied to the Filipinos. Such inconsistency was noticed by Sinibaldo de Mas, who remarked in 1843: "Why do we fall into an anomaly, such as combining our claim for liberty for ourselves, and our wish at the same time to impose our law on remote peoples? Why do we deny to others the benefit which we desire for our fatherland?"<sup>11</sup>

A bamboo curtain, figuratively speaking, isolated the Philippines then from the world of modern ideas. The Spanish authorities maintained strict censorship on all books and periodicals, and banned those which were anti-Spanish and irreligious. Liberal ideas from abroad as found in the writings of Rousseau, Voltaire, Robespierre, Jefferson, Bentham, and other advocates of democracy were outlawed. Foreign travelers were rigidly searched at the customs and spied upon during their sojourn in the colony for fear of their being carriers of liberal ideologies. Any Filipino, who was known to have entertained liberal views or dared to criticize the Spanish officials was persecuted, if not outrightly liquidated.

**Maladministration of Justice.** One grave defect of Spanish rule in the Philippines was the maladministration of justice. The courts were notoriously corrupt, and were, veritably, courts of injustice. The judges, the fiscals, the *escribanos* (law clerks), and other court officials were ignorant, inept, and venal.

Justice was slow, costly, and partial. Poor persons had no access to the courts for inability to meet the heavy burden of litigation. Money, social prestige, and skin color were preponderant factors in winning a litigation. A rich man, by his wealth and social preeminence, or a Spaniard, by his white skin, usually turned the verdict to his side, irrespective of the merits of the case. To be brought to court in litigation was to the people a great calamity. The expenses incurred even in a simple lawsuit

<sup>11</sup> *Informe sobre el estado de las Filipinas en 1842* (Madrid, 1843), Vol. III. Cf. Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. LII, p. 89.