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NICOLAS ZAFRA

EDITOR'S NOTE

In a contest conducted by the Philippine Government in 1947-48 a manuscript entitled *The Revolt of the Masses* by Teodoro Agoncillo was adjudged the best entry. Because of the controversial character of the book, the Philippine Government as such has refrained from publishing it but it has been published instead by the College of Liberal Arts of the University of the Philippines. The volume bears as frontispiece a letter from Tomas S. Fonacier, Dean of the College, under date of 12 May 1956 in which he calls the book "a public document which is of great value to a proper understanding of the cultural history of the Philippines."

We present here an examination of the book by Professor Nicolas Zafra, Chairman of the Department of History of the University of the Philippines, in collaboration with the following members of that Department: Professors Guadalupe Forés-Ganzon and Josefa M. Saniel and Misses Donata V. Tayl6 and Juliana A. Saltiva.

Parts of this critique have appeared in abbreviated form in *The Manila Times* during the month of October 1956. We are grateful to the Editor of the *Times* for kind permission to reprint.

THE book entitled *The Revolt of the Masses*¹ is a painstaking and valiant attempt of a Filipino scholar to trace one of the most dramatic episodes in Philippine history—the birth and growth of the Katipunan and the significant

¹ Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses: the Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan*, Quezon City: University of the Philippines, College of Liberal Arts, 1956. Pp. xv, 456, notes and appendices.

role its members played in the revolt against Spain in 1896-97. The approach is in the main biographical. The author tells the story of the Katipunan movement, using the life and career of Andrés Bonifacio as the center and core of the story.

The picture which such a story presents must needs be drawn on a background of Philippine society during the latter part of the nineteenth century. His "Night over the Philippines" (Chapter 1), "The Awakening" (Chapter 2), "Canes and Paper Fans" (Chapter 5) are devoted to furnishing a historical background for the main event in the story. The rest of the book, with the exception of the concluding chapter, deals with a narration of the Katipunan from its birth to the tragic end of its founder at Mt. Buntis on 10 May 1897. Prominent in the narrative are Bonifacio's activities as founder, recruiter, and leader of the organization.

I

As a work of historical scholarship *The Revolt of the Masses* has many commendable features. While essentially the author has added no new fact to the already-known story of the Katipunan and its founder, he has by diligent search and critical examination of historical records and by fresh appraisal of statements of living participants of the movement effected a more complete and clearer understanding of some parts in the story than earlier writers on the subject have done. Through use of fresh evidence, he has also corrected some minor errors in the earlier works and he has attempted to clear up some hitherto obscure or controversial points in the career of Bonifacio. Chapters 3 and 4 touching on the events leading to the trial and death of Bonifacio are perhaps the meritorious portions of the book. In them are proofs of the painstaking effort and diligence of the author in gathering source material.

It must be said, however, with due respect to the author, that the work has serious defects and imperfections. It suffers from errors of omission and commission.

To the earnest and serious minded student of history, the feature of the book that is most vulnerable to valid criticism is the ill-concealed bias and contempt with which the author has dealt with certain elements and facets of Philippine history. This is particularly noticeable in his references to the religious orders. The impression that the reader gets from a reading of the book is that the friars did nothing worthwhile or uplifting among the Filipinos. In everything that they did, even in such things as the study of Philippine languages, they are represented as actuated by none but base, selfish and ignoble motives. We are made to understand that all they were interested in was to keep the Filipinos ignorant, docile, superstitious.

Such a view is, of course, unfair and unjust to the religious orders. The friars, collectively and individually, had their faults and foibles (what human being or human organization does not have its share of human frailty?). At the same time it must be recognized, and the record abundantly proves it, that the religious orders contributed not a little to the material and cultural welfare of the Filipino people and that in undertaking their assigned mission they were moved by noble and unselfish motives.

Prejudice has a way of distorting a man's understanding and sense of values. A biased mind has a tendency to see only the faults and vices of men and institutions and to blind itself to the brighter and nobler sides of their nature. It is true that a historian can not very well free himself entirely and completely from his likes and dislikes, but if he is really sincere and honest in his desire to understand the truths of the past, he should make an effort to detach himself from his prejudices. This is an obligation which a historian, if he is true to the ideals and standards of his craft, imposes scrupulously upon himself.

II

The author assumes quite correctly that the Philippine Revolution was the culmination of the nationalistic movement

and aspirations of the Filipino people. To substantiate that view, he presents in the first chapter ("Night over the Philippines") a general survey of Philippine history intended to provide a historical background for the Katipunan and the subsequent revolt. How adequate is this survey?

The most charitable thing that can be said of it is that it is inadequate and unsatisfactory. Remote and isolated events, some 300 years before the Katipunan came into being, are telescoped into the pattern of the 19th century, giving the impression that the Filipino nationalists of the latter part of the 19th century had these events in mind as "grievances" against the Spanish administration. The fact that many of the conditions had changed and that the policies which had brought them about had been revoked long before the Katipunan came into being must necessarily weaken the author's implied causal background of the Revolution. Had the author been less bent on conjuring up a picture of "an age of political chicanery and social hypocrisy" (p. 19) out of remote incidents too early to have influenced the thinking of the Filipinos of the period of the Revolution, and had he drawn instead a true picture of Philippine society during the period under study, the cause-effect relationship would have been clearer and stronger. That reforms were attempted during the period was part of the true picture. The author's silence on this matter makes his "background" treatment open to criticism as one pre-determined by personal bias.

From another angle, the author's survey of the historical background of the Katipunan movement is subject to criticism. Since the author has ventured to include in his survey the entire Spanish period, he is expected to tell his readers something of the origin of nationalism in the Philippines, to indicate what the factors and forces were which in one way or another contributed to its growth. This the author has not done. He overlooks or ignores the fact that certain historic forces played a vital role in the formation of the Filipinos into

a nation: for example Christianity, the educational system, and the governmental agencies that Spain established in the Philippines. It can not be ignored that these factors contributed in no small degree to the development of Philippine nationalism. What role each of these factors played is familiar enough to every well-informed student of Philippine history.

Christianity produced in the Philippines, as it did in other lands, notable changes in the ways of life of the people. For one thing, it gave the Filipino Christians a new set of moral and religious values. Under the influence of the new Faith, they turned away from certain customs and practices some of which had been deeply rooted in their lives. At the same time, Christianity strengthened many of their traits and virtues—their love of home, their hospitality, their innate courtesy, their sense of loyalty to constituted authority, their spirit of cooperation, the respect of children towards parents, and, above all, their love of freedom.

That Christianity raised the moral and intellectual stature of the Filipinos was the considered judgment of many foreign authors. The distinguished English scholar, John Crawford, expressed himself on this point in these words:

The natives of the Philippines who are Christians possess a share of energy and intelligence, not only superior to their pagan and Mohammedan brothers of the same islands, but superior also to all the western inhabitants of the Archipelago, to the very people who in other periods of their history, bestowed laws, language and civilization upon them.²

Christianity, moreover, impressed upon the Filipinos the reality of the worth and dignity of the individual as a child of God, endowed with free will and at liberty to develop his powers to the fullest extent for his own benefit and for the welfare of his countrymen. We have in these ideas the source of the notion of country or nation as well as the basis of a sane and sound democracy. It can well be said that Christianity,

² *History of the Indian Archipelago* (Edinburgh 1820) II, 277-278.

apart from the changes it effected in the social and spiritual life of the Filipinos, implanted in Philippine soil the seeds of nationalism and democracy.

The educational system that Spain established in the Philippines, with all its shortcomings and imperfections, contributed much to the political and cultural make-up of the Filipino people. It was in the schools with their emphasis on moral and religious instruction that the Filipinos acquired those elements and facets of Western civilization which made the Filipino pattern of culture quite distinct from that of the Malays in other parts of Malaysia. In the schools, too, the Filipinos learned a new alphabet and a new language. With these valuable acquisitions, the Filipinos found new tools with which they could strengthen the bonds of union among themselves and through which they could more adequately make known their thoughts, their conditions and their aspirations.

The governmental agencies that Spain established, with all their defects, produced salutary results. They brought together the scattered, separate and independent communities in the Philippines and welded them into a nation. Moreover, under the Spanish colonial administration, the Filipino obtained valuable experience in and knowledge of the governmental ways and practices of Spain. Exposed continuously for years to the actuations and requirements of the Spanish colonial administration, and sharing common experiences in the observance of the laws and orders of that government, the Filipinos acquired national consciousness. They came to learn that they belonged to one country and that they had common interests and common aspirations.

Under the influence of the factors above noted—religious, educational, administrative—the Filipinos developed within a comparatively short time into a nation with a culture basically Christian in character and in spirit. It took many more years, however, for them to acquire that sense of solidarity and that keen sensitiveness to events in their country and awareness of the significance of these events to their lives and fortunes as

a people which provide a basis for a nation-wide dynamic and militant form of nationalism. Conditions existing in the Philippines throughout the 17th and 18th centuries were not favorable to the rapid growth of this type of nationalism. The facilities for travel and communication were quite inadequate. Besides, Spain's policy of commercial restriction and isolation for the Philippines during those centuries tended to keep the Filipino away from the influence of historic changes and developments taking place in other parts of the world. To be sure, the spirit of resistance against alien domination remained alive as the frequent revolts and conspiracies which occurred in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries would show. But these manifestations of militant nationalism were local in scope and character. They did not quite rise up to the character and proportions of a truly nation-wide movement.

This development did not come to pass until the latter part of the 19th century. It was brought about by new historic forces and conditions—the opening of the Philippines to foreign trade and the consequent material and social progress, representation of the Philippines in the Spanish Cortes, improvement of means of travel and communication, administrative and educational reforms, the Spanish Revolution of 1868, and above all the controversy which arose over the Philippine curacies which had for its tragic sequel the execution in 1872 of Fathers Burgos, Gomez and Zamora.

An adequate presentation of these facts and developments of Philippine history is important if the reader is to understand and appreciate the place and significance of the Philippine Revolution as an episode of Philippine history. For the underlying forces and influences which made the Revolution possible had their roots in the past. They can be traced to the workings and operations of the Spanish colonial system in all its various aspects—political, administrative, religious, educational and economic. This fact is recognized and understood well enough by scholars and authorities. Joseph R. Hayden adverted to this fact when he wrote:

Although in practice the Spanish government of the Philippines was in many respects corrupt and demoralizing, yet in theory and profession the colonial system of Spain was fine and uplifting. Spaniards and Filipinos may have failed always to maintain high standards, but those standards were ever before them in the laws and precepts of both the State and the Church. There could be no better evidence that these standards did make an impress upon the Filipino mind than the ultimate rebellion of the Filipinos against Spanish rule.³

III

One feature of the book that the reader can not fail to notice is the author's obsession with the idea of class conflict. He constantly harps on the theme that there was a sharp clash of interests between what he calls the "masses" and the "middle class." For one thing, he gives the reader the impression that the Katipunan revolt was exclusively "the revolt of the masses"; that the "middle class" were interested mainly in the things that would redound to their material welfare; that not only were they unsympathetic with the needs and aspirations of the "masses" but they "betrayed" the cause of the Katipunan as well.

It is regrettable to say that the author's presentation of this aspect of his subject is unsatisfactory, unconvincing, unscholarly. In the first place, there is much confusion in the author's mind as regards his categories. What he calls the "masses" for example can be interpreted in many ways. In one place he speaks of the "broad masses [who] groaned and grew numb under the spell of poverty and profound ignorance" (p. 1). Elsewhere he gives one to understand that the "masses" means "those unsophisticated minds who could not see the various possibilities that might accompany a mode of action" (p. 41), or the group of "aggressive and nationalistic elements of population" (p. 42), or the "victims of subtle or overt exploitation" who were not "accustomed to the intricacies of the rational processes and are moved by the impact of feeling and passion and refuse to see the probable effects of their planned

³ *The Philippines: A Study in National Development* (New York 1850) p. 28.

action" (p. 99), or "the ignorant and starving, . . . confused, hopeless, abused" (p. 278), or simply "the lowest class" (p. 204).

What the author's criterion is by which a person may be identified with the "masses" is obviously not at all clear. Certainly it can not be said that Bonifacio or Jacinto or Arellano or Valenzuela was of the group of those who "groaned and grew numb under the spell of poverty and profound ignorance," or of those "unsophisticated minds who would not see the various possibilities that might accompany a mode of action."

The confusion becomes worse confounded when he speaks of the "middle class." On pages 45-46, Mr. Agoncillo writes:

The Katipunan . . . the idea of a plebeian Andres Bonifacio . . . None of its chartered members were of the middle class. Bonifacio was a laborer; while Arellano, Plata, Diwa, and Diaz were court clerks. Dizon, though not ill-provided, was . . . a small merchant belonging more to the masses than to the intellectual middle class.

Elsewhere, writing of the Liga Filipina, the author tells his readers that the Liga was an organization of "middle class" people, "a sort of caste system from which the unlettered commoners were contemptuously excluded" (p. 282). Since Bonifacio, Arellano and other prominent Katipunan members were at one time or another members also of the Liga Filipina, his contention that "none of the chartered members of the Katipunan were of the middle class" becomes difficult to substantiate.

Elsewhere in his book (p. 98) the author states that a segment of the "middle class" was the "intellectual" group. Now Emilio Jacinto, the "brains of the Katipunan," is represented as coming from the "poor intellectual class." Since Jacinto was truly an "intellectual," it is clear that the author in claiming that he was not of the "middle class" repudiates his own statement that the "intellectual group" represented a segment of the "middle class."

In his efforts to underline his idea that the Revolution was a "class conflict," a "class struggle," the author has, wittingly or unwittingly, drawn a distorted picture of the character of the Philippine Revolution. He seems to have overlooked the important fact that the revolutionary movement was truly national in scope and in character. The persons who participated in it were moved and inspired by a genuine love of country. They came from all classes and elements of the population. Their supreme ideal, the bond of union among them, was freedom and independence for the Philippines from alien domination. It was their cherished hope and aspiration to establish a regime of liberty, justice and democracy in their country. That was the "sacred cause" of the Filipino nationalists. And for that "cause" they were disposed to give generously of their blood and possessions.⁴

That the masses from whose rank and file the Katipunan drew the bulk of its strength and power played a vital role in the struggle for freedom is an established fact of Philippine history on which there need be no controversy. They gave generously of their time, their lives, their meager earnings or their fortunes. It is regrettable that in his attempt to emphasize his idea of "class conflict" and "class struggle," Mr. Agoncillo wrote of his so-called "middle class" in terms of disparagement and reproach, depriving them of the credit and recognition that they justly deserve for their labors and sacrifices on behalf of Philippine freedom. It is his contention that the movement was sparked by a selfish desire on the part of this "class" to preserve its position of respectability and political influence, and that the majority of the members of this "class" were political idealists whose thinking did not concern itself with economic problems in the country. The undeniable fact, however, is that the propaganda movement, which was the prelude to the Revolution, was carried out courageously and unselfishly

⁴ See: T. M. Kalaw, *La revolución filipina* (Manila 1925); L. H. Fernandez, *The Philippine Republic* (New York 1926); A. Mabini, *La revolución filipina* (Manila 1931).

by men who belonged to and represented what Mr. Agoncillo claims was "the middle class" group of Filipinos. To say that the men who participated in that movement were actuated by selfish motives and were indifferent towards the plight of the masses is unfair and unjust to them.

Moreover, the Liga Filipina, an organization of "middle class" people as Mr. Agoncillo himself claims, had for one of its aims "the encouragement of instruction, *agriculture and commerce*." (Italics supplied.) It would seem in the light of good evidence, that the "middle class" was not, as Mr. Agoncillo would have his readers believe, entirely unconcerned with the economic needs and problems of the nation.

IV

There are many other instances of historical distortion or misrepresentation in *The Revolt of the Masses*. Of these, the one which relates to Rizal's attitude and position with respect to the Katipunan uprising deserves more than passing consideration because it involves the good name and character of our national hero.

In his chapter entitled "Dapitan Interlude," Mr. Agoncillo gives the reader to understand that Rizal expressed himself in favor of an armed revolt such as was being planned and contemplated by the Katipunan. In writing that chapter the author relies entirely on the testimony of Dr. Pio Valenzuela as found in the latter's "Memoirs" and as repeated in an interview which he had with Valenzuela on 2 October 1947.

There is, however, another testimony of Valenzuela which gives an entirely different version of the matter. It is found in a declaration which Valenzuela made in September 1896 before the Guardia Civil, in the course of an investigation to which he was subjected shortly after he surrendered to the authorities.⁵ It is to be remembered that in order to avail himself of the offer of immunity made by Governor Blanco in

⁵ Retana, *Archivo del bibliófilo filipino* (Madrid 1895-97) vol. 3.

his proclamation of 30 August 1896, Valenzuela submitted himself to the Spanish authorities.

In his testimony, Valenzuela categorically stated that Rizal, to use Valenzuela's own words, was "tenaciously opposed to the idea of a rebellion against Spain." Valenzuela further stated that Rizal expressed himself "in such bad humor and with such feeling of disgust that he (Valenzuela), who had gone there (to Dapitan) intending to stay for a month, left the next day on the return trip to Manila."

Now which of these two versions of Valenzuela is worthy of credence?

In appraising the credibility of Valenzuela, it is important to take into account certain attendant conditions and circumstances. When in September 1896 Valenzuela made his declaration, he was fully aware of the fact that the safety of his life depended much upon the favorable impression that he could make on the authorities regarding the sincerity and honesty of his intentions. He knew that if he was found out to be misleading in his testimony or unwilling to cooperate with the authorities in their effort to delve into the secrets of the Katipunan his life would be seriously jeopardized. It was to his interest, therefore, that he should make a clean breast of the doings of the Katipunan. That is exactly what he did. A reading of his testimony would show that Valenzuela was disposed to tell what the authorities wanted to know regarding the Katipunan and the men connected with it. His testimony has all the earmarks of sincerity and truth. Valenzuela knew well enough that it was an easy thing for the authorities to check up on the veracity of his testimony, there being hundreds of Katipuneros who like him had taken advantage of the Government's offer of immunity and who were at the time undergoing the same searching investigation to which he was being subjected. It can well be taken for granted, therefore, that under the circumstances what he said in his testimony regarding Rizal's attitude towards the Katipunan's subversive plans was the truth and nothing but the truth.

It is surprising that Agoncillo should ignore this testimony of Valenzuela and should choose to rely on a statement made by the same person half a century later when conditions were no longer the same and when the details of events were no longer fresh and vivid in his memory.

Valenzuela's earlier testimony was corroborated in an unmistakable manner by Rizal himself in the statement he submitted in his defence during his trial. In that statement Rizal said:

With respect to the rebellion, I had absolutely refrained from politics since 6 July 1892, until the 1st of July of this year when, advised by Don Pio Valenzuela that an uprising was proposed, I counseled against it, trying to convince him with reasons. Don Pio Valenzuela parted from me apparently convinced; so much so that instead of taking part in the rebellion later, he presented himself to the authorities for pardon.⁶

Agoncillo's contention that Rizal had a change of view and attitude with respect to the Katipunan and its plans of revolt, apart from the fact that it lacks merit, reflects on the character and moral integrity of Rizal. For it gives the reader the impression that Rizal was not quite truthful in what he said regarding the Katipunan movement. The author expresses surprise at the "turnabout" of Rizal, saying that this action was an instance of the "betrayal" of the Katipunan by the "middle class" to which Rizal belonged. Considering that what Rizal said during his trial regarding the Katipunan was given under his word of honor (*palabra de honor*, as the Spaniards would say), Mr. Agoncillo's contention is a slur on Rizal's sense of honor and good faith.

Mr. Agoncillo is, of course, at complete liberty to present the facts of history as he thinks they should be presented and to interpret them in accordance with his own technique of historical interpretation. It should be said, however, that his procedure with respect to this particular point of history is highly

⁶ Retana, *Vida y escritos del Dr. Rizal* (Madrid 1907) p. 342 footnote.

questionable. He is, to put it mildly, quite naive, credulous and uncritical.

V

Another instance of gross misrepresentation is found in the author's reference to Mabini. On page 114, the author presents the following quotation from Mabini's writings:

But when I observed everywhere the unrest and indignation produced by the blind obstinacy of the Spanish Government and the cruelties with which it repaid the services of those who had shown it the dangers of bad administration of the Philippines and had offered plans for doing away with those, . . . I saw the popular will clearly manifested and deemed it my duty to take up the revolutionary cause.

The above quoted citation was used to substantiate the author's favorite theme that the "middle class" was unsympathetic with and had a feeling of repugnance to the revolutionary ideas and plans of the Katipunan and that only after the outbreak of the Revolution did that "class" join the "masses" in the struggle for liberation. According to Agoncillo, Mabini was the "epitome" of this "middle class" attitude.

Any one will readily see how irregular and devious is the author's method of historical presentation and interpretation. What Mabini wanted to say in the above quoted words of his is simply that he became a revolutionist, after seeing the failure of the propaganda campaign. Agoncillo has torn the quotation from its context to make it appear that Mabini, in common with other representatives of the "middle class," embraced the cause of the Revolution only after the Katipunan movement had expanded into a nation-wide struggle for freedom. The author, by making an improper use and interpretation of historical evidence, does an injustice to Mabini representing him as a fence-sitter and an opportunist.

VI

Another instance of Agoncillo's peculiar methodology is found in the same chapter (Chapter 7 "Betrayal"). There

the author makes a laborious attempt to show the reaction of the "middle class" people towards the events of their time. It is his contention that the "middle class" considered the idea of revolt "repugnant," and so were opposed to joining the Katipunan for fear that a revolt "might cost them their possessions and social prestige." As a proof of his contention he presents a statement from Le Roy's work on the conduct of certain prominent Filipinos following the outbreak of the Katipunan revolt. Le Roy stated that the "natives of position hastened to assure the Spanish authorities of their loyalty" and that they felt that "the revolt was wholly premature" (p. 112). That is the kind of evidence that Agoncillo uses to substantiate his claim of "repugnance" on the part of the "middle class" to the idea of revolt. It can readily be seen that Le Roy's quoted words have no relevance at all to the point under consideration. He was simply trying to bring out the fact that those prominent Filipinos, who chose to return to their allegiance to the Spanish Government following the outbreak of the Katipunan uprising, felt that the revolt was "premature." That is entirely different from saying that they had a feeling of "repugnance" to the idea of revolt.

We have another instance of the author's peculiar way of reasoning in his discussion of the trial of Bonifacio. He assumes that the trial was irregular, that it was a farce, a travesty of justice. "The Council of War," he tells us, "was decidedly predisposed against the man on trial for his life." In this connection he brings up for consideration the claim of T. M. Kalaw that the fact that "Bonifacio and his followers submitted to the Council of War without *protest*" (italics supplied) shows that Bonifacio and his followers felt that the Council of War was properly constituted and that they would be given fair trial. Agoncillo takes exception to this claim. He tries to refute it by saying that Bonifacio was not in a position to protest, being a prisoner and suffering from a wound. "Under the circumstances," he states, "how could Bonifacio and his followers have protested against the action of the government and insisted on their refusal to recognize the authority of the Council of

War? Bonifacio was helpless having been wounded and taken prisoner." Any one can see that Agoncillo has not quite grasped the cogency of Kalaw's contention. When he stated that Bonifacio submitted to the Council of War without *protest*, Kalaw had in mind not so much the freedom to move or act physically which can of course be shackled and controlled, but rather the freedom of the will which can not be suppressed by any physical force. Bonifacio had that freedom all the time and he could have used it to voice his protest against the constitution and authority of the Council of War if he cared to do so.

VII

Many other instances can be cited to show the author's peculiar method and technique of historical presentation and interpretation. In the first chapter we find such statements as the following:

Society, rotten to the core, exuded an odor that polluted the atmosphere for more than 300 years and led to the migration of the Filipino intellectuals to healthier climes. . . .

Education was in the hands of the friars who waved the cloak of religion to dazzle the eyes of the Filipinos and so made them helots of a power that wanted to perpetuate itself by conveniently forgetting the principles and virtues for which it stood.

These are instances of sweeping generalities in which the book abounds, framed in utter disregard of the elemental principles of historical construction. Couched in highly rhetorical language they are vague if not entirely meaningless as statements of historical facts. Anyone who reads them is reminded of the style and technique of the Spanish writer Quioquiap and of what Rizal once said of him: "He generalizes the bad and the abject without any exception, drawing universal conclusions from secondary and remote premises." ("Generaliza lo malo y abyecto, sacando consecuencias universales de premisas secundarias y remotas.")⁷

There are also to be found instances of anachronisms, contradictions and historical inaccuracies. In one place (p. 221)

⁷ Rizal á Barrantes, *Epistolario Rizalino* (Manila 1931) II, 300.

the reader is told that Ricarte took the oath of office in the evening of 23 March 1897 at Tanza. In another page it is stated that on 24 March 1897 Ricarte was invited by Emiliano Riego de Dios to attend the oath-taking at Tanza and that on that day Ricarte penned his protest against his election as general of the armed forces of the Revolution. Just when did Ricarte take his oath of office? On March 23 or March 24?

In one place Agoncillo speaks of the "awakening" from the "long night" which prevailed over the Philippines, the "awakening" being the launching of the propaganda campaign by Jaena, Rizal, del Pilar and other Filipino nationalists. And yet elsewhere the author gives the reader to understand that the period of the propaganda was "a long night of political persecution and economic serfdom" (p. 26.). Just when the "night" ended and the "awakening" began is not quite clear.

Speaking of Spain in the 19th century the author says: "In Spain, owing to the unsettled political conditions, progressive ideas existed only in whispers." The facts of Spanish history, particularly during the period 1808-1868, belie the author's claim. That period with its record of revolts, uprisings, *golpes de estado* and *pronunciamientos* bears eloquent witness to the militancy and vociferousness of the liberal spirit and tendencies in Spain. There is no basis to the claim that "progressive ideas existed only in whispers."⁸

Also injurious to what otherwise might have been a purely scholarly research was the unfortunate use of a style such as might have been effective in campaign propaganda literature but which when employed in historical narration detracts rather than adds to its value. The use of expressions such as "crooked as the administration and dirty as the conscience of Spanish officialdom" (p. 64), "friars who wanted to act like the barbarian of the Attila cast" (p. 166), "the friars cackled in their hour of vindictive triumph" (p. 190), "bloodthirsty religious"

⁸ See: H. Butler Clarke, *Modern Spain 1815-1898* (Cambridge 1906); Juan Ortega Rubio, *Historia de España* 8 vols. (Madrid 1910); Salvador de Madariaga, *Spain* (2nd ed. London 1942); Robert Senecourt, *The Spanish Crown* (New York 1932).

(p. 168), and many others of the same nature is an exercise of literary "license" hardly in keeping with an objective and calm appraisal.

Not only does the author use an unfortunate style in words but he has also mingled fiction and history in historical narration, thus confusing the reader as to the real nature of the work. Is the author writing history or fiction in his account of the meeting in the caves of Makarok and Pamitian (pp. 70-71)? Is it history or fiction he writes when he divines the *thought* in the minds of the friars (p. 164)? Or the dramatic scene he describes on pp. 234-235 where Aguinaldo is described approaching the estate-house where Bonifacio and his friends were gathered?

VIII

Being an intensive study of the Katipunan movement, *The Revolt of the Masses* might have been expected to clear up an important point over which there is still much controversy. Reference is had to the time and place of the so-called "Cry of Balintawak." Just when and where did this memorable event of the Revolution take place?

Teodoro M. Kalaw in his book *La revolución filipina* relates the circumstances leading up to this significant event as follows:

The Revolution began in Balintawak in the last week of August 1896. The forces of Bonifacio were not yet adequately prepared, but the unexpected discovery of the Katipunan by Father Mariano Gil, pastor of Tondo, and the rigorous measures that the government took against the innocent as well as the guilty, precipitated the war. Hundreds of persons were arrested. Bonifacio at once held a meeting of Katipuneros in Kankong, Kalookan. It was a tumultuous meeting. Everybody was excited. There were, however, some at the meeting who believed that the moment was not propitious for an uprising. After some discussion, the radicals led by Bonifacio and Jacinto triumphed. Having made their decision, the Katipuneros swore not to return to their homes. To show that from that moment they renounced their allegiance to Spain, they tore their certificates of citizenship—the *cedula personal*.

Bonifacio launched a manifesto calling upon his comrades to take up arms. The 29th of August was the day fixed for the uprising.

According to the inscription placed on the monument, the "Cry of Balintawak" took place on 26 August 1896. This date has been the officially accepted date for this event.

How accurate is the official version as regards the place and time of this event?

Guillermo Masangkay who was present on the historic occasion confirmed the official version in all its essential details in a statement that he made in 1932. According to him the "Cry of Balintawak" took place on 26 August 1896 near the spot where the monument now stands.⁹

Another eyewitness of this event, however, Dr. Pio Valenzuela gives us to understand that certain points in the officially accepted version are not in agreement with the historical reality. In the first place, Dr. Valenzuela says that it was at Pugad Lawin, not in Balintawak, in the yard of Juan Ramos, son of Melchora Aquino, where the decision was made to take up arms. Dr. Valenzuela further states that the date of this event was August 23, not August 26. According to him, at the close of the meeting at Pugad Lawin, which was tumultuous, many of the Katipuneros tore their cedula certificates and shouted "Long live the Philippines! Long live the Katipunan!"¹⁰

From another source we get a slightly different version. It comes from Santiago Alvarez, who, like Dr. Valenzuela and Guillermo Masangkay, was a prominent member of the Katipunan. In a series of articles published in *Sampaguita*, a Tagalog weekly, in 1927 and 1928, he gave a detailed account of the history of the Katipunan. The account was prepared, according to him, from notes that he kept, relating to his experiences

⁹ "A Katipunero Speaks" *The Tribune Sunday Magazine*, Manila, 21 August 1932.

¹⁰ "Memoirs of the K.K.K. and the Philippine Revolution" (unpublished manuscript). Also Valenzuela's statement published in *The Sunday Times*, Manila, 29 August 1948.

as a member of the Katipunan. From his work we read the following references to the events of August 1896:¹¹

Sunday, August 23, 1896.

As early as 10 o'clock in the morning, at the house and barn of Kabesang Melchora, at a place called Sampalukan, barrio of Bahay-Toro, Katipuneros began to gather. About 500 of these arrived ready and eager to join the "Supremo", Andres Bonifacio, and his men . . .

Monday, August 24, 1896.

There were about 1,000 Katipuneros . . . The "Supremo" decided to hold a meeting inside the big barn. Under his presidency, the meeting began at 10 o'clock in the morning . . .

It was 12 o'clock noon when the meeting was adjourned amidst loud cries of "Long live the Sons of the Country." ("Mabuhay ang mga anak ng Bayan.")

Tuesday, August 25, 1896.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, a Katipunero lookout, watching from a sampalok tree, reported that enemy troops were approaching. The Katipuneros immediately made ready to meet the enemy. At a point between Kangkong, Balintawak and Bahay-Toro, a brief encounter took place.

Perhaps the earliest reference in a published document to the events of August 1896 is that made by Olegario Diaz of the Guardia Civil Veterana.¹² Diaz wrote a report on 28 October 1896 giving his version of those events. His account was prepared on the basis of official reports of the doings of the Guardia Civil and on information given by persons who either were captured by the Spaniards or voluntarily surrendered to take advantage of the amnesty offered under Governor Blanco's proclamation of 30 August 1896. Many of these had actual participation in the events of August 1896 and therefore had first hand knowledge of those events. From Diaz' report we read the following:

The conspiracy having been discovered, Bonifacio and his followers hurriedly fled to the nearby town of Caloocan. . . On the 23rd Boni-

¹¹ "Ang Katipunan at Paghimagsik" *Sampaguita*, 14 August 1927.

¹² In Retana, *Archivo del bibliófilo filipino*, vol. 3.

facio moved to the barrio of Balintanac (sic) followed by 200 men from Caloocan; on the 24th they were attacked by the Guardia Civil in the outskirts of the said town and they retreated to their hiding places.

The Supreme Council called for a big meeting to be held the following day in the above mentioned barrio. More than 500 members attended. The meeting began with a discussion of what course should be taken in the face of the new situation and in view of the arrests that were being made. There were some who were disposed to go back and surrender to the Spanish government. Bonifacio was strongly opposed to such a course. He was for taking up arms at once. Put to a vote, Bonifacio's proposal was approved by an overwhelming majority. See how strong an influence he wields!

Orders were immediately sent out to Manila, Cavite, Nueva Ecija and other provinces for the Katipuneros to strike at dawn on Sunday, August 30th.

From the statements above presented, it will be readily seen that there is marked disagreement among historical witnesses as to the place and the time of occurrence of what is at present generally known as the "Cry of Balintawak." Four different places have been mentioned as the scene of that memorable event—Balintawak, Kankong, Pugad Lawin and Bahay Toro. As to the time of the event, four different dates were claimed—the 23rd, the 24th, the 25th, and the 26th of August 1896.

It is regrettable that Agoncillo has not seen fit to clear up the confusion that still prevails on this point in the history of the Revolution. All that he has done is to accept the version of Valenzuela without question. He has not told his readers why he considers the testimony of Valenzuela more reliable and more authoritative than that of any of the other contemporary witnesses. Considering the character and standing of the persons whose testimony has been cited and the excellent opportunities that they had for accurate observation of the events about which they wrote, what they had to say regarding those events is deserving of the utmost consideration and respect.

Despite the faults and defects of his work, the author is deserving of praise and commendation for certain things. He has presented in convenient form already known data which would otherwise have remained available only in scattered sources. To them he adds the new data he acquired from further research for which he deserves credit, especially those which he gathered from interviews he conducted in preparation for his book. These data will be useful to a historian when other sources are available to check them.