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Emilio Aguinaldo under American and Japanese Rule Submission for Independence?

Some historians are skeptical of Emilio Aguinaldo's heroism after his role in the Philippine revolution against Spain and the Philippine–American War in large part because of his apparent collaboration with the Americans and the Japanese. Actually little is known about events in Aguinaldo's life after 1899. This article aims to shed light on the obscured periods in Aguinaldo's life and career. In doing so, it addresses the questions: How could he have desired Philippine independence despite his submission to two imperial powers, America and Japan? Why did he collaborate with both powers? How would his place in Philippine history be evaluated?

KEYWORDS: COLLABORATION, AMERICAN COLONIALISM, JAPANESE OCCUPATION, ASIA–PACIFIC WAR, ARTEMIO RICARTE

In an interview I had with the late Armando Malay (1995), a former reporter of *The Tribune*, a Japanese-sponsored newspaper in Manila during the Japanese occupation, for my doctoral dissertation (Ara 1997) on Artemio Ricarte, he told me: “If you want to write something about General Ricarte, you also should look into the thoughts or nationalism of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo during the postrevolutionary period. Very few Filipinos acknowledge his actuation after the Philippine revolution and Philippine–American War.”

José Rizal, Ricarte, and Benigno Aquino Jr. returned to the motherland from foreign soil and died for their country. If these three historical figures, although hardly analyzable on the same level, were quite “stubborn,” Aguinaldo was rather flexible and adapted to changing circumstances. If martyrdom alone were to define heroism, then Filipino historians would hardly regard Aguinaldo as a hero.

Although Aguinaldo has been praised as one of the national heroes in Philippine history for his role in ending Spanish colonialism and declaring Philippine independence, his fame as a nationalist is due mainly to his activities in 1898. His autobiography published in 1964, *Mga Gunita ng Himagsikan* (Memories of the Revolution), was silent about events in the second half of the revolution against Spain and the Philippine–American War (Aguinaldo and Sunatay 1964). He had promised a second memoir (ibid., 266), but passed away in the same year that *Mga Gunita* was published. His death hardly moved historians to reassess his role in Philippine history.

Aguinaldo as Hero and Antihero

Some historians consider Aguinaldo a traitor in Philippine history, citing his actions and attitude toward Spain and the US after the signing of the 1897 Biak-na-Bato truce. They either condemn Aguinaldo’s acceptance of American rule or emphasize Aguinaldo’s inconsistencies in the revolution and the Philippine–American War. For instance, while Alfredo Saulo (1983) strongly commended Aguinaldo for his crucial role in Philippine history, Nick Joaquin raised issues surrounding his heroism. Joaquin (2005, 140) argued that Aguinaldo failed to make the most of the opportunity to win against Spain and the US. Whether Aguinaldo’s images as hero and antihero coexist in the minds of Filipinos is unclear. Among scholars, however, the question of his heroism has proved to be controversial.

Regardless of Aguinaldo’s problematic stance at crucial moments, somehow his heroism has been accepted and praised in history textbooks. Unfortunately, these textbooks say little about him during the American colonial years and the Japanese occupation. Philippine historiography has ignored the Aguinaldo of these periods, a point that may illustrate the nature of his heroism.

These two historical periods force us to confront important questions, given his stubborn resistance against Spain and the US and his longing for Philippine independence, which did not seem to have escaped his mind until his death (Aguinaldo and Pacis 1957, 147): (a) How could he have desired Philippine independence if he submitted to two imperial powers, the US and Japan? (b) Was his submission to these two colonizers a strategy toward attaining independence?

After the Americans captured him in March 1901, he asked all his men to surrender to avoid futile resistance. Also, at the onset of the Japanese occupation he called for the people’s capitulation to the new colonizers. How could these actions be consistent with his desire for independence? For Saulo (1983, xvii), “Aguinaldo knew that [waging war against Japan] was pointless, nay, absurd for the Philippines, an American colony, to fight America’s war to the last Filipino.” Saulo (ibid., xv–xvii) contended that the Japanese did not pressure Aguinaldo to encourage Filipino soldiers to surrender. In his “Ang Paunang Salita sa Munti kong Talang-buhay” (Introduction to My Short Autobiography), probably written in 1946 after the end of the war,¹ Aguinaldo acknowledged American supremacy, which Filipinos could never defeat. Responding to Mabini’s (1969) accusation against him regarding the fall of the Malolos Republic, Aguinaldo (ca. 1946/2002) defended himself on his capture as well as his collaboration with the Americans by asking rhetorically, “Why would [Mabini] censure our defeat against the Americans, the world’s superpower? Couldn’t we consider that although we had lost, we were still victorious?”

For Aguinaldo, submission to the US might be another way for the country to attain independence. As long as Aguinaldo kept on desiring independence even after he had accepted American sovereignty over the Philippines, historians ought to have looked into the period of the Japanese occupation to address the questions posed earlier. However, to understand his life during the Japanese period, one must first analyze the accusations of opportunism against him in his dealings with the American colonizers.

Aguinaldo and US Colonial Rule

Following his capture in 1901, Aguinaldo swore allegiance to the US and then retired to a comfortable life in Cavite. However, his acknowledgement of US colonial power did not put an immediate end to revolutionary activities: Americans still struggled to control the archipelago due to the persistence of Filipino guerrillas, who were mostly allied with Aguinaldo.

Many Filipino revolutionaries must have been disappointed with Aguinaldo. Macario Sakay had lost hope in the struggle for independence and had sworn allegiance to the US, but in 1902 he rose up again against the Americans to organize a “New Katipunan” in the outskirts of Manila. Ricarte, who led Aguinaldo’s forces in the southern Tagalog area, never swore allegiance to the US and was then banished to Guam together with Mabini. While Sakay led a resistance movement, Ricarte drew a plot to overthrow US rule and reestablish the Katipunan. Neither Sakay nor Ricarte succeeded because of the subtle yet effective American tactic of collaborating with Filipino oligarchs. Sakay was executed in 1907, while Ricarte was imprisoned in Bilibid for more than six years or so and later expelled to Hong Kong (Ara 1997, 28–32). Ricarte, whom Teodoro Agoncillo (1965, 388) described as a “naïve revolutionary,” chose exile in Japan in 1915 rather than be subjugated to a new colonial power.

In contrast Aguinaldo gave in to the Americans just as other aristocratic Filipino collaborators did. Although many revolutionary veterans were disappointed with Aguinaldo’s political conduct, his organizing of the *Asociación de los Veteranos de la Revolución* (Association of Veterans of the Revolution or AVR) in 1923, which worked to secure pensions for its members and made arrangements for them to buy land on installment from the government, could have healed those wounds. Unlike Ricarte, who was in Japan and thus far away from the Philippines, Aguinaldo was active in various political activities after the end of the war. He focused his energies chiefly on the AVR, of which he was president. This post gave him a lifetime monthly pension of P1,000 from the US government (CIC 1945b), which he used to engage in several business enterprises in Cavite. These enterprises involved food retailing and transportation, from which he profited considerably.

However, the profits he made did not completely account for his collaboration. He gave in and collaborated when he became convinced of the supremacy of the United States, which he did not think “could be as bad

a master as Spain” and which he felt assured “would sooner or later redress the sins of her individual sons” (Aguinaldo and Pacis 1957, 129).

Ricarte on Aguinaldo’s Collaboration with the US

Strangely, although there was much skepticism about his “wholehearted collaboration” with the US, very few Filipinos publicly questioned Aguinaldo’s stance. But privately some did. As Mabini had done, Ricarte expressed his negative sentiments about Aguinaldo in his letters to Jose P. Santos, which probably reflected the sentiments of Filipino veterans who were disappointed with Aguinaldo. In the beginning Ricarte and Aguinaldo were on good terms as both were favorably inclined toward Japan, which they considered as “the Messiah” for the oppressed races in Asia that were under the control of “White races” (Kokuryukai 1966, 637–38). But they eventually parted ways. While Ricarte continued the resistance, Aguinaldo eventually compromised with the Americans.

Ricarte’s personal letters compiled by Santos showed that Ricarte (1927, 1928a, 1928b, 1929a, 1929b) started denouncing Aguinaldo as one “who chose to be with the American imperialist” during the second half of the 1920s (cf. Jose 1999, 155–85). While Santos (1933) frequently praised Aguinaldo as the first Philippine president, Ricarte severely criticized Aguinaldo. Ricarte’s letter to Santos on 17 October 1927 expressed his negative feelings about the AVR. Ricarte (1927) deemed the abolition of the AVR, “one of the main hindrances for the Philippines to attain genuine independence,” as promoting the quest for independence.

In the same correspondence, Ricarte added that Aguinaldo always took the side of Republican Gov. Gen. Leonard Wood. Although the Republican Party’s policy on the Philippines in the 1920s slowed down progress toward Philippine independence, Aguinaldo still praised Wood’s effort in “restoring efficiency and honesty in the public service” (Aguinaldo and Pacis 1957, 153). Aguinaldo appreciated Wood’s administration, a stance Ricarte never accepted. Using a subtle rhetoric in Tagalog, Ricarte (1927, 4) criticized Aguinaldo for his “un-nationalistic conduct” toward Wood, who provided Aguinaldo with “innumerable things.” Even after Wood’s death in 1927, Ricarte continued to denounce Aguinaldo.

Ricarte (1928a) pointed out to Santos that Republican Henry Stimson’s selection to the post of governor-general was Aguinaldo’s willed instruction. Ricarte revealed that in so doing Aguinaldo concurred with the Republican

Party's policy against Philippine independence. He claimed that in the eyes of the people of Malolos Aguinaldo's actions and words were entirely biased toward the Americans, whom in the past he had even characterized as "Vassals of Hell" (Ricarte 1928b). Ricarte (ibid.) labeled Aguinaldo an "Amerikanista" or "pro-American." He added that:

Kahinawa, ay maliwanagan si Hen. Aguinaldo sa mga nangyayaring iyan, at iwan niya ang pagpiling sa mga Amerikanong kalaban ng Pagsasarili ng bayang Pilipino, at kung hindi naman niya maagapayanan ang mga halal ng bayan, ay huwag na siyang makialam kanino pa man; samakatuwid, tumabi na lamang. Namumula ang aking mukhang nababatid kong si Hen. Aguinaldo ay pawang mañekang linalaro-laro lamang niyang mga makaharing Amerikano.

We hope that Gen. Aguinaldo is enlightened by what have been happening, and that he distances himself from the Americans who are enemies of Philippine independence. And if he could not assist the elected officials of the nation, he should not interfere with anyone else; therefore he should just step aside. My face turns red in fury at the thought that Gen. Aguinaldo is a mere puppet being playfully manipulated by those lordly Americans.

Moreover, Ricarte (1929a) did not agree with Aguinaldo's trip to the US as a member of the Philippine independence mission, which he viewed as obstructing the "Sacred Purpose of Our Race." He pointed to Aguinaldo's acceptance of a lifetime pension from the colonial government, which "flawed the entire people of the Philippines." Ricarte (ibid.) wanted the Filipino people not to remain indifferent to his condemnation of Aguinaldo for he did not wish anyone to risk the nation's dignity. Although Filipinos could forgive Aguinaldo, Ricarte suggested that they must cease to give him aid because his monthly pension and gains from his large landholdings were more than sufficient to cover his needs.

In spite of his severe criticisms of Aguinaldo, Ricarte still respected him as his former superior in the revolution. Ricarte (1929b) even hoped that Aguinaldo would change his political stance. As I have shown elsewhere (Ara 1997), Ricarte's style in seeking Philippine independence became more

moderate when he lived in Japan. He acknowledged American authority in the Philippines and began to favor American colonial policy (ibid., 48–50). Although Ricarte accepted American sovereignty over the Philippines, he opposed Aguinaldo's lifestyle made possible by his monthly pension and his praise for American officials and their colonial policy. When Ricarte visited Aguinaldo at his Kawit residence in January 1942, the latter held a banquet to welcome Ricarte back to the Philippines. Ricarte saw many items displayed in Aguinaldo's residence, including the Stars and Stripes and the photograph of then US president Franklin Roosevelt. However, several days later when Kaneshiro Ota visited Aguinaldo's home to send him an official correspondence on Ricarte's behalf, Ota found that Aguinaldo had replaced Roosevelt's photograph with that of Emperor Hirohito.² Aguinaldo also displayed in his room the Japanese sword given by Tsuyoshi Inukai, one of the Japanese nationalists who helped Filipino revolutionaries in the early twentieth century (Ota 1972, 124–27). Hence, for Ricarte, Aguinaldo's political stance was opportunistic and inconsistent with the Philippine independence movement as well as with the allegiances the latter claimed to have. We do not know if Ricarte's sentiments reached Aguinaldo.

The Quezon–Aguinaldo Political Feud

Undoubtedly Aguinaldo wanted to redeem his dignity as a former leader of the country. In fact, he had been a political opponent of Manuel L. Quezon in the 1920s and 1930s, when Quezon was senate president and virtually controlled Philippine politics.

While in Japan Ricarte opposed the Hare–Hawes–Cutting Act, a controversial Philippine independence bill, when it was being deliberated upon in the Philippine Legislature in 1933. Aguinaldo likewise opposed the bill because its proposed ten-year transition period did not guarantee an immediate, absolute, and complete independence for the Philippines. Although the Tydings–McDuffie Act, a new independence bill that Quezon obtained from the US Congress, was passed in the Philippine Legislature in 1934, Aguinaldo still did not trust Quezon in working for the bill's passage (Friend 1965, 119–20). Clearly, Aguinaldo had negative views toward Quezon, an antagonism that can be traced to the so-called Wood–Quezon controversy of the 1920s. Aguinaldo appreciated Wood while he utterly disliked Quezon's political style.³

This political enmity resulted in a feud that characterized the 1935 presidential race for the then newly established Philippine Commonwealth (fig. 1). Three candidates, Manuel Quezon, Gregorio Aglipay, and Emilio Aguinaldo, ran for the presidency. Quezon won the race by a landslide. Aguinaldo did not want to accept his defeat and even released a statement that, if he were defeated at the polls, he and his followers would resort to force. Quezon was reportedly afraid of the alleged death threat from Aguinaldo's followers. Quezon was thus supplied with an armed Constabulary guard and a Constabulary force quartered in Kawit, Cavite, which kept constant surveillance over Aguinaldo (CIC 1945d). This surveillance understandably caused Aguinaldo to resent Quezon, probably not only because of the latter's authoritarian style of politics but also because of his comprehensive strategy to strip Aguinaldo of political influence even before the 1935 elections. In late 1934, as Aguinaldo prepared for his presidential campaign, Secretary of Agriculture Eulogio Rodriguez Sr., a close ally of Quezon, suddenly discovered Aguinaldo's arrears on a twenty-year-old government loan for the acquisition of a former friar estate in Cavite.⁴ In one of the very few instances of prewar land reform, Secretary Rodriguez summarily stripped Aguinaldo

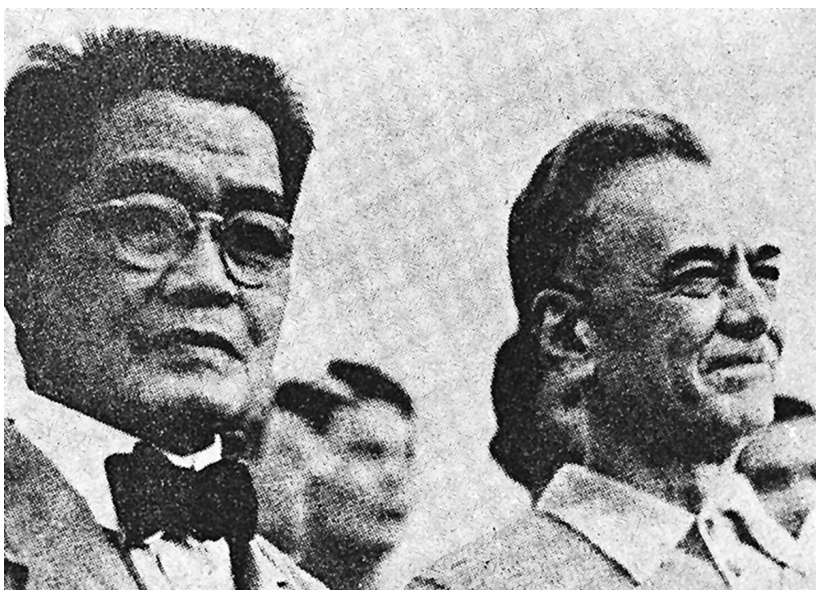


Fig. 1. Rivals Aguinaldo and Quezon during the 1935 election campaign

Source: University of Michigan 2015

of all but 344 hectares and then distributed the bulk to his tenants (McCoy 1989, 138).

Aguinaldo eventually accepted his electoral defeat and then involved himself in minimal political activities, such as the aforementioned AVR, while still being sharply critical of Quezon's administration. The investigation of the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC), which handled Aguinaldo's collaboration case after the Asia-Pacific War, stated that Aguinaldo never forgave the Americans and Quezon for his electoral loss and had held a grudge against them through the years. It also stated that the animosity between Aguinaldo and Quezon caused the former to collaborate with the Japanese during the occupation years, even if the two had publicly reconciled during the Commonwealth period (CIC 1945d). Moreover, Aguinaldo's anti-Americanism resurfaced during the war. The Japanese occupation gave him the opportunity to regain his political stature.

Aguinaldo's Submission to Japan

Almost ten hours after the Pearl Harbor attack, Japan invaded the Philippines, with the Japanese Army landing in Cagayan and Pangasinan. These forces then advanced to Manila, entering the city on 2 January 1942 without encountering any resistance from American and Filipino forces. The following day, Lt. Gen. Masaharu Homma, commander-in-chief of the Japanese forces, declared the end of American sovereignty in the Philippines and proclaimed martial law in all occupied areas. He announced Japan's objective: to liberate the peoples of Asia from the oppression of colonial powers. Moreover, he enjoined Filipinos to "sever their relations with the United States, obey faithfully the commands of the Japanese military authorities, to cooperate with them in their activities and to supply them with military needs when asked." He also asked all Commonwealth public officials to remain at their posts and carry out their duties as faithfully as before (De Viana 2003, 15–20).

Even before they reached Manila, toward the end of 1941 the Japanese began contacting Commonwealth officials, among them Jorge Vargas, Quezon's Executive Secretary, to whom certain powers had been delegated to cope with the unusual situation. On 8 January 1942 Homma asked Vargas to organize the civil government (Homma 1942; Steinberg 1967, 35). Apparently the Japanese had formulated as their principle for occupation the cooptation of Commonwealth officials or Filipino elites, who previously had cordial relations with the Americans.

Aguinaldo's collaboration with Japan began with his contact with Gen. Masami Maeda, Homma's chief of staff. Two days after Homma's message to Vargas, Aguinaldo (ca. 1942) voluntarily met with Maeda at his residence in Cavite to suggest the creation of a provisional government to terminate American rule and cooperate with the Japanese. Meanwhile, Commonwealth officials gathered in the Manila residence of Speaker Jose Yulo to discuss the matter of dealing with Japanese military rule. On 12 January Aguinaldo received the official correspondence from Vargas (1942) stating that the Filipino leaders were to form a provisional Council of State "for the purpose of assisting in the maintenance of peace and order and the promotion of the welfare of our people in the area occupied by the Japanese Imperial Forces." The letter also stated that Commonwealth officials were unanimous in asking Aguinaldo to join this Council of State and sign the document that has been popularly known as the Manifesto of Treason (see CIC 1945a) for their collaboration with the Japanese (Vargas 1942), both of which Aguinaldo accepted.

On 28 January Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo pledged in the Japanese Diet that Japan would grant the Philippines independence within a year, provided that Filipinos understood the principle of Greater East Asia. Aguinaldo was said to be pleased with this news, which seemed understandable since he still had the apparent desire for Philippine independence. However, Arsenio Bonifacio, a former subordinate of Aguinaldo during the revolution, had another story. According to Bonifacio's (1945) postwar testimony to the CIC, Aguinaldo was very happy with the news of Tojo's pledge; however, after two or three months he realized that the Japanese-sponsored independence was but a new form of subjugation. Bonifacio added that since then Aguinaldo became lukewarm toward the Japanese.

Nevertheless, Aguinaldo's collaboration with the Japanese was obvious especially during his cordial contacts with Maeda. In a letter to Maeda dated 16 February 1942 Aguinaldo (1942c) expressed his support for Japan's occupation policy, saying the Filipino people "should trust in the good purpose of the Japanese Empire to make the Philippines an independent nation, a member of the sphere of co-prosperity in the Greater East Asia." He also offered to provide Japanese authorities with his ten heavy vehicles and ten small boats to transport foodstuffs from Cavite as a way to address the food shortage. Moreover, he promised that for every trip he would give

Japanese authorities half the quantity of the said foodstuffs "at the cost-price plus transportation expenses without any profit" (ibid.). He also volunteered 5 percent of the net profit from this business as his contribution to the Japanese (ibid.).

Some historians posit that Aguinaldo's collaboration was borne by his desire to achieve freedom for the Philippines under his watch—a possibility that became more remote with the emergence of leaders like Quezon and Osmeña and Aguinaldo's advancing age (De Viana 2003, 10). In addition, a new political circumstance might have augmented his presidential ambition when Ricarte returned to the Philippines from Japan with the Japanese forces (Agoncillo 1965, 388; Ara 1997, 127–35). Although Tojo's speech must have encouraged Aguinaldo to collaborate with the Japanese, it is necessary to look into another aspect of his collaboration, specifically the issue of his pension.

When the war erupted Aguinaldo feared losing his pension, which had made him a man of property and the owner of a transportation business. He was uncertain if he would continue to receive this pension under the Japanese. The CIC found out in its postwar investigation that Aguinaldo (1945a) petitioned the Japanese authorities twice on this matter without success. In May 1942 Aguinaldo wrote to Gen. Takaji Wachi to request for his lifetime pension. Receiving no reply, Aguinaldo (1942e) made a second request to the Japanese that he be given his monthly pension, which he pegged at P2,000 (contrary to Ricarte's testimony that the pension amounted to P1,000). Aguinaldo (ibid.) said the pension was "a prized possession because of the patriotic history connected with it" and he could not "relinquish it without detriment to [his] personal welfare." He added that he would contribute half of his pension to the Japanese authorities to "aid in the greater task . . . of establishing a co-prosperity sphere among the various peoples of Greater East Asia with governments of their own but 'with Japan as the centripetal power'" (ibid.).

Japanese authorities denied his petition but granted him permission to use vehicles, including some trucks or buses, for his transportation business. Despite the denial, Aguinaldo supported the Japanese in many ways such as the propaganda campaign for the "unsundered" soldiers hiding in the mountains. As a member of the Council of State, he even participated in Japan's pacification campaign in the name of attaining Philippine independence.

Japan's Supremacy and Aguinaldo's Collaboration

The Japanese used Aguinaldo because they recognized his great influence over certain segments of the populace, as reflected in their strong support for him during the 1935 elections. Despite his advanced age, he worked to promote Japan's cause in the Philippines and discredit the United States (People's Court ca. 1945). Aside from the independence issue, Aguinaldo's messages during the pacification campaign dwelt on the futile resistance of Filipino and American soldiers or guerrillas against the Japanese military power and the casualties or destruction caused by the attacks of American forces. He accepted the independence that Japan promised to grant, provided it hastened the date of independence.

The most controversial task the Japanese assigned to Aguinaldo was the propaganda campaign to get Gen. Douglas MacArthur to surrender in Bataan. On 30 January 1942 Aguinaldo (ca. 1942) met with the newly appointed Japanese consul, Katsumi Niro, to talk about Aguinaldo's message for MacArthur's "honorable surrender." Aguinaldo's (1942b) famous radio address on 1 February was aired over KZRH (now DZRH). In his message he asked MacArthur to surrender and thereby prevent further bloodshed. He affirmed that, if the US ended the war, Japan would grant the Philippines independence so that Filipinos could settle down and participate in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Aguinaldo's (ibid.) message emphasized Japan's military supremacy and the futility of resistance, the very reasons he used to persuade Filipino soldiers to surrender. He also offered his honorable surrender to the Japanese in the same message to MacArthur, assuring him that surrender "cannot mar the brilliance of [his] military career" and that his "love of humanity, which is not in conflict with your military valor, will be known and thanked for" (ibid.).

Most USAFFE soldiers who had not surrendered ignored Aguinaldo's exhortations, although some did voluntarily surrender. In Aguinaldo's (1942f) message to Filipino guerrillas in the Filipino language on 11 June and in English on 2 August, he requested them to surrender, even hinting at the possibility of an amnesty.

In October 1942 Aguinaldo initiated his propaganda campaign targeted at former USAFFE soldiers who became guerrillas in Iloilo under Tomas Confesor. With the approval of Lt. Gen. Shizu-ichi Tanaka, Aguinaldo (ca. 1942) sent Jose Gamu to deliver a message to Confesor. Written in Spanish

with an English translation, the letter of Aguinaldo requested Confesor to surrender, telling the latter he could use the letter itself as a safe-conduct pass. Aguinaldo (1942g) also expressed admiration for Confesor's sacrifice in commanding guerrillas but stressed the futility of resistance.

Aguinaldo pointed out that the Philippines could not expect anything from the US because when MacArthur left the country after having destroyed bridges and burned cities, he brought with him all of the country's wealth. He emphasized that Filipinos should accept Tojo's pledge of independence and that independence, whether "it came from Tokyo or Washington," was an opportunity "within reach" (ibid.).

In December 1942 Aguinaldo tried to get in touch with several hardliners among the guerrilla leaders in northern Luzon, namely, Ilocos Norte Gov. Roque Ablan and Cagayan Gov. Marcelo Adduru. Aguinaldo met with Col. Sadaharu Honda, chief of the Department of Peace and Order of the Japanese Army, to discuss his plan. He sent his message, dated 16 December 1942, to the two guerrilla leaders through one of his men, Lt. Emilio Gannanban. Like his prior messages, this message mentioned the futility of resistance and urged the guerrilla leaders to surrender to and trust the Japanese so that Filipinos could expect the forthcoming independence that Tojo had pledged. It further added the notion of Asianism that might be associated with Japan's intention for waging war.

It is evident too that Japan is the natural leader of all oriental people. She wants us to realize that we are not inferior to any other race and that there is no reason why the Oriental races should forever be dominated by the whites. In this sense the present war that she is waging has a lofty purpose which should be lauded by all the peoples of East Asia. With Japan as the leader of the co-prosperity sphere, the Philippines and all the other peoples within the sphere will be assured of protection against any attempted aggression by any other power, for she will never again allow any Occidental nation to conquer any of the territories in Great East Asia. This she can easily do because of geographical proximity. (Aguinaldo 1942h)

Aguinaldo became quite vigorous in his propaganda campaign to convince guerrillas in northern Luzon. On 24 December 1942 Aguinaldo (1942i, 1) wrote a memorandum requesting safe-conduct passes for his

agents⁵ while they delivered letters to the guerrilla leaders. He congratulated the Japanese Military Administration (JMA) for abolishing all political parties. Perhaps this move led to the creation of the KALIBAPI, Kapisanan ng Paglilingkod sa Bagong Pilipinas (Association for Service to the New Philippines). KALIBAPI was “incessantly combated by the Association of the Veterans of the Philippine Revolution for many thirty years” (ibid.). In the memorandum he also suggested that the Philippines be renamed the “Tagalog Islands” inasmuch as the word “Philippines” was derived from the name of the Spanish monarch (ibid., 3).

Aguinaldo conducted his pacification campaign in collaboration with the Kempeitai (Japanese Military Police). It was considerably effective such that some former USAFFE soldiers surrendered to the Japanese. During the first half of 1943, Aguinaldo’s pacification activities focused on northern Luzon including Cagayan, Ilocos Norte, Abra, and Pangasinan. In these areas Aguinaldo commissioned his former subordinates to distribute pamphlets to guerrillas. From January to March 1943 Pedro Dancel y Garcia, one of Aguinaldo’s men, asked Col. Blas Villamor, a former Aguinaldo subordinate, to approach guerrilla leaders in Ilocos Norte including Ablan. As a result two soldiers surrendered with their guns in the municipality of Dingras, and so did forty other former USAFFE men in the municipality of Piddig. During this campaign, the Kempeitai followed suit by ordering all USAFFE men to surrender after guaranteeing them freedom and immunity. Aguinaldo mobilized his trucks in northern Luzon for his emissaries’ transport needs and to convey soldiers who had surrendered to Japanese army camps (Dancel 1943).

Through Villamor’s efforts Lt. Feliciano Madamba, one of the most distinguished guerrilla leaders in Ilocos Norte, surrendered in April 1943. On 15 April Emilio Medina (1943), the Japanese-sponsored governor of Ilocos Norte, wrote about Aguinaldo praising Villamor’s efforts and informing him of the tranquil situation in the province after Madamba’s surrender. Following the surrender of several prominent guerrilla leaders in the Ilocos region, a few USAFFE men also surrendered.

Aguinaldo and Tojo’s Promise of Independence

Having engaged in this pacification campaign, Aguinaldo expected Japan to grant Philippine independence in 1943. On 13 April 1942, Aguinaldo (1942d) sent a letter to General Wachi, director-general of the JMA, congratulating

him for the speech he delivered at Luneta after the fall of Bataan. In this letter Aguinaldo (ibid.) emphasized the nature of Asianism that Japan had shown in its benevolent and indubitable intention of “liberat[ing] the Oriental peoples from the domination of the Occident”:

The fall of Bataan is doubly significant: first, it proved the might of an Oriental race; secondly, it showed the benevolent intentions of the great Japanese Empire. One of the oft-repeated arguments against the grant of Philippine independence advanced by the American imperialists in the past was the so-styled Japanese menace, meaning that as soon as independence was granted, Japan swoops down upon the Philippines and subjugates and oppresses us. With Japan’s assurance now of independence in the near future, the mendacity of that propaganda is evident; and with the co-prosperity sphere that is being established under the aegis of Japan of which the Philippines will be a member, the unselfishness and the beneficent intentions of His Majesty, the Emperor, become an object lesson to the world. It is now too clear to be doubted that Japan’s holy aim is to liberate the Oriental peoples from the domination of the Occident. For this reason her leadership will be acclaimed throughout East Asia.

In the first half of the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, Aguinaldo’s message centered on Japanese supremacy and the devastation that the bombing by American forces caused. When the inauguration of Philippine independence (Second Republic) drew near, Aguinaldo’s discourse increasingly dwelt on Asianism.

His discourse on the rise of the Orient might be associated with his inclination toward Japan during the struggle against Spain and the US. According to the book compiled by the Black Dragon Society (Kokuryukai),⁶ Aguinaldo was drawn toward Japan when he sought help from the Japanese government to extend military assistance to the revolutionary forces in July 1899. Aguinaldo expressed his sentiments toward Japan when he talked to Lt. Tei Hara of the Japanese Navy in Manila: “Japan was the only nation in Asia overwhelming Western power in the region. I cannot trust the white race anymore particularly American people in pursuing our independence movement” (Kokuryukai 1966, 637–38). During his conversation with

several Japanese nationalists in Hong Kong in the late nineteenth century, he denied the superiority of the white race and praised Japan for its role in the independence movements in Asia. Although he acknowledged American colonial power in the Philippines prior to the Japanese occupation of the country, he still desired to achieve freedom for the Philippines on his own terms. In this context he was against the political style of Filipino elites, such as Quezon or Osmeña, who acted pro-American at that time. During the Japanese occupation, his inclination toward Japan became obvious after the creation of the Preparatory Commission for Philippine Independence (PCPI) in June 1943.

Initially Tojo did not specify a date for Philippine independence. All he said was that it would be granted as soon as the Philippines had substantially progressed in cooperating with the Japanese empire and in the restoration of order and security. However, because of the collaboration efforts of the Council of State, the early grant of independence loomed around May 1943. On 5 May Tojo made a second visit to Manila and was visibly impressed by the Filipinos' show of loyalty. Upon his return to Tokyo, he reported to the Diet that the entire Filipino people under the leadership of Jorge Vargas were positively cooperating with the JMA and fully understanding the intention of Japan. On 15 June Tojo announced that Japan would accord the honor of independence to the Philippines during the current year. Four days later the KALIBAPI approved the formation of a committee to prepare the country for independence. This committee became known as the PCPI.

On 18 June 1943 the composition of the PCPI was announced: Jose Laurel was appointed president and Ramon Avanceña and Benigno Aquino Sr. were first and second vice-presidents, respectively. The next day Laurel appointed Aguinaldo as a member of the PCPI.⁷ Aguinaldo participated in the PCPI's main task: drafting a new Philippine constitution. A few days earlier, at the annual AVR convention with 12 June, he delivered a speech pledging sincere cooperation to Japan in building a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (AVR 1943). More importantly, he discussed Japanese superiority in the context of a wider Oriental race and expressed his reasons why Filipinos could not trust the independence that the Americans had promised to grant in 1946.

Aguinaldo (ca. 1943) began the 12 June speech by stressing that Japan should be the leader in Asia as "protector of all the weak peoples of Asia" and not the West. He added, "The peoples of Asia are more ancient than

the peoples of the West. The civilization of the world had its beginnings in Asia." Secondly, concerning American colonialism and the independence that would be granted by the United States, Aguinaldo (ibid.) said: "She [the US] could have been noble and magnanimous then by recognizing the Republic that we have already established. Instead, she chose the role of a selfish colonizer and would not agree to set us free by 1946 if our products had not competed with her in her own market."

In the same speech Aguinaldo (ibid.) recalled the Philippine–American War that "pictured to us the selfishness of American ends." He also criticized Quezon for providing MacArthur with more than P60,000 compensation per month and luxurious accommodation at the Manila Hotel in the late 1930s while he was military advisor of the Commonwealth Government. Aguinaldo frequently depicted American colonial rule in the country as "a rule full of selfishness (ibid.)."

Along with Aguinaldo's 12 June speech, the AVR submitted three resolutions: the first addressed to Lt. Gen. Shigenori Kuroda, the highest commander of the Japanese Army; the second to the Philippine Executive Commission; and the third to the KALIBAPI (AVR 1943). In the first resolution, Aguinaldo pledged to Japan the AVR's total and unconditional cooperation. In the second resolution he commended the Philippine Executive Commission for its "splendid work and pledged to it the unconditional support and cooperation of all its members." In the last he again pledged the association's adherence to the concept and ideal of the KALIBAPI (Aguinaldo 1943b). Two days after this convention, he sent an official correspondence to Tojo through the JMA. Aguinaldo (1943a) reiterated what he mentioned in his speech, describing the independence to be granted by Japan as "the potent remedy for eradicating American influence which has been rooted deeply in these islands for the last 45 years" and as "the key to complete peace in the country."

For the record, the real reason behind Japan's grant of an early independence to the Philippines even in the first stage of its occupation was that Japanese military officials thought early independence would stabilize the peace and order situation amid ongoing guerrilla warfare. Although Aguinaldo's discourse conformed to this line of reasoning, he was not always submissive to Japan's occupation policy. As a PCPI member he had objections to the first draft of the constitution, called for an amendment, and eventually resigned from the committee.

Aguinaldo's Objections to the 1943 Constitution

While belief in their supremacy led Aguinaldo to accept Japanese rule in the country, he was disappointed with some measures they implemented.

Firstly, Japanese authorities dissolved the AVR on 19 June 1943, since they considered it a political party that should be incorporated to the KALIBAPI (Jose 2001, 163). In a speech Aguinaldo (ca. 1943) claimed that the AVR “is not a political association. It is purely civic, devoted to the mutual interests of its members, and is composed of the remnants of our struggle for liberty twice against Spain and once against the United States.” His remonstrations went for naught. Two days earlier, Aquino (1943), KALIBAPI director-general, expressed his regret to Aguinaldo over the AVR’s dissolution and appealed to all members to join the KALIBAPI.

Secondly, Aguinaldo objected to the first draft of the constitution for the Second Republic of the Philippines, which was to be inaugurated in October 1943. The contents of the so-called 1943 Constitution were presumably patterned after those of the 1935 Constitution. The PCPI used the 1935 charter as a template and made simple retouches—replacing the word “Commonwealth” with “Republic of the Philippines”; striking out the word “democracy,” since the Japanese were quite allergic to it; substituting “ministers” for “department secretaries”; and retaining practically the entire “Bill of Rights,” but renaming it “Duties and Rights of the Citizen.” The adoption of a new charter was a procedural matter; the Japanese could not have cared less, although they monitored its drafting (Saulo 1992, 136–37). However, the executive branch in the 1943 Constitution became more powerful than that in the 1935 charter. Minoru Shiba, judiciary advisor of the JMA of the Fourteenth Japanese Army, virtually drafted by himself the fundamental form of government in the 1943 Constitution. In an interview with *Yomiuri Shimbun* in 1970, Shiba (1970) narrated that the Japanese military authorities eagerly wanted to vest executive power on the president to facilitate the implementation of Japanese occupation policy.

Prior to the final drafting of the constitution in September, Aguinaldo (1943b) submitted to the PCPI on 20 August 1943 the official correspondence titled “Objections to the Draft of the Constitution Presented by the Drafting Committee.” Aguinaldo’s comments focused on the possibility of dictatorship in the draft constitution, which according to him ran against the essence of a republican form of government “because the powers conferred upon the President are so absolute and illimitable that two influential persons may

make arrangements to be elected alternatively to the position of President for six years each and continue in power thru the subsequent election of their descendants”(ibid.).

Aguinaldo added that Section 2, Article II, of the draft regarding the executive branch of government was undemocratic. The draft defined the election of president as “by a majority of all the members of the National Assembly at the place and on the date to be fixed by law.” The National Assembly “shall be composed of the provincial governors and city mayors as members ex-officio, and of delegates to be elected every three years, one from each and every province and chartered city.” Aguinaldo claimed this procedure was undemocratic because a National Assembly composed of officials in the executive branch who were presidential appointees would be electing the president (cf. Chan Robles Virtual Library 2012). The PCPI tried to amend the provision on the impeachment of the president; however, according to Aguinaldo (1943b), the result was practically the same, as though no provision for impeachment was made since it was coursed through the National Assembly. Aguinaldo (ibid.) was also alarmed by Section 9, Article III, which gave the president the power of absolute veto over whatever bill was passed by the National Assembly, which could not overturn the president’s veto (ibid.).

Apparently Aguinaldo aspired for the presidency of the occupied Philippines as seen in his strong opposition to the provision on age qualification for candidacy. He preferred a minimum age limit of 60 years old, instead of 40 years old as in the draft, because “for such an important position as chief of state, and as the venerable father of the people and the nation, what is necessary are persons who . . . are mature and reflexive and not impulsive . . . the maturity and experience of the individuals will always be the major guarantee of our actuations” (ibid.).

On 25 August 1943 Aguinaldo (1943c) wrote PCPI president Laurel to say that, if his suggestion on the election of president could not be carried out, then not only National Assembly members but also municipal mayors and councilors should be entitled to vote for the president; “otherwise a better solution be thought of which would win the support of the people, so that they may not deny us their cooperation.” He also suggested that the PCPI consider the option (which it adopted) of requesting the Emperor of Japan to appoint the president “from the members of the Executive Commission, Council of State, and others, to be submitted by the PCPI

(excluding myself, for I do not wish to be a candidate now that we shall already get our independence)” (ibid.). Aguinaldo finally gave up on his objection to the presidency as a potential dictatorship. Initially he thought that the presidency should be democratically elected, but later changed his mind. This inconsistency could well be seen in the context of an imminent war the Philippines faced at the time:

For as soon as the Japanese Forces are withdrawn from the Philippines, we shall be very weak in the beginning and the Government will not be as stable. Once we are free, and because of the heavy responsibility that rests on our shoulders (which even now is already staggering), it would be impossible for us not to declare war against the nations now at war with Japan, so that our people would not forsake us and we would not have to suffer the same fate that President Quezon suffered, who escaped and left his country, to seek refuge in America, carrying with him the wealth of the country. Otherwise, we would see ourselves hiding in Japan. (ibid.)

In his 25 August 1943 letter to Laurel, Aguinaldo (ibid.) expressed his intention to resign from the PCPI, pointing out that Aquino, one of the PCPI commissioners, had accused all members of insincerity in performing their duty. Aguinaldo (ibid.) denied Aquino’s accusation and resented it so much that he felt it best to resign. Shiba (1970) surmised that Aguinaldo’s disappointment over the draft constitution could be connected with his resignation plan.

Laurel (1943) replied to Aguinaldo on 4 September that he could not accept the suggestion to amend the constitution because the Japanese authorities had already approved the final draft. Laurel (ibid.) also stated that he had no power to accept Aguinaldo’s resignation. In any case, by the time Aguinaldo attempted to resign, there was not much left to do except to sign the constitution. He eventually gave up on his objections. On 9 September Aguinaldo (1943d) informed the JMA director-general that he had already signed the 1943 Constitution, while he reconsidered his tender of resignation.

Aguinaldo’s Final Message under the Second Republic

When the Second Philippine Republic was inaugurated on 14 October 1943, the PCPI had been dissolved. Aguinaldo attended the inauguration ceremony, in which Ricarte hoisted the Philippine flag, while Laurel took his oath as president (fig. 2).

Aguinaldo’s life under the Second Republic was relatively calm compared with his previous political activities. Nevertheless, he was still involved in propaganda activities with the Japanese Propaganda Corps, enticing guerrillas in Luzon to surrender. Aguinaldo (ca. 1942) continued to engage in business transactions with Japanese companies, such as when he sold a Ford V8 truck to the Furukawa Mining Company for P23,000 in November 1943.

As he had done before, in 1944 Aguinaldo delivered messages over KZRH to stress the futility of resistance. Emphasizing what he called the “deceit of America in the war,” he tended to criticize the brutality of US forces, which supposedly became apparent in the last phase of the war. The



Fig. 2. Aguinaldo (*left*) listens as Pres. Jose P. Laurel delivers a speech during the inauguration of the Japanese-sponsored Second Republic of the Philippines on 14 October 1943

Source: Dumindin 2006

destruction caused by war, according to Aguinaldo, could be attributed to Japan's counterattack against US forces. Aguinaldo's (1944c) radio message of 29 September 1944 condemned the US for its improper strategy of advancing against Japan through the Philippines and in the process putting more Filipinos in harm's way. As Aguinaldo (*ibid.*) stated,

It is not fair that she should over-run our country, because whether she intends to or not, in so doing, she cannot help but kill thousands of Filipinos. True, there are legions of Japanese troops here. But I reply that it is not the fault of the Filipinos that the Japanese were able to conquer the country; it is exclusively the fault of the United States, the inevitable result of her unpreparedness. Japanese and Filipinos are now so intermixed here that, even in military objectives, for one Japanese killed, there might be forty of fifty Filipinos killed besides.

While Aguinaldo admitted Japanese atrocities in the Philippines, still he pinned the blame on American military strategy for those atrocities. Although he viewed the war situation as no longer in Japan's advantage, he still commended Japan for enabling the Filipinos to "establish our Second Republic . . . [one that] would be real and lasting" (*ibid.*).

Aguinaldo seemed to trust Japanese authorities in Manila as well as the Second Republic during the final stages of the war. During the first anniversary of the Second Republic on 14 October 1944, he stated in a press release for Tokyo that "If the United States should persist in her poor and dilatory strategy, we have no other alternative but to defend ourselves" (CIC 1945d).

From Arrest to Postwar Retirement

Amid the raging battle between US and Japanese forces in Manila until 3 February 1945, the CIC of the US Army started investigating the case of Aguinaldo's collaboration with the Japanese. Initially the CIC could not locate Aguinaldo. Residents who lived near his AVR office in Binondo did not know his whereabouts. According to Vicente Agoncillo (1945), known to be his neighbor in Manila, Aguinaldo had been in hiding for about two weeks since the American advance to the city. However, this testimony

might be problematic because anti-Japanese guerrillas arrested Aguinaldo on 8 February 1945.

According to the memorandum of the 306th CIC, the Marking Guerrillas Unit arrested Aguinaldo for treason. Seemingly this group acted based on their grudge against him or the intrigue sowed between him and the group. No sooner had the CIC begun to search for Aguinaldo in Manila than Maj. Juanito Gelito, the Marking Guerrillas leader, ordered his men to arrest Aguinaldo. Since the guerrilla unit was headquartered at San Nicolas, Manila, it was easy for them to locate Aguinaldo. Gelito's men raided Aguinaldo's office on 8 February and then arrested Aguinaldo. On 12 February the CIC interviewed one of Gelito's men, Tomas Carillo, who stated that San Nicolas residents had clamored for Aguinaldo's execution because of his pro-Japanese activities (Emilito 1945).

Upon his arrest, Aguinaldo was taken to the "Jacky Club" in Manila and afterwards to the headquarters of the 306th CIC for further investigation (*ibid.*). From the CIC office he was incarcerated in Bilibid that same day. Four days later the 493rd CIC Detachment released Aguinaldo and informed him he would be placed under house arrest at his home in Binondo (CIC 1945a; CIC 1945b, 1945d; People's Court 1945).

The CIC investigated Aguinaldo's treason case while he was on house arrest. During the investigation, he complained of the raid carried out by the Marking Guerrillas and their rude conduct when he was in their custody on 8 February. In an official correspondence written in Spanish and addressed to the chief of CIC Manila on 25 April, he claimed that the intrigue sowed by Gelito, who was from San Nicolas, caused his arrest (Aguinaldo 1945b; CIC 1945c). He added that, following his arrest, Marking Guerrillas looted the AVR building and took, among other things, two old and historic Philippine flags with gold shields; four rings and other jewelry; his personal clothes; documents of great value; and P10,000 in Philippine currency and P20,000 in Japanese currency (*ibid.*). He also complained that one of the guerrillas raped his niece Aurelia Agoncillo (1945), a young clerk at the office.

The second part of his letter to the CIC chief contained a request to present his own defense (Aguinaldo 1945b; CIC 1945c). He justified his collaboration with the Japanese by emphasizing Japan's supremacy during the occupation period. He claimed to have always been a loyal friend of the US and made a general plea for all political collaborators, whom he

attested were more pro-American than pro-Filipino when they were serving the Japanese. He stated that these men collaborated with the Japanese to save their lives and prevent the country from further suffering. He appealed to the American people for justice and to MacArthur to grant all political collaborators amnesty and allow them to help in the country's reconstruction (ibid.). Aguinaldo believed this move would be a step forward in bringing peace and order to the nation.

To the CIC Aguinaldo was simply justifying his collaboration with the Japanese. His February 1942 radio address calling for MacArthur's "honorable surrender" was, according to him, a nonviolent means of achieving peace and order. He explained his propaganda campaign as his way to avoid the "useless sacrifices on the part of the Filipinos" (Aguinaldo 1942b). He then summarized his reasons why he doubted the US and lamented that the US attacked the Philippines instead of attacking Japan directly (ibid.).

Discussing the question of American and Filipino prisoners of war (POWs) as an example, Aguinaldo stated that those who like himself cooperated with the Japanese improved the sad condition of the country. And, although collaborators failed in freeing the American POWs, they nevertheless succeeded in freeing the Filipino ones. He ended his letter to the CIC Chief with a "plea for an understanding" and emphasized that he "had never desired political power" either under the Americans or the Japanese, but that he had "always been sincere in his efforts" toward Philippine independence and bringing about the Filipinos' happiness and prosperity (Aguinaldo 1945b; CIC 1945c). He also made a request for his "liberation and exoneration from all charges" brought against him (ibid.).

Despite his appeal to the CIC Manila investigator, Aguinaldo's case was eventually turned over to the special prosecutors in the Department of Justice for trial under the People's Court. On 9 March 1946 Aguinaldo faced eleven counts of treason in accordance with Philippine Commonwealth law. He was accused of collaborating "wholeheartedly" with the Japanese, accepting the offer of membership in the Council of State; joining the PCPI; delivering a message to MacArthur for the latter's surrender; urging several governors in northern Luzon to surrender; and propagating messages that the Americans would never return to the Philippines (People's Court 1945).

Like most cases filed against collaborators such as Vargas or Laurel, Aguinaldo's was categorized as political collaboration. Eventually,

however, political and economic collaborators enjoyed more favorable conditions. On 28 January 1948, Pres. Manuel Roxas, whose collaboration MacArthur immediately absolved, declared amnesty for all political and economic collaborators (De Viana 2003, 191–213). A day after the amnesty proclamation, the People's Court dismissed Aguinaldo's case (ibid., 210). In fact, the trial of Aguinaldo was never held.⁸ He then returned to his hometown to quietly spend the twilight years of his life. Although he appeared in public in 1950 when Pres. Elpidio Quirino appointed him a member of the Council of State in Malacañang, he returned to retirement soon after, dedicating his time and attention to veteran soldiers' "interests and welfare." When Pres. Diosdado Macapagal moved the celebration of Independence Day in 1962 from 4 July to 12 June, Aguinaldo made sure to attend that year's commemoration despite poor health and illness (Wikipedia [n.d.]; *Manila Times* 1964).

Conclusion

Since the end of the Asia-Pacific War, but especially after his death on 6 February 1964, numerous books and articles have depicted Aguinaldo as a Filipino nationalist, praising him as one of the most distinguished figures in Philippine history. In contrast, historians like Joaquin have evaluated his nationalism objectively and concluded that his heroism was problematic. After the revolutionary period, Aguinaldo, unlike Ricarte, seemed to have enjoyed a luxurious life during which his political thoughts were strongly influenced by American democracy. Meanwhile, Ricarte was still as stubborn as a former Katipunero desiring Philippine independence.

Although influenced by democratic norms (Aguinaldo and Pacis 1957, 182) Aguinaldo had a great affection for Japan, not seen in other Filipino elites or cabinet members of the Quezon administration (Recto 1946/1985, 101), as evidenced by his suggestion contained in the 1943 Constitution that the Japanese Emperor appoint the Philippine president. Aguinaldo stressed in his memoir that he was "helplessly" misused by the Japanese, forced to be involved in the Japanese propaganda "backed by barbaric military ruthlessness" (Aguinaldo and Pacis 1957, 181–83). However, he could not deny that he had an inclination toward Japan, which had been nurtured since the late nineteenth century and had definitely led to his collaboration with the Japanese.

As a way of accounting for his inconsistencies, it can be said that Aguinaldo was quite opportunistic. When the CIC investigated him for treason, he even made a contradictory remark on his career in the past. For example, Aguinaldo (1945b) stressed that he had never desired political power either under the Americans or the Japanese. If that were the case, how would he explain his decision to run for president in 1935 and his Council of State membership under Japanese rule? Although Teodoro Agoncillo (1965, 388) said that Aguinaldo had no solid political support from any sector at the time, the latter obviously pursued his presidential ambitions as Ricarte had done in the Makapili movement.

Both Aguinaldo and Ricarte had their lifelong ambition to attain Philippine independence under the tutelage of two imperialistic powers, America and Japan. What would distinguish them from each other? Ricarte was pure and naïve in his quest for independence, while Aguinaldo was realistic and practical especially with regard to money matters.

That Aguinaldo always had financial matters in mind during the Japanese occupation and even after the war shows another aspect of his logic of submission and collaboration. Aguinaldo pleaded with the Japanese for his pension, which might be one of his motives for collaborating with them. A CIC memorandum dated 17 July 1945 mentioned his request for the Japanese currency he earned to be recognized at 50 percent par value because such a move would discourage banditry; he also disclosed a deposit of more than P200,000 with the Philippine National Bank or PNB (Aguinaldo 1945b). Aguinaldo's (1944a) purchase of two parcels of land in Mamburao, Mindoro, for which he paid more than P16,000 to the PNB, which possessed this property during the Japanese occupation, reflected his affluence.⁹

However, money does not totally explain his collaboration with imperial powers, for he was a wise tactician who maneuvered to survive any harsh turn of events in Philippine history. Once he realized American supremacy, he gave in and collaborated with them. He viewed the Japanese occupation in the same way.

Aguinaldo's quest for independence hinged upon his subjugation to the supremacy of colonial powers. He chose to submit to the two colonizers, under which he sought to find another way toward independence. With this protracted approach to independence Aguinaldo eschewed martyrdom and kept silent on accusations against him—such as his roles in events like Andres Bonifacio's execution, Antonio Luna's assassination, his capture in

1901, and the fall of the First Republic—until he published his “Paunang Salita” after the war (Aguinaldo ca. 1946/2002). Even then he did not address all accusations. Since quitting the fight against America to submit to its colonial power, one wonders if in fact Aguinaldo's desire for independence had already vanished.

Abbreviations Used

AVR	Asociación de los Veteranos de la Revolución (Association of Veterans of the Revolution)
CIC	Counter Intelligence Corps
JMA	Japanese Military Administration
KALIBAPI	Kapisanan ng Paglilingkod sa Bagong Pilipinas (Association for Service to the New Philippines)
PCP	People's Court Papers, Special Collections, Main Library, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City
PCPI	Preparatory Commission for Philippine Independence
PNB	Philippine National Bank
UP Filipiniana	Filipiniana Section, Main Library, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City
USAFFE	United States Army Forces in the Far East

Notes

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- 1 In this article the period covered by the Japanese occupation of the Philippines is called “Asia-Pacific War,” not Second World War.
- 2 Kaneshiro Ota was the official Spanish interpreter for Ricarte, who was attached to the JMA. He was one of Ricarte's students in Kaigai Shokumin Gakko in Tokyo, where Ricarte taught the Spanish language as a part-time faculty member (Ara 1997, 51, 130; Ota 1972, 87–90, 118).
- 3 As for Quezon's political style Aguinaldo stated: “My decision to run in 1935 was perhaps influenced more than anything else by an observation I had made during the Wood–Quezon quarrel, in which I had supported the Governor General. At that time, I convinced myself that Quezon's long nationalistic career had made him an advocate and practitioner of government of

men and not of laws, unfitting him for the necessary and primary task under the Commonwealth of educating the people in constitutionalism" (Aguinaldo and Pacis 1957, 178).

- 4 The details on Aguinaldo's acquisition of friar lands still require thorough research, which I may be able to undertake in the future.
- 5 The agents mentioned by Aguinaldo (1942i), who were all under his influence, were as follows: in La Union: Bernardo de la Peña (Banagar), Mariano Gaerlan (San Juan), and Valeriano Idalgo (San Fernando); in Ilocos Norte: Basilio Aguinaldo (Pasuquin), Apolinar Madamba (Laoag), and Teodulo Ruiz (Sarrat); in Cagayan: Emilio Gannanban (Lal-lo), Geminiano Villaflor (Tuguegarao), and Crescenoio Almeda (Aparri); in the Mountain Province: Blas Villamor y Borbon (Bangued or Apayao), Juan Kibal (Rizal, Cagayan), and Manuel Guzman (Enrile, Cagayan); in Isabela: Leoncio de Villa (Cordon), Placido Buensuceso (San Mariano or Palanan), and one Samson (Ilagan); in Nueva Vizcaya: Silvino Palugod (Dupax), Hermenegildo Sotto (Solano), and Felix Maddela (Solano); in Negros Oriental: Jose Gamu (Tolon Viejo) and Teodocio Buenaventura (Guihulngan).
- 6 The Black Dragon Society (Kokuryukai) is an association founded by an ultranationalist group in Japan headed by Mitsuru Toyama.
- 7 The PCPI was composed of the following: Emilio Aguinaldo, Antonio de las Alas, Rafael Alunan Jr., Benigno Aquino Sr., Melecio Arranz, Ramon Avanceña, Manuel Briones, Jose Laurel, Vicente Madrigal, Camilo Osias, Quintin Paredes, Claro Recto, Manuel Roxas, Pedro Sabido, Sultan sa Rmain, Teofilo Sison, Emiliano Tria Tirona, Miguel Unson, Jorge Vargas, and Jose Yulo (Aguinaldo ca. 1942).
- 8 A perusal of the records shows that several court hearings for Aguinaldo's arraignment had been set first on 25 June 1946 (People's Court 1946b), then postponed to 10 July (People's Court 1946c), and after a "motion to quash" filed by his lawyer, Atty. Jose Melencio, was denied, an actual hearing for Aguinaldo's arraignment was held on 17 Aug. 1946. During this hearing Aguinaldo pleaded not guilty to the charge of the crime of treason (People's Court 1946a). Responding to the denial of his motion to quash on the grounds that there had been said to be illegality in the gathering of evidence against Aguinaldo, Atty. Melencio filed a motion for reconsideration on 26 Aug. 1946. While waiting for the court's decision, Aguinaldo's case was dismissed on 29 Jan. 1948.
- 9 In August 1944 this parcel of land was transferred to Cristina Aguinaldo Suntay, one of Aguinaldo's (1944b) sisters then living in Hagonoy, Bulacan.

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