

# TUTURAN

PROGRESS & TRANSFORMATION



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*A photograph of  
Andres Bonifacio reproduced in  
Manuel Artigas y Cuerva,  
Andres Bonifacio y "El Katipunan"  
Reseña Historica Bio-Bibliografica  
(Manila: Imp. de "La Vanguardia",  
Vol. II, 1911)*



# ANDRES BONIFACIO

## FATHER OF THE FILIPINO NATION

**A**ndres Bonifacio founded the Katipunan in 1892, initiated the Philippine Revolution and established the first national government in 1896, and was the first Philippine president, from 24 August 1896 to 10 May 1897.<sup>1</sup>

### The Katipunan

The propaganda movement failed to convince the Madrid government to muster the political will to bring about urgent reforms in Manila. The Filipino activists in Europe realized that change had to come about from within the Philippines itself.

With this in mind, Jose Rizal came home to the Philippines on 26 June 1892. Upon arrival, he went around the provinces of Manila and Bulacan via the new railroad. After meeting with different local activists, Rizal established a civic society called the *Liga Filipina*. On 3 July, a week after he arrived in Manila, Rizal launched the organization in the house of Doroteo Ong-junco on Ilaya Street, Tondo. The aims of the society were, national unity; mutual aid; common defense; encouragement of education, agriculture and commerce; study and application of reforms.

The *Liga Filipina* was short-lived. On 6 July, Rizal was arrested and detained upon the orders of Governor-General Eulogio Despujol. Two weeks later, he was sent to Dapitan, Mindanao where he lived in exile for four years.<sup>2</sup>

One of the founding members of the Liga was Andres Bonifacio. On 6 and 7 July 1892, when it became apparent that an openly pro-Filipino organization like the *Liga Filipina* was going to be suppressed by the colonial government, Bonifacio and some friends formed a secret society. Among them were Deodato Arellano, Ladislao Diwa, Valentin Diaz, Jose Dizon, and Teodoro Plata.

The organization came to be known as the *Kataastaasan Kagalang-galang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan*. The aim of the Katipunan was to unite the country and to win independence from Spain by means of revolution.

Although the Katipunan had already been founded, Bonifacio continued to work with the *Liga Filipina*, which the more prominent members resurrected in April 1893. Because

A. A. B.

SA MAY NASANG MAKISANIB  
SA KATIPUNANG ITO

Sa pagkakailangan, na ang lahat na nagpumasok sa katipunang ito, ay magkakaibang lubós na pananadig at kaisipan sa mga hinututungo at mga kaaralang pinatuturing pat na ipakilala sa kanilá ang mga bagay na at ng bukas makalawa'y huag silang magtuturing maluang sa kalooban ang kanilang hinututungulin.

Ang kabagayang pinaguusig ng katipunang ito ay lubós na dakila at mahalaga, papagisahin ang loob at kaisipan ng lahat ng tagalog sa pamamagitan ng isang mahigpit na panunumpa, upang sa pagkakaisang ito'y magkalakas iwasak ang masinsing tabing na nakabubulag sa kaisipan at matuklasan ang tunay na larang Katuiran at Kaliwanagan.

(\* Sa salitang *tagalog* katuturan'y ang lahat nang tumubo sa Sangkapuluang ito; sa makatuid, bisaya man, kapangpangan man, etc., ay *tagalog* din.

*Katipunan nang mga A.N.B. - Sa May Nasang Makisanib sa Katipunang Ito*

also known as *Cartilla ng Katipunan*  
written by Emilio Jacinto 1896.

This first edition printed pamphlet contains the famous footnote defining "Tagalog" as people born in the archipelago, regardless of ethnic origin.  
(Emmanuel N. Encarnacion collection, ex-Epifanio delos Santos)

of his personality and communication skills, the Supreme Council of the Liga appointed him chief of propaganda. Bonifacio's success in recruiting members unnerved the more conservative elements of the Liga, who did not agree with his revolutionary ideas. The Liga finally ceased to operate in October 1894.<sup>3</sup>

Bonifacio did not become president of the Katipunan until 1895, although he was always an officer. Under his guidance, the Katipunan prepared for revolution. Emilio Jacinto, Bonifacio's trusted friend and adviser, wrote the *Cartilla* or primer, which embodied the teachings of the organization. The Katipunan operated a clandestine printing press and published a newspaper, *Kalayaan*. By 1896, on the eve of the revolution, membership in the Katipunan had expanded dramatically. Estimates of membership vary from 30,000 to 400,000.<sup>4</sup>

In April 1896, the rebels were reported to have cut railroad lines in Kalookan and environs.<sup>5</sup> And by August 1896, Fray Mariano Gil, the Augustinian curate of Tondo, exposed the threat posed by the Katipunan on the Spanish community. Numerous prominent residents were arrested and detained; houses were raided and searched. Governor-General Ramon Blanco was about to apply the "juer de cachillo" or total annihilation of the Filipino population in a prescribed zone within the areas of the uprising.<sup>6</sup> There was no holding back. The revolution had begun.

**The Birth of a Nation**

The historian Manuel Sastron described the revolution as a "rebellion of the tagalogs against Spanish domination" and "the tagalog insurrection" and referred to "the tagalog rebels".<sup>7</sup> But, it is clear that the 1896 revolution gave birth to the Filipino nation.

Written and published in 1896, the *Katipunan's Cartilla* defined its main objective as: "Ang kabagayang pinaguusig ng katipunang ito ay lubós na dakila at mahalaga; papagisahin ang loob at kaisipan ng lahat ng tagalog (\* sa pamamagitan ng isang mahigpit na panunumpa, upang sa pagkakaisang ito'y magkalakas na iwasak ang masinsing tabing na nakabubulag sa kaisipan at matuklasan ang tunay na landas ng Katuiran at Kaliwanagan. -----

(\* Sa salitang *tagalog* katuturan'y ang lahat nang tumubo sa Sangkapuluang ito; sa makatuid, bisaya man, iloko man, kapangpangan man, etc., ay *tagalog* din."<sup>8</sup>

In this footnote, the term "*Tagalog*" was defined as: all persons born on this archipelago, whether Bisayan, Ilocano, Pampango, etc. Therefore the Tagalog nation or *Katagalugan* consisted not only of Tagalog speakers but included all those who grew up (*tumubo*) in the Philippines, regardless of ethnolinguistic grouping and ancestry.

In their time, the term "Filipino" applied solely to Spaniards born in the archipelago. Bonifacio and Jacinto made "Tagalog" a term applicable to all indios or natives.

In his unpublished memoir, *Pa-ehihimagsik Nang 1896-1897*, written in 1898, Carlos V. Ronquillo explains the concept further: "Ito ang dapat unawain ng mga bumabasa: sa tawag naming tagalog na makikita sa bawa't dahon halos ng kasaysayang ito, ay di ang ibig naging sabihi'y ang paris ng palagay ng iba, na iniuukol lamang sa mga tubong Maynila, Kabite at Bulakan, at iba pa, hinde kundi ang ibig naging tukuyin ay Pilipinas, ...sapagka't sa palagay namin ay ganito ang talagang nararapat ikapit sa tanang anak ng kapilipinuhan.

(\* Sa salitang *tagalog* katuturan'y ang lahat nang tumubo sa Sangkapuluang ito; sa makatuid, bisaya man, iloko man, kapangpangan man, etc., ay *tagalog* din.





Type of medal worn by the *Kawal* or military rebel, as described in the textbooks written by Gregorio F. Zaide and Teodoro A. Agoncillo. (Emmanuel N. Encarnacion collection, ex-Alido P. Basso)

Sumilang na Yná sa sinisikatan  
ang araw ñg poot ñg katagalugan,  
tatlong daang taon nanging iniñgatan  
sa dagat ñg dusa at kapiñgatan.  
Walang sinusuay kaming iyong anak ;  
sa bagyong masasál ñg dálita't hirap  
iisa ang puso nitong Filipinas :  
ikaw ay hindi na Yning matatawag.  
Sa kapua Yná'y wala kang kawañgís  
palayaw sa anak ay dálita't sákit,  
kung mag patirapá sa iyo at humibik,  
ang lunas na gamot ay madlang pasákit.  
Gapusing mahigpit kaming lumuluhog  
lamnguin sa síkad, kulata at suntok,  
makinali't ibitin na gaya ñg hayop :  
¿ ito baga Yná ang iyong pag irog ?  
Ybilango at saka sa dagat itapon  
barilin, lasunin, patain sa gutom ;  
¿ sa aming tagalog, ito baga'y ampon  
ñg Yoáng maguiliw sa lahat ñg kampon ?  
Aming tinitiiis hangang sa mamatiy  
bangkay ñg mistula'y ayaw pang tiguilau,  
kaya kung ihulog sa mga libiñgan  
mga ~~luto~~ y linsad, lamán ay lamuráy.  
Walang masasabi kaming mga anak  
na layaw sa iyo kung hindi pahirap,  
pataas na buis, patente'y nag kalat  
recargong masasál na sákdal ñg bigat.  
Bakuran at bahay na tinatahanan,  
lupaing tubiga't malawak na pirang  
at mga halamang ari nanging túnay  
sa Pareng kastila ay binubuisan.  
Bukod pa sa rito, may iba't iba pa,  
huag ñg saysain ; oh Ynáng España!  
sunód kaming lahat hangang may hiniñga,  
datapua't kami, minamasamapa.  
Ykaw aming Ynáng walang pag mamahal  
pabáyá sa anak at di madaiñgan,  
ihanda mo ñgayon ang mga libiñgan  
at mananawá ka ñg maraming bangkay.  
Ang iyong binusog sa anduka't layaw  
at pinasaganang fraile sa yaman,  
sa iyo'y igñinanti gawing kataksilan,  
kinasanguni mo'y lilihin na kaaway.  
Maiisip baga ñg sino mang anak  
lumabag sa Yná, kung hindi sa hirap  
ñg madlang parusa na lubhang masaklap :  
¿ oh Ynáng España, ito baga ang lingap !  
Sa Sangkapuluan ñgayo'y sumasábog  
malumbay na taghoy ñg dugong nanagos,  
ang baril at cañon katulad ay kulog,  
dagundong ñg balang kakilákilabot.  
Ang mga tagalog na luluhá luhá  
di nag wantay sa España ñg awá :  
lualhating lubos nanin ang mapuksá  
yayamang nais mo ang kami'y madusta.  
Hahatulan ka rin ñg Historiang pahám  
sa dugò at luhá na iyong sinayang  
at sa iyong noo'y kanyang ikikintal  
ang ganitong wiká: LILO'T TAMPALASAN.

*Ang tagalog o lalong malinaw, ang tawag na "tagalog" ay walang ibang kahutugan kundi "tagalog" na sa tuwirang paghuhulo ay taong maibiging manira sa tabi ng ilog, bagay na di maikakaila sa siyang talagang hilig ng tanang anak ang Pilipinas, saa't saan mang pulo at bayan."*<sup>9</sup>

In his patriotic writings, Bonifacio expressed his concept of nationhood. In "K.K.K. Katungkulang Gagawin ng mga Z.L.L.B.", "Pagibig sa Tinubuang Bayan", "Hibikng Filipinas sa Inang Espana", and "Ang Dapat Mabatid ng mga Tagalog", he referred to the Philippine Islands as "sangkapuluan" or "Katagalugan".<sup>10</sup> In a revolutionary leaflet printed in Cavite during the first quarter of 1897, Bonifacio said: "Mabuhay ang Haring Bayang Katagalugan!"<sup>11</sup>

It was clear to Bonifacio and the Katipunan that theirs was a national struggle.

### First Filipino Government

When the plans of a general uprising was discovered, Bonifacio called a general meeting at the barn of Melchora Aquino in barrio Bahay Toro on 24 August 1896. The assembly made three major decisions. First, they declared a nationwide armed revolution to win freedom from Spain. Second, they established a national government. And third, they elected officials who would lead the nation and the army.

In his memoirs, Santiago Alvarez recounts that among those who attended the assembly were Andres Bonifacio, Pio Valenzuela, Emilio Jacinto, Briccio Pantas, Enrique Pacheco, Ramon Bernardo, Pantaleon Torres, Francisco Carreon, Vicente Fernandez, and Teodoro Plata.

The *Katipunan* became an open *de facto* government. Bonifacio had organized the *Katipunan* as a secret organization with its own laws, bureaucratic structure and an elective leadership. But a working government was imperative once the August 1896 revolution began.

Bonifacio, when questioned at Tejeros in Cavite, defined the letter "K" in the *Katipunan* flag to mean *kalayaan* or freedom and explained: "...namula sa Ktt. Pamunuan ng *Katipunan*, hanggan sa kababa-babaan, ay nagkakaisang gumagalang sa pagkakapatiran at pagkakapantay-pantay; namumuhunan ng dugo at buhay laban sa Hari, upang makapagtatag ng sarili at malayang Pamahalaan, na sa makatwid, ay mamahala ang Bayan sa Bayan, at hindi ang isa o dalawang tao lamang." Jacinto Lumbereras stated: "Ang Kapuluan ay pinamamahalaan na ng K.K.K. ang mga Anak ng Bayan, na siyang nagbukas ng Paghihimagsik; may Batas at Alituntuning pinaiiral; sinusunod at iginagalang ng lahat sa pagtatanggol ng Kalayaan, pag-ibig sa kapatid, pag-aayos at pamamalakad ng mga Pamunuan." Santiago Alvarez also said: "Kaming mga *Katipunan* ... ay mga tunay na Manghihimagsik sa pagtatanggol ng Kalayaan ng Bayang tinubuan."<sup>12</sup>

While Bonifacio, Lumbereras and Alvarez defined the moral, democratic, and nationalist bases of that government, some elements were more explicitly republican. One captured official seal, illustrated in the 30 March 1987 issue of the *La Ilustracion Española y Americana*, bore the term "*Republika ng Katagalugan*".<sup>13</sup>

John R. M. Taylor, the American military historian and custodian of the Philippine Insurgent Records who studied the *Katipunan*, concluded that Bonifacio established the first Filipino national government. Taylor interpreted the documents he saw as follows: "The *Katipunan* came out from the cover of secret designs, threw off the cloak of any other purpose, and stood openly for the independence of the Philippines. Bonifacio turned his lodges into battalions, his grandmasters into captains, and the supreme council of the *Katipunan* into the insurgent government for the Philippines."<sup>14</sup>



Andres Bonifacio's decalogue: "K.K.K. Katungkulang gagawin ng mga Z. L. L. B." (or Duties of the Sons of the People) served as the moral code of behavior for the members of the *Katipunan*. In only two hundred five words, Bonifacio succeeded in presenting the fundamental principles, and ideas of love for one's native land, for humanity, for liberty and for independence. Unsigned and undated manuscript. (Jorge T. de los Santos collection, ex-Epifanio de los Santos)



The first presidential seal  
found on the April 1897  
letters of Bonifacio to Jacinto.  
(Emmanuel N. Encarnacion  
collection,  
ex-Epifanio de los Santos.



The Filipino historian Teodoro A. Agoncillo echoed Taylor: "Immediately before the outbreak of the revolution, therefore, Bonifacio organized the Katipunan into a government revolving around a 'cabinet' composed of men of his confidence."<sup>15</sup>

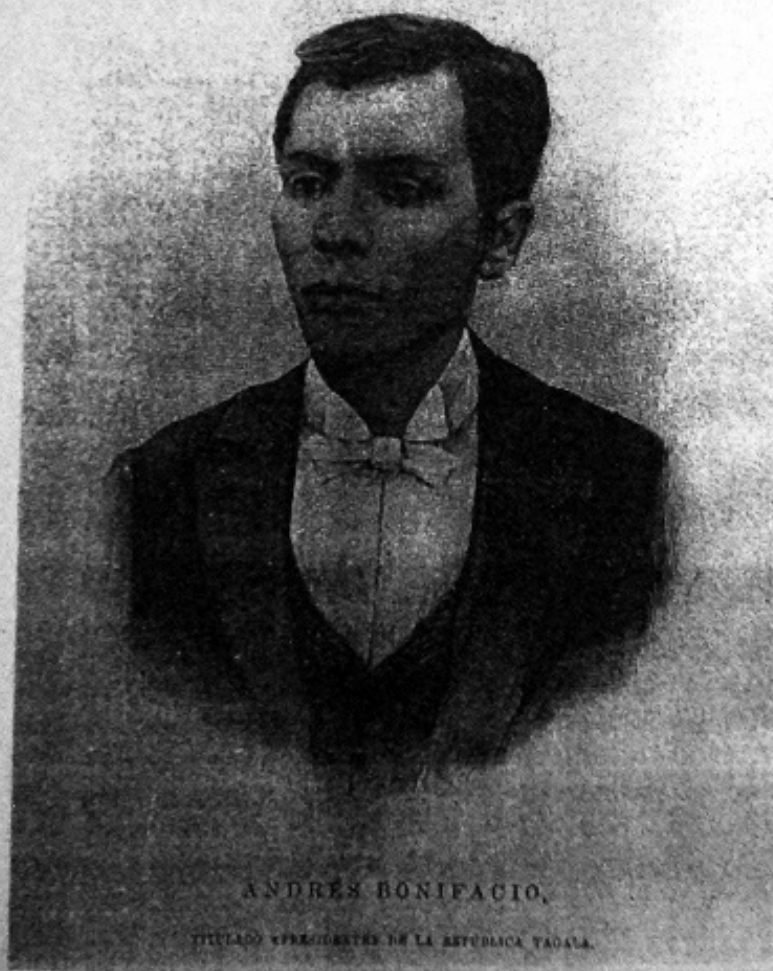
Gregorio F. Zaide also acknowledged Bonifacio's revolutionary government: "The Katipunan was more than a secret revolutionary society; it was, withal, a government. It was the intention of Bonifacio to have the Katipunan govern the whole Philippines after the overthrow of Spanish rule."<sup>16</sup>

### Bonifacio, First President

A far clearer idea of Bonifacio's Katagalugan government became possible in 1988 when the collection of noted historian and former Director of the pre-war Philippine Library and Museum, Epifanio de los Santos, consisting mainly of letters and other important documents signed by Andres Bonifacio, became accessible.

Three Bonifacio letters and one appointment paper written on printed letterheads dated from 8 March to 24 April 1897, and all addressed to Emilio Jacinto, prove that Bonifacio was the first president of a national government. These letters contained the following titles and designations: "Pangulo ng Kataastaasang Kapulungan, Ang Kataastaasang Pangulo, Pangulo nang Haring Bayang Katagalugan, Ang Pangulo ng Haring Bayan, May tayo nang K. K. Katipunan nang mga Anak ng Bayan, Unang nag galaw nang Panghihimagsik, Kataastaasang Panguluhan, Pamahalaan nang Panghihimagsik"<sup>17</sup>

LA ILUSTRACION ESPAÑOLA Y AMERICANA



An engraved  
illustration of  
Andres Bonifacio in  
white tie from the 8  
February 1897  
issue of *La  
Ilustracion  
Española y  
Americana*. Here,  
the government and  
presidency of  
Bonifacio prior to  
the 22 March 1897  
Tejeros Convention  
was reported. Of  
60,000 troops in  
his command,  
20,000 were armed.  
The article referred  
to Aguinaldo as  
generalissimo, or a  
high ranking  
general in  
Bonifacio's army.

The prewar historian Jose P. Bantug acknowledged that Bonifacio was "Kataastaasang Pangulo" and "General No. 1". Jose P. Santos in 1933, and Zaide in 1939, came to the same conclusion and recognized the Bonifacio presidency. However, both men misread the phrase "Ang Haring Bayan", found in the 23 March 1897 Minutes of the Tejeros Assembly, 15 April 1897 Jacinto Appointment Paper, as well as the undated Bonifacio Manifesto entitled "Katipunan Mararahas ng mga Anak ng Bayan", as "Ang Hari ng Bayan". The first term proves that there was a democratic, national government headed by Bonifacio prior to the 22 March 1897 Tejeros Assembly. Santos, Zaide and other post-war historians only interpreted the term, so that they believed that Bonifacio only attempted to establish a government independent of Aguinaldo after the Tejeros Assembly, and therefore he was guilty of treason.<sup>18</sup>

An article about Bonifacio's position in the revolutionary government appeared on 8



February 1897 in *La Ilustracion Española y Americana*. An engraved portrait showing him wearing a black suit and white tie, with the caption "ANDRES BONIFACIO. / TITULADO (PRESIDENTE) DE LA REPUBLICA TAGALA" accompanied the article.

In the text, Bonifacio was described by G. Reparaz as the head of the native government. The reporter referred to Aguinaldo as only a *generalissimo*. The key officers in the Bonifacio government according to Reparaz were as follows: Teodoro Plata, Secretary of War, Emilio Jacinto, Secretary of State; Aguedo del Rosario, Secretary of Interior; Birecio [sic: Briccio] Pantas, Secretary of Justice; and Enrique Pacheco as Secretary of Finance.<sup>19</sup>

Bonifacio's transformation of the Katipunan into a revolutionary government, and his election to the presidency in late August 1896, was described by Pio Valenzuela.<sup>20</sup> The captured rebel leader, Aguedo del Rosario also testified on 16 September: "The detention today of the rebel, Aguedo del Rosario, a bookbinder, was a very important capture, for this man was one of those designated by the *Katipunan* to form the Revolutionary Government of the Philippines and to carry out the function of local government administration. As a prisoner, he lost the opportunity of serving as a minister, and without doubt, faced death and the coffin. Thus, he decided to reveal the grand plans and horrendous projects associated with the organization."<sup>21</sup>

Bonifacio moved the site of the *Katagalugan* government from barrio Bahay Toro on 24 August, to barrio Balara, on 30 August 1896. Then he went and orchestrated the revolution in Cavite from late November, till his capture on 28 April 1897.

### Organizational Structure

Bonifacio was not autocratic. He encouraged the mechanisms for people participation even on the level of national matters. The government established under the *Katipunan* was run like a *junta*. In his 1897 book, *El Katipunan o el Filibusterismo en Filipinas*, the Spanish historian Jose M. del Castillo reiterated the results of the first Philippine national election and listed the same names as in *La Ilustracion Espanola y Americana*.<sup>22</sup>

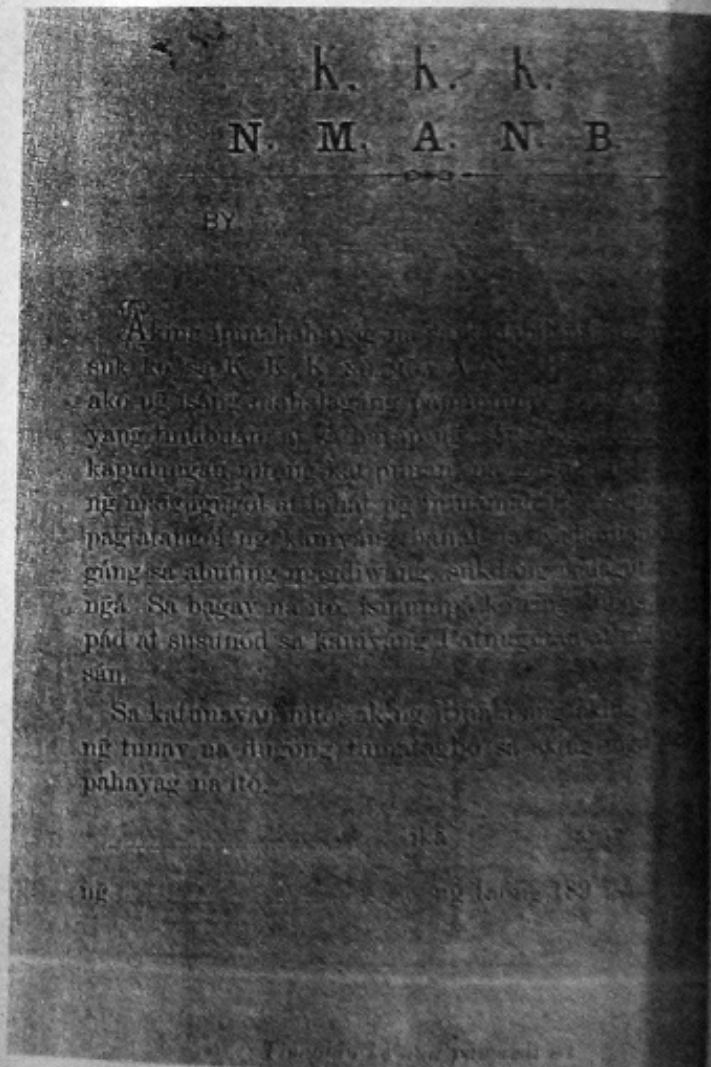
The Supreme Council was called the *Kataastaasang Kapulungan* as can be observed from the letterhead and seal used by Bonifacio.<sup>23</sup> In a letter dated 21 March 1897 and addressed to Felix Cuenca and Mariano Noriel from Baldomero Aguinaldo, the *Pangulo* of *Sangunian Bayan Magdalo*, refers to a memorandum from Bonifacio as "isang Kalatas ng G. Presidente sa Magdiwang" and recognizes the national government led by Bonifacio as "Kgg. na pulungan ng hihimacsic (Gobierno revolucionario)".<sup>24</sup>

Each province was divided into several *Sangunian Bayan* run by the *Kataastaasang Sangunian* whose function was to oversee the affairs of public administration and the military establishment at the municipal level.

In the province of Manila, there were many *Sangunian Bayan*, such as in Tondo, Kalookan, Mandaluyong, San Juan del Monte, Marikina, Pasig and Pateros, San Mateo, etc. Aside from these, several *Sangunian Bayan* existed within each of the provinces of Batangas, Bulacan, Laguna, Nueva Ecija and Tayabas, etc. There were at least three *Sangunian Bayan* in Cavite: *Magdiwang* based in Noveleta, *Magdalo* in Kawit, and *Mapagtiis* in San Francisco de Malabon.

When the revolution was underway, it was necessary to merge several *Sangunian Bayan* under unified military commands over particular zones to facilitate strategic planning and tactical moves. For example, the Battle of Manila required that the revolutionary forces be divided into four brigades under Generals Aguedo del Rosario, Vicente Fernandez, Ramon Bernardo and Gregorio Coronel.

Printed Katipunan application form for membership. (Jorge T. de los Santos collection, ex-Epifanio de los Santos)



M. ANDRES BONIFACIO MAYPAGASA  
PANGULO NANG HARING BAYANG KATAGALUGAN, MAYTAYO NANG  
K. K. KATIPUNAN NANG MANGA ANAK NANG BAYAN AT UNANG  
NAG GALAW NANG PANGHIMAGSIK

SA PANGKAKILALA sa pagtatalinghod sa pag  
tatagol sa Bayang maulana ni M. *Emilio Jacinto*  
*Pangulo* itong Kataastnang Panguluhan sa pag  
gadap nang kaniyang kapangyarihang tatalinghod  
na tumala ang pagtatagol kapund sa Kataastnang  
*Emilio Jacinto*  
*Pangulo*  
Upang mapagkilala at tumon sa mga katagol nang  
Pamahalaan nang Panghimbagsik at tumala sa kaniya  
ang narapat na pitagan aking tatalinghod nang Kataastnang  
dito sa Kataastnang Panguluhan nang Haring Bayang  
ngayong ita sa nang *Andres Bonifacio*



*Andres Bonifacio*

*Appointment paper of Emilio Jacinto as Commander-in-Chief of the revolutionary forces of the North, signed by Andres Bonifacio as "Pangulo nang Haring Bayang Katagalugan", dated 15 April 1897. Handwritten in printed form. The letterhead cites the three achievements of Bonifacio, i.e., first as President of Katagalugan, second as founder of the Katipunan, and third as Father of the 1896 Philippine Revolution. (Emmanuel N. Encarnacion collection, ex-Epifanio de los Santos)*



In the founding assembly in Kalookan on 24 August 1896, the revolutionary government made the following specific decisions: "1. the revolution would begin with the attack of Manila at midnight of Saturday, 29 August; 2. a revolutionary army was established with the appointment of the four previously mentioned brigadiers general: del Rosario, Fernandez, Bernardo and Coronel; 3. the four generals were tasked with strategic planning for the occupation of Manila; 4. the military situation should be appraised so that an uprising could even be started earlier than 29 August; and 5. assigned routes for three commanders were laid out through Tondo, San Marcelino and the Sampaloc rotonda, now better known as part of Santa Mesa."

Later, Bonifacio and more than ten generals commanded a rebel army which had been assembled out of the *Sangunian Bayan* of different towns within and around the present national capital region. Battles were mostly conceived as attack-and-withdraw operations, to temporarily seize town halls, capture food, arms and ammunitions, and neutralize enemy outposts. Then, the rebels would return to their fortified camps in favorable geographical sites in Balara, Mt. Tungko, Masuyod, Pantayanin and Montalban.<sup>25</sup>

The Cavite rebels evolved into two supra-municipal governments with military commands. One was called *Magdiwang*, covering the territory from Noveleta and San Francisco de Malabon up to Batangas. The other was called *Magdalo*, which extended its sphere of influence from Kawit, Cavite 26 to the southern parts of the province of Manila, now Rizal.<sup>27</sup> As Cavite's *Sangunian Bayan* units expanded into supra-municipal governments, it became apparent that in order to hold on to captured territory, the rebels had to form inter-provincial administrative units. Then, the perimeter was secured with forts and trenches for defense against enemy attacks.

The Katipunan forces in Cavite were numerous, but in fact, it has been estimated that the army north of the Pasig river was much bigger than the one in the southern sector.<sup>28</sup> In other parts of the archipelago, the rebels were normally organized into squads and smaller commands compared to those in central Luzon.

It appears that there was little or no revolutionary civilian administration at all due to the exigencies of war. The original Katipunan sub-organizations of *Sangunian Bayan* or municipal governments, as well as *Panguluhang Bayan* or district or barangay sections constituted the civilian component of the *Katagalugan* government. Nevertheless, many civilian leaders also became military officials due to the revolutionary character of the government.

Since it was wartime, power in the government structure was concentrated on the generals and key officers in the revolutionary army. This was logical, since Bonifacio, as president, effectively assumed the position of commander-in-chief. It must be remembered that while Bonifacio occupied the position of first president of the Republic of the Philippines, Aguinaldo was only one of his captains general.<sup>29</sup>

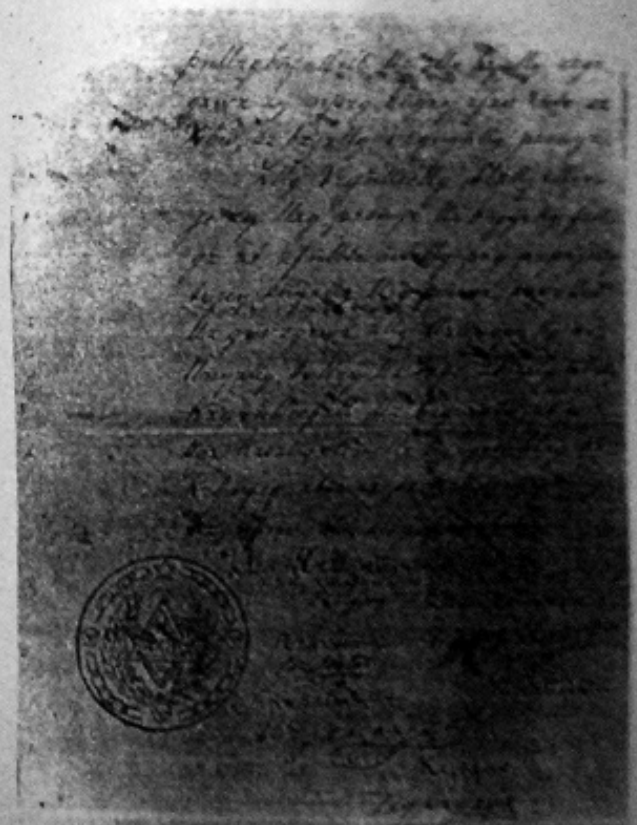
The Spanish military writer Federico de Monteverde gives details on the military organization instituted by Bonifacio. In his work, different insignias corresponding to each rank, such as, minister, colonel, brigadier general, major general, lieutenant general, and captain general, worn by the Katipunan officers are fully illustrated. Various military insignias were also shown by Taylor, as in the memoirs of Alvarez and Ricarte.<sup>30</sup> The use of these insignias suggest the actual operation of a formal military structure from the outset of Bonifacio's *Katagalugan* government.

Bonifacio led an ill-equipped army which he formally organized on 16 December 1896. In an order defining the Katipunan military organization, each battalion unit called "*Katipon*" composed of 203 men was drawn to include the hierarchy of officers as well as individual units in the organization.<sup>31</sup> This much earlier evidence reinforces Bonifacio's position as president of the revolutionary government in 1896.

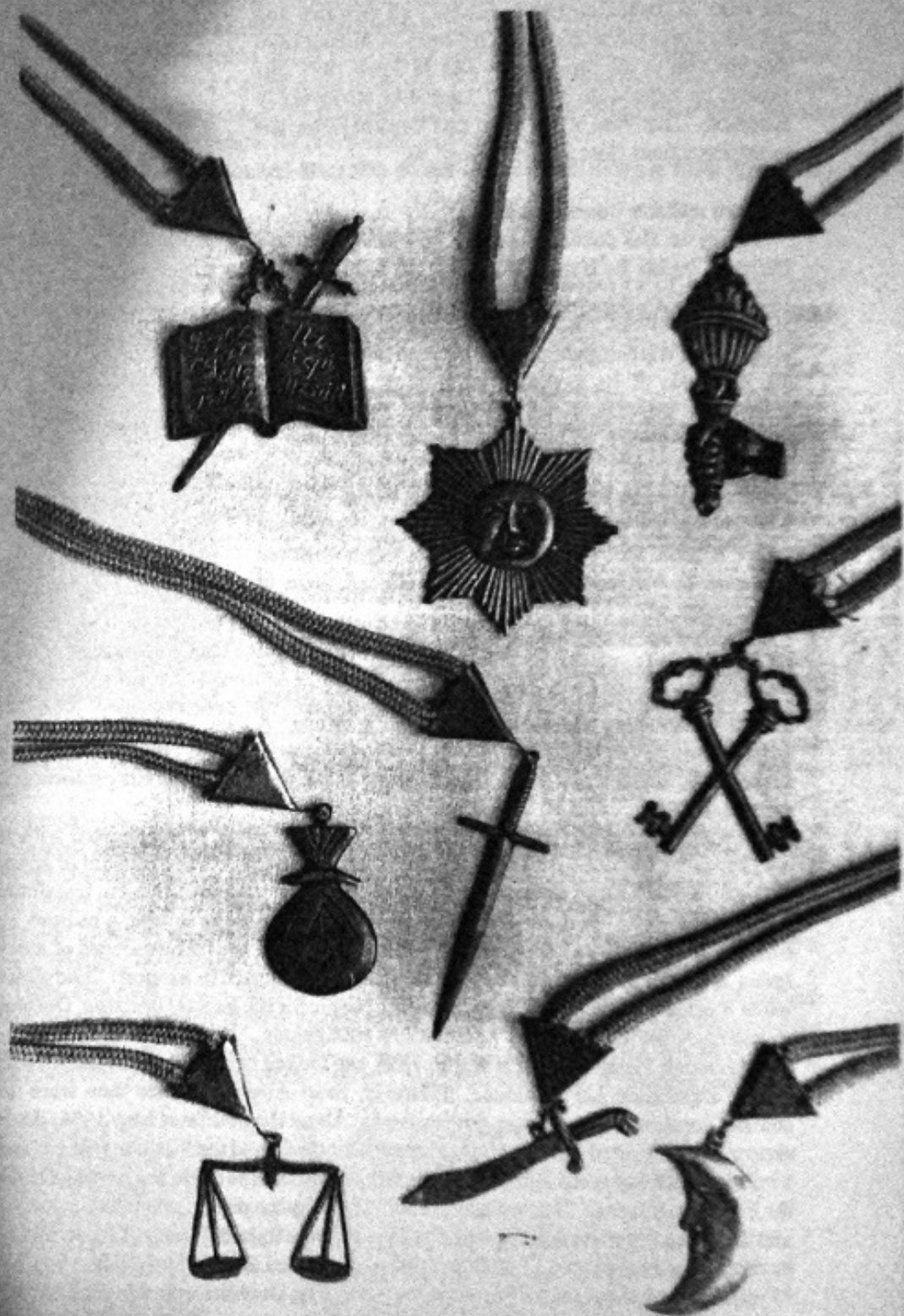


*Facsimile of the first Katipunan seal, the original of which can be found in the 1892 sworn statement of Restituto Javier, below.*

*Sworn statement of Restituto Javier, dated 2 September 1892, signed by Deodato Arellano as president, and Andres Bonifacio as kalihim or secretary of the Katipunan, among others. Earliest dated and only known 1892 Katipunan document in existence, authorizing the establishment of the Sangunian barangay in Mindanao. (Emmanuel N. Encarnacion collection, ex-Epifanio de los Santos)*



*The different Katipunan medallions worn by the Supreme Council in 1895; Supremo Andres Bonifacio Maypagasa wore the sun with face design, and Emilio Jacinto Pinkian wore the torch design. (Emmanuel N. Encarnacion collection, ex-Felipe Y. Liao and Jesus Celis)*





As such, Bonifacio had to supervise planning of military strategies as well as the preparation of orders, manifests and decrees, adjudicate offenses against the nation, as well as mediate on political disputes. He harnessed generals and stationed troops in the fronts. On the basis of command responsibility, all victories and defeats all over the archipelago, between 24 August 1896 (his election to the presidency) and 28 April 1897 (his capture by Aguinaldo's forces), should be attributed to Bonifacio. Therefore, it was ridiculous for some historians to say Bonifacio "lost all his battles".<sup>32</sup>

#### Foreign Affairs Commission

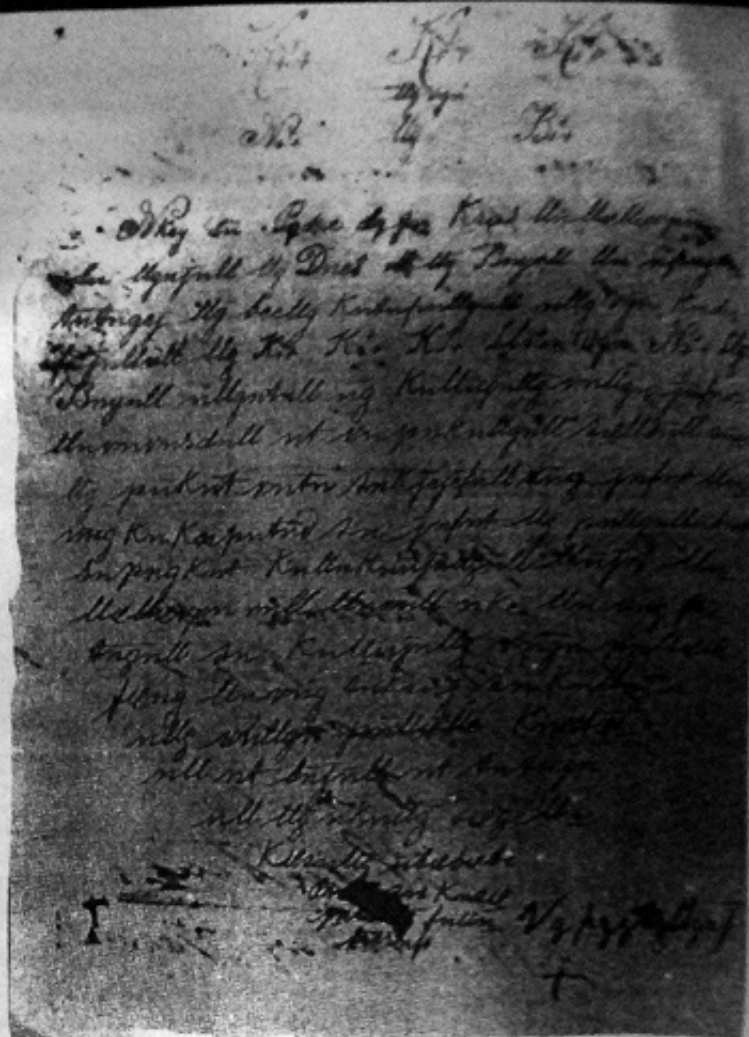
Prior to the outbreak of the revolution, certain Filipinos based in HongKong acted on behalf of the nationalist movement in the Philippines. The group's leader was Doroteo Cortes, believed to have been "a former president of the Katipunan Superior Supreme Council." On the basis of its organizational chart, the earlier Katipunan association was thought to have had two Supreme Councils, a "Superior" which functioned as board of directors and one called "Inferior" which performed line management tasks.<sup>33</sup> However, the new Katagalugan Government created out of the Katipunan on 24 August 1896 had to change its organizational structure to one equivalent to a republican form of government.<sup>34</sup>

Funds were solicited from various sources, especially from wealthy businessmen and companies. Then the money collected from donations were sent to Jose Maria Basa in HongKong, who served as disbursing officer. A large portion of the funds was used in sending a commission to Japan in order to negotiate for political, military and financial aid to support the anticipated uprising scheduled towards the end of 1896.

With Cortes were Isabelo Artacho and Jose A. Ramos, who arranged with Japanese politicians for the acquisition of 100,000 rifles and an unspecified amount of ammunition. This was partly paid in advance while the balance was to be amortized in installments over a number of years. In addition, a petition was filed for Japan to send a military squadron once the revolution was underway to assist in obtaining the independence of natives from Spain, and then to recognize the Filipino state. As indicated in a report: "The plan was that while Andres Bonifacio was busy recruiting people for the general uprising, Doroteo Cortes should carry on the necessary negotiations with Japan..."<sup>35</sup>

Although Japan was not at war in 1896, she looked at her Asian neighbors with a keen eye for expanding her influence. However, most Asian countries then were under the colonial dominion of European governments. About the middle of May 1896, the Japanese cruiser *Kongo* visited Manila. Immediately, Bonifacio and the Katipunan members sought a meeting with Japanese Admiral Kanimura, while Jacinto drafted a message addressed to the Emperor of Japan. That message read: "The Filipino people greet the Emperor of Japan and the entire Japanese nation, with the hope that the light of liberty in Japan will also shed its rays in the Philippines..."<sup>36</sup> Japan was not disposed to go to war against Spain in 1896-97 just to protect the rights of Filipinos. Nevertheless, Bonifacio expected the arrival of arms and ammunition from Japan in August 1896.<sup>37</sup>

Cortes continued to represent the revolutionaries before foreign entities. Together with Jose Maria Basa and A. G. Medina, Cortes sent a petition, this time to the Consul of the United States of America on 29 January 1897. The request was addressed to the "Gefe Supremo de su Nacion", imploring for the protection of the Filipinos and recognition of their right to self-government.<sup>38</sup> But the petition to the United States was ill timed. President



Katipunan oath of allegiance signed in blood by Pedro de la Cruz of San Juan Del Monte, with the certification of Andres Bonifacio, undated (possibly circa 1892-94) (Emmanuel N. Encarnacion collection, ex-Epifanio de los Santos)

Grover Cleveland to whom the message was intended in February 1897 lost the national elections of 3 November 1896, while William McKinley would only be inaugurated as president on 4 March 1897. And at the start of the McKinley administration, the focus of his national policy was aimed at "domestic business conditions and economic recovery from the continuing depression of 1893 and therefore will try to avoid conflict with Spain".<sup>39</sup>

Also in January 1897, the Philippine Commission in HongKong handed a petition to a Consul, addressed to M. Henry Hannoteaux, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, enumerating fifty grievances of the Philippines against Spain and calling for assistance. These were signed by the Commission members. France remained strictly neutral because she feared that such anti-colonialism would contaminate neighboring IndoChina, and also because France had no means for practicable intervention.<sup>40</sup>

No foreign state responded favorably to the request and petition from Bonifacio's Katagalugan government.

### Conclusion

In July 1892, Bonifacio founded the Katipunan, which launched the first anti-colonial revolution in Asia in August 1896. He undertook the formation of the first national government which became the foundation of the governments which Aguinaldo established from 1897 to 1899.

The Katagalugan government carried over the symbols and teachings of the Katipunan, which was accepted by the people as the legitimate authority. This government was democratic in principle, orientation and form. At its inception, it was formed by representatives from the provinces where the Katipunan had a mass-based membership. It adapted the red and white "sun with the Tagalog letter 'Ka' in the center" as its national standard, and commissioned the "*Marangal na Dalit ng Katagalugan*" by Julio Nakpil as the national anthem.<sup>41</sup>

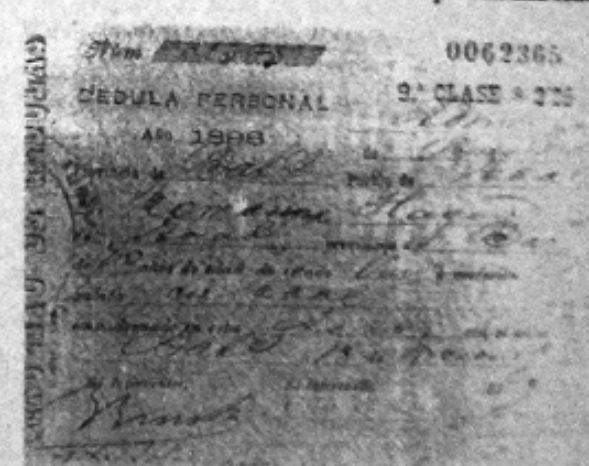
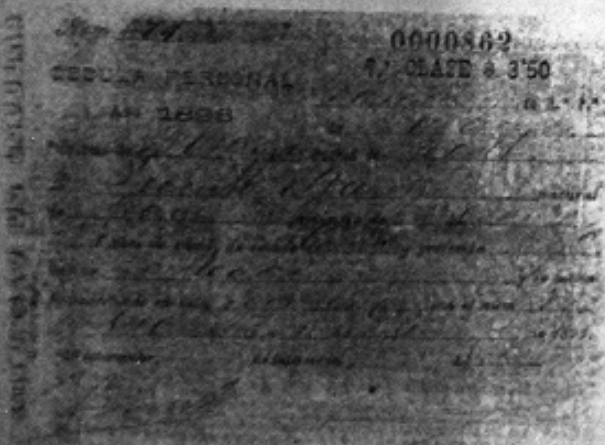
In defining "*Tagalog*" as the term for all Filipinos, and "*Katagalugan*" as the country's name in lieu of "*Filipinas*" which had colonial undertones, Bonifacio and the Katipunan sought to define a national identity.

The Katagalugan Government commanded the loyalty of a significant portion of the population. While it existed, the government held territory, where it exercised the functions of a state. It had armed forces which fought for, and defended its existence. It had a diplomatic component, which attempted to gain international recognition for the new nation.

In reality, the governments that succeeded Bonifacio's essentially republican Katagalugan government proceed legitimately from it. The 24 August 1896 government certainly had a larger mass-based following than the 24 April 1897 entity that deposed it. But as a result of the power struggle in Cavite, though only one of many revolutionary generals, Emilio Aguinaldo usurped President Andres Bonifacio's authority. He reorganized the government of the *Republika ng Katagalugan*, which he renamed *Republica Filipina*.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, Filipinos should observe the date of establishment of the first Filipino national government on 24 August 1896 as National Day, if the 1896 Philippine Revolution and the Katipunan would have any worth at all. And Filipinos should recognize Bonifacio not only as the child who grew up in Tutuban, son of Tondo, founder of the Katipunan and leader of

Two entire 1896 cedula (i.e. Class 7 and 9) used in Batangas, the type of revenue tax receipt torn by the rebels during the important August 1896 Cry. (Emmanuel N. Encarnacion collection, ex-Anuncion N. Marino)





the revolution of 1896. Bonifacio is not only the other Philippine national hero and hero of Manila, but the father of the nation and its democratic government: the first Filipino president. ■

#### ENDNOTES

1. This article was culled from various essays in the book about to be published, Pangulo ng Haring Bayan, Andres Bonifacio and the 1896 Revolution, by Milagros C. Guerrero, Ramon N. Villegas and Emmanuel N. Encarnacion.
2. Leon Maria Guerrero, The First Filipino: A Biography of Jose Rizal (Manila: National Historical Commission, 1971), p. 326; John N. Schumacher, The Propaganda Movement: 1880-1895 (Manila Solidaridad Publishing House, 1973), p. 250; and Nicholas P. Cushner, S.J., Spain in the Philippines (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1971), p. 225.
3. Gregorio F. Zaide, Manila During the Revolutionary Period (Manila: National Historical Commission, 1973), p. 42; and Teodoro A. Agoncillo, The Revolt of the Masses (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1956), pp. 37-40.
4. Membership estimates vary, see Teodoro A. Agoncillo, History of the Filipino People (Quezon City: R. P. Garcia Publishing Co., 1990), p.166; and Gregorio F. Zaide, The Pageant of Philippine History (Manila: Philippine Education Company, Vol. II, 1979), p. 230.
5. A document in the Philippine revolutionary records of the Philippine National Railway, now with Tutuban Properties, Inc.
6. Sofronio G. Calderon, Mga Nangyari sa Kasaysayan ng Pilipinas Ayon sa Pagsasaliksik ni Sofronio G. Calderon (Maynila: Vol. II, 1925, typescript), 512 p.
7. Manuel Sastron, La Insurreccion en Filipinas (Madrid: Imp. de la Viuda de M. Minuesa de los Rios, Tomo I, 1897), pp. 226, 229, 242, 244, and 289, among many others.
8. Original printed Cartilla ng Katipunan of 1896, also known as Katipunan nang mga A.N.B. - Sa May Nasang Makisanib sa Katipunang Ito, p.1.
9. Carlos V. Ronquillo, Panghihimagsik Nang 1896-1897 (Hong Kong 1898), original uncorrected manuscript, Volume I, n.p.
10. Jose P. Santos, Si Andres Bonifacio at ang Himagsikan (Manila: La Opinion, 2nd edition, 1935), pp. 6-10 and 19-21.
11. Pedro S. Achutegui S.J. and Miguel A. Bernad S.J., Aguinaldo and the Revolution of 1896, A Documentary History (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila, 1972), pp. 328-332, and 570.
12. Santiago V. Alvarez, The Katipunan and the Revolution, Memoirs of a General (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, Paula Carolina S. Malay, trans., 1992), pp. 254 and 319.
13. G. Reparaz, "La Rebellion Filipina," La Ilustracion Espanola y Americana (Madrid: 30 March 1897 issue), p. 163.
14. John R. M. Taylor, The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States (Pasay City: Eugenio Lopez Foundation, Volume I, 1971), p. 63.
15. For his latest remarks, see Teodoro A. Agoncillo, History of the Filipino People (Quezon City: R. P. Garcia Publishing Co., 8th edition, 1990), p. 152; 161-165; etc. The photo of the evidence can be seen in Teodoro A. Agoncillo, The Revolt of the Masses (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1956), p. 187.
16. Zaide 1979: 227.
17. Bonifacio's letters and one appointment paper to Emilio Jacinto dated 8 March, 15, 16 and 24 April 1897.
18. Several historians recognized Bonifacio's presidency before the war: (1) Jose P. Bantug, "El Supremo del K.K.K.," Philippines Free Press (Manila: 24 August 1929), p. 59; (2) Jose P. Santos, Was Aguinaldo Right to Have Caused Bonifacio's Death? (Manila: Imprenta Manila, 1933), 14 pages; and (3) Gregorio F. Zaide, History of the Katipunan (Manila: Loyal Press, 1939), pp. 130-131.
19. Reparaz 8 February 1897.
20. National Historical Institute, "21 October 1896 Testimony of Pio Valenzuela", Minutes of the Katipunan (Manila: Second Printing 1978), p. 174.
21. Emilio Reverter Delmas, La Insurreccion de Filipinas en 1896 y 1897 (Barcelona:

- Centro Editorial de Alberto Martin, Tomo I, 1899), p. 418.
22. Jose M. del Castillo y Jimenez, El Katipunan o el Filibusterismo en Filipinas (Madrid: Imp. del Asilo de Huerfanos del S. C. de Jesus, 1897), pp. 107-117.
23. The term "Kataastaasang Kapulungan" can be found on the printed official stationery of Andres Bonifacio. These documents were previously referred to in: (1) Teodoro A. Agoncillo's article "Historical Documents & Landmarks Destroyed" in the 16 April 1950 The March of Life magazine: "Don Epifanio de los Santos Cristobal, suffered the same fate as the two mentioned above. His complete collection of stamps of the Philippine Revolution, periodicals, the original documents of this period of the Philippine history with the exception of those that dealt with Andres Bonifacio and Emilio Jacinto, all historical materials and rare Filipiniana books and pamphlets were all burned"; (2) Teodoro A. Agoncillo's The Revolt of the Masses published in 1956, the appointment paper of Emilio Jacinto was illustrated on p. 187; (3) translations of Bonifacio's letters were included by Teodoro A. Agoncillo in The Writings and Trial of Andres Bonifacio published in 1963, on pp. 16-22 and 85-91; (4) Ambeth Ocampo's paper "Andres Bonifacio: Mito o Realidad" presented at the First Annual Andres Bonifacio and Parian Lectures held at Bulwagang Katipunan in Manila City Hall, 1989, he remarked: "Walang dudang taal ang mga dokumento sa koleksyon ni G. Encarnacion sapagkat nakita ko ang ilang retrato ng mga ito sa vault ng Pambansang Aklatan at nailimbag ang mga retratong ito sa sari-saring babasahin bago gierra"; (5) Ambeth Ocampo's "Looking Back" column in Daily Globe, 30 November 1989 issue, entitled "Bonifacio redux," where he remarked: "One of the extant documents with Andres Bonifacio's flowing signature happens to be Emilio Jacinto's appointment, on 15 April 1897, as Commander-in-Chief of the revolutionary forces in the North. I have seen the original document now in a private collection in Manila and was surprised by the printed text on top of it which reads..."; and (6) Gregorio F. Zaide made a brief summary of Bonifacio's 24 April 1897 letter in his 1990 book Documentary Sources of Philippine History, Vol. 8, pp. 400-401.
24. Achutegui and Bernad 1972: 343 and 565.
25. Alvarez 1992: 20, 33, 182-190 and passim; also, the Katipunan established chapters and councils in many provinces, particularly in the following: Manila [15,000], Cavite [10,000], Batangas [15,000], Bulacan [4,000], Laguna [20,000], Nueva Ecija [1,500], Tayabas [8,000], etc., enclosed were the tally of the Katipunan membership population by Sastron 1897: 141. The Sangunian Bayan served as the nucleus for popular councils under its jurisdiction. See also National Heroes Commission, Memoirs of General Artemio Ricarte (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1963), pp. 69-71. Like Santiago Alvarez, Artemio Ricarte was a captain general during the first phase of the Philippine Revolution. Ricarte provides information regarding the war, the internal political foundation of Bonifacio's Katipunan government, as well as the roles played by many of the generals during that critical time.
26. Gregorio F. Zaide, The Philippine Revolution (Manila: The Modern Book Company, 1954), p. 116-117.
27. Alvarez 1992: 19-20 and passim. This author utilized much information from this book, such as details on various Sangunian Bayan, and the locations of the rebel military camps. The extent of influence of the two Cavite-based Sangunian Bayan can be found in Alvarez 1992: 48-49. The printed form used by the Magdalo for appointing key officers in the revolutionary army states "lalawigan ng Magdalo", meaning province of Magdalo.
28. Rafaelita Hilario Soriano, A Shaft of Light (Quezon City: Kayumanggi Press, Inc., 1991), p. 260.
29. The picture of Andres Bonifacio in a military uniform in the Philippines Free Press (Manila: 20 August 1949), p. 10.
30. Federico de Monteverde y Sedano, Campana de Filipinas: La Division Lachambre - 1897 (Madrid: Libreria de Hernando y Compania, 1898), p. 67. Other military uniforms and insignias are discussed in Alvarez 1992: 50-51, and in Taylor 1971: Vol. I, 285-286.
31. National Historical Institute 1978: Appendix T, 172, this is an English translation of the manuscript document "Order of Andres Bonifacio Defining Military Organization" dated 16 December 1896 written in San Francisco Malatose, Appendix No. 197 attributed by NHI to the Watson collection.
32. There are many primary evidences as well as interpretative accounts which declares Bonifacio as the President of the revolutionary government while Aguinaldo was only one



- of his generals.
33. Rafael Guerrero, Cronica de La Guerra de Cuba y de la Rebelion de Filipinas (1895-1896), (Barcelona: Casa editorial Maucci, Vol. IV, 1896), p. 585.
  34. Del Castillo 1897: illustrated page fronting 108, which is also shown on the August 1896 election document of Bonifacio as President.
  35. National Historical Institute 1978: Appendix L, Testimony of Pio Valenzuela y Alejandrino, 152-153; Appendix M, Declaration of Antonio Salazar y San Agustin, 190-191; and Appendix N, Declaration of Juan Castañeda, 195.
  36. National Historical Institute 1978: Appendix A, The Memoirs of Dr. Pio Valenzuela, 102-103.
  37. National Historical Institute 1978: Appendix L, 175-176.
  38. A printed pamphlet addressed to the U.S. Consul in HongKong; an English translation is in Taylor 1971: Vol. I, Exhibit 22, 289-294.
  39. John S. Bowman, general editor, Almanac of America's Wars (Hong Kong: Brompton Books Corporation, 1990), p. 95.
  40. Denis Nardin, France and the Philippines: from the beginning to the end of the Spanish regime. Translated by Ma. Theresa J. Cruz. (Manila: National Historical Institute, 1989), p. 114-115.
  41. The national flag is described in the Ricarte memoirs: 5, and in Delmas 1899: Tomo I, 506; while the national anthem was mentioned in Bonifacio's letter to Jacinto; see also Encarnacion Alzona ed. and trans., Julio Nakpil and the Philippine Revolution (Manila: Heirs of Julio Nakpil, 1964), pp. 90-92.
  42. Emilio Aguinaldo verifies the date of the meeting at Balintawak as Monday, 24 August 1896, on the basis of two letters sent by Bonifacio, see Emilio Aguinaldo, Mga Gunita ng Himagsikan (Manila: Cristina Aguinaldo Suntay, 1964), pp.57-58. Aguinaldo took his formal oath of office as President of *Republica Filipina* on 24 April 1897, see Taylor 1971: Vol. I, 301-303.