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Celebrating **Philippine Independence** during **COVID-19 Pandemic**



Aguinaldo Shrine – The Home of Independence at Kawit, Cavite

Preparation for the celebration of Philippine Independence is always sought after by the Filipinos all over the archipelago. It's like a switch button that when pressed the mentality of the people are geared towards the ceremony in front of the Emilio Aguinaldo Shrine where crowds were gathered to witness the reenactment of the reading of the draft of Philippine Independence followed by the waiving of the Philippine Flag while the Philippine National Anthem was played. Minutes prior to this ceremony, at the back of the shrine was the wreath laying

ceremony at the tomb of President Emilio Aguinaldo where various groups such as the kin of President Aguinaldo, his fellow masons, and some government officials paid their respect to the President of the First Philippine Republic. Moving prior to the wreath laying ceremony, the program starts with a parade of various sectors starting at Barangay Panamitan going in front of Aguinaldo Shrine. The atmosphere was pompous and joyous especially at the Aguinaldo Park where so many tiendesitas/bazaar were organized.

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The whole morning was like a fiesta and in the afternoon would be the various cultural performances sponsored by the Municipality of Kawit and the Provincial Tourism Office. The afternoon event is popularly called the culminating activity of the Kalayaan Festival which started on May 28 and run until June 12 every year.

It seems however that this celebration comes to a halt for this year due to COVID-19. This year, the government through the Inter-Agency Task Force on COVID-19 mandated that only few persons could initiate the commemoration of the Independence Day in Kawit, Cavite and the other areas where simultaneous flag raising and wreathlaying will be held. No brass band to serenade the people, no short or lengthy speeches and no crowd to speak of

to witness all these events. Why? It is because everybody would like to have a fair share to the prevention of further infection of COVID-19 in our country. The government instead allows people to celebrate this event online in a form of webinars, online activities and the like without face to face interaction.

More than the political context of independence as we remembered in the past, the context of independence on this era of pandemic would be to become independent (mind your own) by means of social distancing, covering the face with a mask, and observing health protocols wherever you go. Following those policies set by the government is already a nationalistic thing to do because it promotes national health development and economic progress which is the end result of nationalism where the June 12 Independence Day Commemoration philosophy rests.



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Editorial

Making the Ideals of Freedom Sustainable¹

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The struggle for freedom has always been the centerpiece of our history as a people and as a nation. It was in the name of freedom that Lapu-Lapu valiantly fought the Spanish forces in 1521. It was in the name of freedom that the liberty-loving Filipino natives waged more than a hundred revolts to resist Spanish abuses. Those who sacrificed their lives for freedom in the Revolution of 1896, those who were victims of American and Japanese atrocities, and those who were silenced because of their principles during the Marcos dictatorship, they all did so in the great name of freedom. Until this day, the cry for freedom lingers.

The theme of freedom, although primarily belongs to the heroes of our nation, also belongs to us, the Filipinos of today's generation. As we regularly celebrate our Independence Day, we should be constantly reminded, that freedom is as ephemeral as the lives of those who fought and died for it. It is as delicate as those who inherit the responsibility for keeping it. Freedom is like a fragile flower, with many predators, and needs constant tending. It is all too easily reversible. Yesterday's heroism can turn to cowardice today. Yesterday's show of national unity can be today's fractured race for selfish ends.

How could we sustain the ideals of freedom then? For freedom to be sustainable, it should not only be based on the strength of institutions but be rooted in the attitudes and hearts of the people. In this light, freedom stands for humanism, for tolerance, for progress, and for the search of truth and justice. Therefore, its maintenance should be based on the human capacity for reason, love, compassion, empathy, and respect for the freedom

of others. Akin to this is the lesson for each Filipino to realize how important it is to retain a sense of self. For inner freedom can survive even in the face of oppression as demonstrated by Jose Rizal, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and others who have changed many lives as part of their struggles for freedom.

More so, for freedom to be sustainable, it needs a people with vigorous memory of their historical past, a people vigilant of their legacy. Freedom, after all, is not free. It is bought with a price and our sacrifices are also required to keep the flames of freedom burning. Through our heroic instincts and abilities, we will continue to inspire succeeding generations to do the same. History teaches us that only when freedom and openness are accompanied by a matching sense of responsibility can they transform society into one that is vibrant and dynamic. We did not win our freedom so that we might rest afterward but rather, we work harder to build and strengthen that freedom. Freedom brings responsibility and these two actually form two sides of the same coin. As we relate with other people, so we end up with a web of duties toward them.

Let us then so conduct ourselves in such a way that future generations will honor our memory as we honor the memory of those who have given us the freedom we now relish with pride. During this time of emergency, our freedom and human rights must be protected even amid the threat of the pandemic. We must strike a balance between enforcing the law to achieve a public good, which is to prevent the spread of the disease, and showing compassion for people, especially the poor who already facing many difficulties even before COVID-19.

¹ The idea was inspired by the book written by Jason Co, *The Spirit of 1896: A Mirror of the Philippine Past, A Window on Its Future* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2000), 16-22.





State of Economic Freedom During Pandemic

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The corona virus disease (COVID-19) has taken not only the lives of hundred thousand people all over the world but also the freedom of the many. People were obliged to stop going to work and businesses were forced to shut down during lockdowns or community quarantines constraining people's exercise of their economic freedom. From the freshly released information by the Philippine Statistics Authority, as of April 2020 there were around 7.3 million jobless Filipinos, a 17.7% all-time record high of unemployment rate (<https://www.rappler.com/business/262948-unemployment-rate-philippines-april-2020>). Economic recovery for people to feel a certain degree of freedom through earning income is not going to happen soon. It is highly dependent on the developments about researches on the corona virus and the vaccine. World Health Organization's chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan predicted that to defeat the virus could take four to five years. (<https://www.ft.com/content/1467b1da-28a5-47d4-a5e2-a6f4b6.8484c3>).

While we are still uncertain when we could have cure to protect lives and be free from COVID-19's ravaging effects, we could not afford to be in lockdown indefinitely. To stimulate

economy, Enhanced Community Quarantine was gradually lifted across the country. Government has laid its fiscal policy which include cash transfers to low income households, social protection measures for displaced and overseas Filipino workers, credit guarantee for small businesses and agriculture sector, and financial assistance to affected micro, small, and medium-size enterprises and vulnerable households through specialized microfinancing loans and loan restructuring (<https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Respon-ses-to-COVID-19>). These fiscal measures are complemented with Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' monetary policy to ease out the flow of money through reduced policy interest rate and reserve requirement ratio for commercial banks. It purchased government securities and remitted dividends to the national government (<http://www.bsp.gov.ph/publications/media.asp?id>).

These economic policies intend to protect the livelihoods of the people that may provide a very limited degree of freedom to households and businesses. The road to gaining back the economic freedom that we used to enjoy may be long and rough, but economy should keep going.

(Ang Sandigan.... from page 9)

sa daigdig na doon ay may mga kababayan tayo. Nagpapatunay lamang na ang kabutihang loob ay likas na sa mga Pilipino. Sa kabilang banda, may negatibong hamon ang pandemya sa kalayaan dahil naisasakripisyo ang ating mga karapatang pantao sa kagustuhan ng pamahalaang makontrol ang pagkalat ng virus.

Bilang kongklusyon, huwag nating kalimutan na sa kaalamang bayan ng ating mga dakilang bayani, ang kalayaan ay nakasandig sa mga katutubong konsepto ng "kaginhawaan" at "kabutihang loob" na ang ibig ipahiwatig ay isang kalagayan na ang tao ay nabubuhay na malusog, masaya,

maginhawa, at masagana. Ang malusog masaya, at maginhawang buhay ay tiyak makakamtan kapag ang tao ay mayroong kabutihang loob, may mabuting kaluluwa, may dangal, puri, at kabanalan.

Sa panahon ng pandemyang ito, kailangang buhayin muli at lalo pang dapat palakasin ang diwang ito ng kalayaan – ang diwa ng bayanihan at kabutihang loob para sa ikagiginhawa ng mga Pilipino lalo na ng mga nangangailangan nating mga kababayan. Sa ganitong paraan lamang tayo magiging karapat-dapat sa kalayaang binanal ng ating mga bayaning magulang na nag-alay ng kanilang mga luha, pawis, at dugo.



Excerpts from the article:

Aguinaldo's Expression of His Enduring Admiration for Spain and the Spanish Language

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Aguinaldo wished that the Spanish language and culture must be preserved for it was the official language, along with Tagalog, of the First Philippine Republic. In the light of this, Aguinaldo would decry that the Philippines is still following the colonial policy of the United States in forcing the English language on the Filipinos even after the independence was restored in 1946.

Aguinaldo's attachment to the Spanish language and heritage of the Filipinos seemed paradoxical, given his leadership of the rebellion against Spain. In addition, after his initial successes during the first phase of the Revolution, when he managed to liberate from Spanish rule a greater part of the province of Cavite, Aguinaldo made attempts to erase the vestiges of its colonial past under Spain which could indicate that Aguinaldo was anti-Spanish. This was manifested in changing the foreign names of the localities into native ones, such as his hometown of Cavite el Viejo into *Magdalo*, and Imus to *Haligi*.¹ After retreating from Cavite to Biak-na-Bato in Bulacan the following year, he reorganized the revolutionary government into a republic, known as the Biak-na-Bato Republic with a constitution modeled on the Cuban Constitution of Jimaguayu with Tagalog as the official language.

Aguinaldo's attachment to the Spanish language and the Philippines' Fil-Hispanic heritage, which could be properly labeled as *Fil-Hispania*, is explained by the fact that the Spanish language and culture brought by Spain, just like earlier in Latin America, interacted with the indigenous culture and evolved into the present Filipino culture

with the indelible legacies of Spain still obvious until now. This makes the Philippines still part of *Hispanidad* despite the lack of foresight of the framers a status it once occupied along with English and Filipino under the 1935 and 1973 Constitutions. It also led to the dropping of the mandatory Spanish course in Philippine colleges and universities. Commenting on this, a former Spanish Ambassador to the Philippines Jorge Domecq once wrote, "This decision could have been avoided, the truth of the matter is that the majority of Filipinos then no longer used Spanish in their daily lives and therefore the constitutional reform only represented a statement of fact."²

The war greatly contributed to the decline of Spanish language especially with the massive loss of lives during the Battle for the Liberation of Manila in 1945. The heaviest fighting was in the districts of the city where the Hispanized people were concentrated, such as in Intramuros, Ermita, and Malate, which explains why "a great deal of their experiences were written in the Spanish language."³ In addition, the poverty conditions brought about by the war caused a lot of those who survived the carnage to go to Spain, including many who were actually born

¹ Pedro de Archutegui, S.J., and Miguel Bernad, S.J., *Aguinaldo and the Revolution of 1896: A Documentary History* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1972), 164-165. Cited in Alfredo B. Saulo, *Rewriting Philippine History: The Truth About Aguinaldo and Other Heroes* (Quezon City: Phoenix Publishing House, Inc., 1987), 181.

² Jorge Domecq, *Why Spanish?* Inquirer Net, November 21, 2011, Read more: <https://opinion.inquirer.net/17637/why-spanish#ixzz5VFLnTnaR>.

³ Alfonso J. Aluit, *By Sword and Fire: The Destruction of Manila in World War II* (The Author, February 3 – March 3, 1945).

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(Excerpts from the article:.... from page 6)

in the Philippines, further reducing the numbers of the Hispanic community and consequently the number of Spanish speakers.

The position of the Hispanized community was also a reflection of the dramatically changing landscape of Spain during those years. If during the prewar years, Spanish mestizos and even Hispanized Filipinos viewed American culture as something new, non-classical and therefore, could be proud of the Spanish culture as being European. However, after the war, this notion had changed. It could be seen that laws passed during this time encouraging the compulsory teaching of Spanish in the schools and universities such as the Sotto Law (Republic Act No. 343), the Magalona Law (Republic Act No. 709), and the Cuenco Law (Republic Act No. 1881) which required 24 units of Spanish in the tertiary level. A final law reduced it to 12 units. With the Philippine Congress still dominated by Spanish-speaking legislators, such bills easily became part of the laws of the land.

Unfortunately, these laws meant to preserve Spanish backfired instead. The younger generation of Filipinos felt that studying the language was irrelevant which resulted to the repealing of all these laws shortly after the ratification of the 1987 Constitution with its provision of Spanish and Arabic be promoted only on a voluntary and optional basis.⁴ This provision was lamented by the Hispanists as the final nail driven into the coffin for Spanish in the Philippines, making the study of the language optional and causing many Spanish language teachers to lose their jobs. The identification of Spanish with the Philippine oligarchy also reinforced the notion that it was an elitist language and the image that it was the worst upper class in the Pacific region, which was considered

aloof from the lower classes.⁵ As pointed out by Belen Argúelles, former chief of the Division of Spanish and Culture of the Department of Education, “in the Philippines the language was connected to colonialism.”⁶ She referred to Spanish as the language connected to slavery and oppression, a characteristic of the former Spanish regime. Analyzing this, it could easily be seen that during the postwar years, due to this identification of Spanish with colonialism, the Spanish language forfeited the opportunity to preserve its erstwhile status as the lingua franca of the Philippines. The Filipino Hispanist Wystan de la Peña disclosed that the Spanish language is “maligned as the colonizer’s language. The discourse would then be principally expressed in English, it being another colonizer’s language conveniently forgotten”⁷

This was the immediate cause of Aguinaldo’s lament in his twilight years on the rapid decline and virtual loss of the Spanish as a living language in the Philippines, along with the Fil-Hispanic culture it engendered and nurtured, making the Filipinos, especially the younger generation more vulnerable to American cultural imperialism, which he decried, would lead to “de-Filipinization.” He, like most of his generation, was aware of the role and influence of the Spanish language and culture, which left indelible and lasting legacies to the Filipino nation and the loss of Spanish would undoubtedly affect the ability of the Filipinos to understand themselves, especially their history and culture. This made the Filipino youth more vulnerable to American cultural imperialism naturally facilitated by the American version of the English language, such as young Filipinos mesmerized by American popular culture and immediately adopting these such as coca-cola, jazz, and rock and roll just to name a few at the expense of many Filipino cultural traits, which in many ways, contributed to the present identity crisis of the younger Filipino generations.

⁴ Hector S. de Leon, *Textbook on the Philippine Constitution* (Manila: National Book Store).

⁵ Ref. to a 1993 World Bank, “Pride and Privilege,” in *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong), May 12, 1994, 25.

⁶ Belen Argúelles, “El Estado de la enseñanza y aprendizaje del idioma español en Filipinas.” In *Arbor Revista General de Investigación y Cultura*, Tomo LV, 211-12 (Julio-Agosto, 1963).

⁷ Wystan de la Peña, “The Spanish-English Language “War.” *Linguae et Litterae*, IV-V: 6-28 (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Diliman, 2000), 14.





ANG SANDIGAN NG KALAYAAN AT ANG HAMON DITO NG PANDEMYA¹

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Marahil ilan sa atin ay nagtatanong, bakit kailangang ipagdiwang o bakit kailangang gunitain pa ang Araw ng Kalayaan sa panahong ito ng pandemya na marami ang nawawalan ng trabaho, marami ang naghihirap, nagugutom, nagkakasakit, at nasasawi? Dapat nga bang magdiwang sa ating kalayaan o magluksa sa ating nararanasang abnormal na kalagayan?

Direkta ang aking tugon. Kailangang ipagdiwang ang Araw ng Kalayaan sa kabila ng krisis na ating nararanasan dahil ito ang kaarawan ng ating Inang-Bayan, ng ating Bansa. Ang akto ng pagdiriwang o paggunita ng kaarawan ng ating Inang-Bayan ay isang kakahayagan ng ating pagkilala at paggalang sa ating mga magulang na nakipaglaban at nagbuwis ng buhay para sa ating kalayaan at kasarinlan. Sa panahon ng krisis, higit pang kailangan natin ang inspirasyon ng ating mga dakilang ninuno at bayani na nag-iwan ng mga aral at halimbawa kung paano harapin ang mga hamon ng abnormal na buhay.

Upang mabigyan ng saysay ang paksa, hinati ko ang lektura sa tatlong bahagi: 1. Ang Sandigan ng Kalayaan, 2. Ang Hamon Dito ng Pandemya, at 3. Kongklusyon.

Sa unang bahagi, aking sinuri ang sandigan ng kalayaan batay sa prinsipyo mismo ng mga Katipunero at Rebolusyonaryo. Sa Katipunan ang konsepto ng kalayaan ay nakasandig sa dalawa pang katutubong konsepto ng 1. “kaginhawaan” at 2. “kabutihang loob.” Sa iba’t ibang etnolinggwistikong grupo sa Pilipinas, ang ginhawa ay itinuturing na bahagi ng tao na may kinalaman sa kalusugan, mabuting pakiramdam, at mabuting

pamumuhay. Ang konsepto ng kalayaan bilang konsepto ng kaginhawaan ay walang iba kundi ang kabuuang kagalingan ng tao – ang tao ay nabubuhay sa isang tila perpektong lipunan, isang mala-paraisong bayan na batbat ng kasaganaan at masayang buhay. Ang buhay-malaya, ang buhay-maginhawa ay buhay-langit din. Ang ganitong pag-unawa sa kahulugan ng kalayaan ay mababasa din sa talumpati ng Pangulong Emilio Aguinaldo sa pagbubukas ng Kongreso ng Malolos noong Setyembre 13, 1898. Tinurol ng Acta ng Kalayaan noong Hunyo 12, 1898 na ang kalagayang ito ng mga Pilipino ay naglaho sa panahon ng kolonyalismong Espanyol dahil sa pang-aapi ng mga ito sa mga katutubong Pilipino na dapat ay ituring nila itong mga kapatid o kadugo kung pagbabatayan ang ritwal ng sanduguan na ginawa nina Miguel Lopez de Legazpi (kinatawan ng panig ng mga Espanyol) at Sikatuna (sa panig naman ng mga katutubong Pilipino).

Paano naman nauugnay ang kabutihang loob sa kalayaan at kaginhawaan? May malaking kaugnayan ang ginhawa sa kaluluwa ayon sa mga etnograpiya ng ng iba’t ibang etnolinggwistikong grupo sa Pilipinas. Ang pagkawala ng kaluluwa sa katawan, habang buhay pa ang tao, ang nagiging sanhi ng kanyang pagkakasakit; ang ginhawa naman

¹ Buod ng ibinahaging lektura/presentasyon sa CSC-CILP-CHS Webinar Bilang Paggunita sa Araw ng Kalayaan 2020, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Hunyo 11, 2020; 10:00 n.u. – 12:00 n.t.

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(*Ang Sandigan.... from page 8*)

ang siyang nagpapanatili ng kanyang kalusugan. Naniniwala ang mga Pilipino na may elementong “moral” ang kaluluwa, ito ang nagbibigay ng kabutihan sa tao, ang nag-uudyok sa kanya na gumawa ng mabuti. Ang lahat ng ito ay kaugnay ng konsepto ng Pilipino ng “kalooban.” Malinaw kung gayon na kung mabuti ang iyong kalooban, mayroon kang mabuting kaluluwa, may dangal, puri, at kabanalan. Ito rin ang batis ng ginhawa. Ito ang dahilan kung bakit ang Kartilya ng Katipunan na isinulat ni Emilio Jacinto ay nakaugat sa mga sinaunang kasabihan na nagpapahalaga sa kabutihang loob at tumutukoy sa marangal at banal na pamumuhay.

Sa ikalawang bahagi, tinurol ko ang hamon ng pandemya sa ating kalayaan: ang hamon ng pagdedeklara ng “state of emergency” ng Pamahalaang Duterte, ng pagpapasailalim sa Luzon at iba pang lalawigan at siyudad sa Visayas at Mindanao sa *Enhanced Community Quarantine* upang masolusyonan ang pagkalat ng nakamamatay na virus at gawing ligtas ang buhay

(*Act of Proclamation... from page 15*)

and ordering the return of those parishes, all of which proceedings are on file with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to which they are sent last month of last year for the issuance of the proper Royal Degree which, in turn, caused the growth of the tree of liberty in this our dear land that grew more and more through the iniquitous measures of oppression, until the last drop from our chalice of suffering having been drained, the first spark of revolution broke out in Calocan, spread out to Santamesa and continued its course to the adjoining regions of the province where the unequalled heroism of its inhabitants fought a onesided battle against superior forces of General Blanco and General Polavieja for a period of three months, without proper arms nor ammunitions, except bolos, pointed bamboos, and arrows.

Moreover, we confer upon our famous Dictator Don Emilio Aguinaldo all the powers necessary to enable him to discharge the duties of Government, including the prerogatives of granting pardon and amnesty,

And, lastly, it was resolved unanimously that this Nation, already free and independent as of this day, must use the same flag which up to now is being used, whose design and colors are found described in the attached drawing, the white triangle signifying the distinctive emblem of the famous Society of the "Katipunan" which by means of its blood compact inspired the masses to rise in revolution; the three stars, signifying the three principal Islands of this Archipelago-Luzon, Mindanao, and Panay where this revolutionary movement started; the sun representing the gigantic steps made by the sons of the country along the path of Progress and Civilization; the eight rays, signifying the eight provinces-Manila, Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Bataan, Laguna, and Batangas - which declared themselves in a state of war as soon as the first revolt was initiated; and the colors of Blue, Red, and White, commemorating the flag of the United States of North America, as a manifestation of our profound gratitude towards this Great Nation for its disinterested protection which it lent us and continues lending us.

And holding up this flag of ours, I present it to the gentlemen here assembled.

ng mga mamamayan. Partikular na nilagdaan ng Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang Batas Republika Blg. 11469 na kilala sa tawag na “Bayanihan to Heal as One Act.” Ang naturang batas ay nagbibigay ng natatanging kapangyarihan sa Pangulo para malabanan ang paglaganap ng COVID-19 sa bansa sa mga sumusunod na aspekto: 1. pangkabuhayan at tulong pananalapi, 2. pangkalusugan, 3. kaayusang pambayan, at 4. probisyong pananalapi. Sa bahaging ito, aking ipinakita na may mga positibo at negatibong naidulot ang pagtugon natin sa pandemya. Positibo dahil buhay na buhay pa rin ang konsepto ng kalayaan, kaginhawaan, at kabutihang loob sa ating mga mamamayan sa pamamagitan ng pagbabayanihan, pagdadamayan, at pagtutulungan. Iba’t ibang sektor mula sa gobyerno, mga pribado, publikong institusyon, samahan, grupo, at indibidwal ay kumilos para magbigay ng mga pagkain at “personal protective equipments” sa mga bagong Katipunero at Rebolusyonaryo – ang ating mga *frontliners*. Nasaksihan natin ito na umiiral hindi lamang dito sa loob ng kapuluan kundi maging sa iba’t ibang bansa

(*continued on page 5*)



Ang Kasarinlan ng Pilipinas Bilang Isyung Politikal sa Kampanya ng Halalang Pampanguluhan ng 1935¹

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Isang mahalagang ikutang-pangyayari ang naganap noong 1935 sa gitna ng makabayang pagpupunyagi ng mga Pilipino para sa kasarinlan ng bansa mula sa kamay ng mga Amerikanong mananakop. Sa taong ito ginanap ang kauna-unahang pampanguluhan halalan para sa inilatag na Pamahalaang Komonwelt, isang 10-taong transisyon ng paghahanda para sa nakatakdang pagsasarili ng Pilipinas pagsapit ng 1945. Apat na kandidato ang tumakbo sa pagka-Pangulo sa nasabing halalan: sina Hen. Emilio Aguinaldo ng Cavite, Sen. Manuel Quezon ng Tayabas, Obispo Gregorio Aglipay ng Ilocos Norte, at G. Pascual Racuyal ng Cebu. Tampok sa kampanya ang mainitang balitaktakan ng mga kandidato sa napakaraming isyung sosyopolitikal sa bansa. Pangunahin dito ang usapin hinggil sa kasarinlan ng Pilipinas. Sapagkat higit na nagtuon si Obispo Aglipay sa mga isyung pang-ekonomiya at si G. Racuyal naman ay hindi naging aktibo sa pangangampanya, iikot ang tema at tuon ng presentasyong ito sa naganap na debateng politikal sa pagitan nina Hen. Aguinaldo at Sen. Quezon hinggil sa kasarinlan at kung paano nila pinanindigan ang magkaibang prinsipyo hinggil sa usapin.

¹ Abstrak ng ibinahaging lektura/presentasyon sa CSC-CILP-CHS Webinar Bilang Paggunita sa Araw ng Kalayaan 2020, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Hunyo 11, 2020; 10:00 n.u. – 12:00 n.t.

(The Quest for... from page 14)

Macapagal proclaimed June 12 as the Philippine Independence Day, and all citizens of the Philippines are enjoined to observe such day with rites befitting Independence Day.

This quest entails the hardship, struggles, love, respect, and determination that our forefathers felt and experienced. Their dedication to achieving freedom signifies the nation's pride and a legacy to the country's present and future generations.

“Aming ligaya na pag may mang-aapi
Ang mamatay nang dahil sa iyo.”

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Ang Kampanya ng Kalayaan ng mga Pilipino sa Iba't ibang Panahon: Tunggalian ng Perspektiba at Interpretasyon¹

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Malaki ang pagpapahalaga ng mga Pilipino sa kalayaan ng Pilipinas. Mababasa ito sa iba't ibang akademikong publikasyon, mga peryodiko, at iba pang popular na mga babasahin. Sa kabila ng pagtamo ng kalayaan ng mga Pilipino, hindi pa rin nagkakandado lalo na ang mga siyentipikong panlipunan kung saan nga ba dapat ilagay na panahon ang araw ng kalayaan ng Pilipinas. Bilang kaligiran, ang pagsikil sa kalayaan ng mga Pilipino ay nagsimula nang dumating si Fernando Magallanes sa Pilipinas. Bilang reaksiyon ay nilabanan siya ni Lapu-lapu. Nang magsimulang maitatag ang mga pamayanang Espanyol sa arkipelago sa panahon ni Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, sunod-sunod na rin ang mga pag-aalsa ng mga katutubo mula sa iba't ibang panig ng kapuluan upang maibalik ang nawalang kalayaan bunga ng pananakop. Mula dantaon 16 hanggang dantaon 19, sumalamin ang panahon ng mga pag-aalsa sa pagbawi ng kalayaan sa kamay ng kolonyal na pamahalaan. Gayunpaman, ang kanilang adhikain ay para lamang sa kani-kanilang mga lugar o bayang kinabibilangan at hindi pambansa. Sa hindi inaasahang pagkakataon ay nahubog ang pagkakaisa ng bawat grupong etniko mula sa iba't ibang rehiyon. Pasan-pasan ang magkakatulad nilang hinaing para sa kalayaan at karapatan, at sinabayan pa ng pagbubukas ng pandaigdigang kalakalan, pag-angat ng gitnang uri, paglaganap ng ideyang liberal, sekularisasyon, ang Pag-aalsa sa Cavite at sa bandang huli, ang pagpatay sa GOMBURZA, lahat ng ito ay naging batayan sa pagbuo ng konsepto ng pagiging isang nasyon.

Bagama't nakilala ang mga repormistang Pilipino sa kanilang paghingi ng pagbabago sa mga batas na ipinapatupad sa Pilipinas, ilan sa kanila ay naging instrumento upang magkaroon ng kamalayan ang mga Pilipino na lumaya sa Espanya. Nang mabuo ang Katipunan noong Hulyo 7, 1892, pormal na inilusad ang isang kampanya ng kalayaang pampulitika na matatamo lamang sa isang marahas na paraan. Sa hindi inaasahang pagkakaton, natuklasan ang lihim ng Katipunan noong Agosto 19, 1896 kaya walang nagawa ang mga opisyal at kasapi nito kundi ilusad na ang himagsikang Pilipino

noong Agosto 23, 1896. Mula 1896 hanggang 1898, unti-unting umunlad ang kampanya ng mga Pilipino sa Kalayaan. Mula sa pagiging isang samahan, nabuo ang pamahalaang rebolusyonaryo sa Teheros, ang pansamantalang republika sa Biyak-na-Bato, mga relasyong diplomatiko sa ibang bansa, at ang pagpapalano sa pagtatatag ng isang republika. Ang ikalawang yugto ng himagsikan ay naging mabunga sapagkat dito naganap ang pagbabalik ni Pangulong Emilio Aguinaldo sa Pilipinas, pagkapanalo sa mga labanan, proklamasyon ng kalayaan, pagbuo

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¹ Buod ng ibinahaging lektura/presentasyon sa CSC-CILP-CHS Webinar Bilang Paggunita sa Araw ng Kalayaan 2020, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Hunyo 11, 2020; 10:00 n.u. – 12:00 n.t.





The Quest for Philippine Independence

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*To wean from the more than three centuries hands of Spanish rule
was to receive the foremost dream – the birth of Philippine Independence.*

On Sunday, June 12, 1898, at the window of General Emilio Aguinaldo's house in Kawit, Cavite, the Philippine Independence was declared. The cheering crowd of Filipinos who struggled and unitedly fought against the enemy signified victory.

The story behind this quest for freedom is for every Filipino to remember.

With the loss in major battles, the Manila Katipuneros retreated in the mountainous regions of Montalban. Cavite became the center of the revolutionary battle. The Cry of Cavite, also called *Agaw Armas* on August 31, 1896, signified the coordination and strategies of Caviteño Katipuneros. San Francisco de Malabon was the first to revolt and was followed by Noveleta and Kawit on the same date. These movements of Caviteño Katipuneros resulted in the liberation of the aforementioned towns.

Then followed the successive battles that spoke of triumph of revolutionaries who fought for freedom. Noted for these were the battles held in Imus (September 2, 1897), Binakayan, and Zapote (February 17, 1897).

Tejeros Convention was formed on March 22, 1897, in the presence of Magdalo and Magdiwang councils. The proposed unification of the two councils was brought up by Magdalo President Baldomero Aguinaldo during the Imus Assembly on December 28, 1896. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo while in the battle with his troop in Pasong Santol was elected President of the revolutionary government. His older brother Crispulo who was instructed to fetch him and took over his troop and died in that battle. Gen. Aguinaldo, with the other elected officials (Mariano Trias – Vice President, Emiliano Diego de Dios – Secretary of War,

Artemio Ricarte – Captain-General, Severino de las Alas – Secretary of Justice, and Baldomero Aguinaldo – Secretary of Finance) except Andres Bonifacio – Secretary of Interior took their oath at the Tanza Convent, Santa Cruz de Malabon (presently Tanza) on March 23, 1897.

Cavite earned victories but the latter were temporary. The Spanish forces led by Gen. Jose de Lachambra and Gen. Ramon Blanco launched Cavite revolutionaries with massive attacks. They reclaimed various towns and forced Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo and his men to retreat using the mountainous town of Maragondon until they reach the hilly towns of San Mateo and Puray, Rizal. From there on, they stopped and encamped at Biak-na-Bato, San Miguel de Mayumo, Bulacan, where Gen. Aguinaldo temporarily set the Constitution and formed the Republic of the Philippines (Biak-na-Bato Republic) on November 1, 1897.

At Biak-na-Bato, a pact that would temporarily end the fight between the Filipino and Spanish forces was forged. Here, an agreement required the banishment of selected revolutionary officials in the country aside from the requested Filipino reforms listed and the damages (P800,000) in the revolution. So Gen. Aguinaldo was exiled in Hong Kong. However, people anticipating that Aguinaldo's action would end the conflict, but the betrayal of trust between the two forces was an indication to resume the revolution in the Philippines (with the help of the Americans).

Dedicated Filipino revolutionists formed the Hong Kong Junta that would further study the existing matters in the Philippines and recommended to Aguinaldo the next move in making an independent country.

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ng Kongreso at pagkakaroon ng isang saligang batas na nagtadhana ng Republika ng Pilipinas. Hindi ito tinanggap ng mga imperyalistang Amerikano kaya naglunsad muli ng digmaan ang mga Pilipino noong 1899 na tumagal humigi't kumulang ng sampung taon. Sa muling pagsakop ng mga Amerikano sa Pilipinas, ipinagpatuloy ng mga Pilipino ang kampanya sa kalayaan sa pamamagitan ng isang prosesong pulitikal mula awtonomiya na magbibigay ng ganap na kalayaan. Naitatag ang Pamahalaang Komonwelt mula 1934 hanggang 1945 sa panahon ng liberasyon at sinundan ito ng pagtatapos ng Batas Tydings-McDuffie na nagtadhana ng kalayaan ng Pilipinas. Gayunpaman, ang pananakop ng mga Amerikano ay nagbunga ng kolonyal na mentalidad sa mga Pilipino kaya kahit mayroon na tayong kalayaang pampulitika noong 1946 ay tinatawag pa rin itong neokolonyalismo dahil maraming Pilipino ang kumakatig na sa mga Amerikano. Mula noon hanggang ngayon ay nagpatuloy ang hinaing sa pagkamit ng lubos na kalayaan. Kabilang dito ang laban ng kalayaan sa panahong diktadurang Marcos, ang kalayaan sa kahirapan, at sa ating kasalukuyang kinakaharap na krisis – ang kalayaan sa sakit na COVID-19.

Sa ispektrum ng kasaysayan ng kampanya ng kalayaan ng mga Pilipino, kapansin-pansin na ang kampanyang maging malaya ay bahagi na ng lipunang Pilipino sa lahat ng panahon. Kaya naman kung pag-uusapan kung kailan nga ba talaga naging malaya ang mga Pilipino ay kinakailangan itong isakonteksto upang maipaliwanag ng husto. Kabilang dito ang isang tunggalian na magpahanggang ngayon ay hindi pa rin natatapos: ang isyu kung kailan masasabing nagkaroon ng kalayaang pampulitika sa Pilipinas. Sa isang perspektiba, ang kalayaan ng Pilipinas ay dapat simulan sa Sigaw sa Pugad Lawin noong Agosto 23, 1896 sapagkat

ito ang panahon na ipinahayag ng mga Katipunero ang kalayaan ng mga Pilipino sa mga mananakop na Espanyol. Ito ay sa kabila na ang Hunyo 12, 1898 proklamasyon ng kalayaan ang pinakapopular na tinatanggap bilang araw ng kalayaan ng ating bansa. Gayunpaman, ito ay tinatawaran sapagkat hindi pa naman diumano tayo ganap na malaya noon dahil sa nakikipaglaban pa tayo sa mga Espanyol. Isa pa ring araw ng kalayaan ang isinabatas sa panahon ng Hapon ngunit walang naniwala dito. Sa mga naniniwala sa pananaw na legal ay sinasabing ang Hulyo 4, 1946 ang talagang kalayaan ng Pilipinas sapagkat ito ay itinadhana ng batas ayon sa Kasunduan sa Paris noong 1898 at Batas Tydings-McDuffie noong dekada 1930's. Para sa ilang siyentipikong panlipunan, bagama't binigyan tayo ng kalayaan ng mga Amerikano noong 1946, hindi pa rin masasabing ganap na malaya sapagkat napunta lamang tayo sa sitwasyon na neokolonyal. Sa panahong post war, hindi na naging usapin ang pambansang kalayaang pulitikal. Ang isyu ng kalayaan ay karaniwang ikinakapit sa kalayaang pang-indibidwal o grupo lalong-lalo na sa panahon ng batas militar. Kaya naman naging palasak na probisyon ito ng Saligang Batas noong 1987 sa seksyon ng Kalipunan ng mga Karapatan (Bill of Rights). Sa kasalukuyan, ang kalayaan at karapatan ay muling naririnig sa usapin ng West Philippine Sea dahil sa pakikialam ng bansang Tsina sa kalupaan at tubig-dagat ng Pilipinas. Gayundin, ang maging malaya sa banta ng pandemya ang isa sa malaking hamon sa mga Pilipino sa kasalukuyang henerasyon.

Bilang pangwakas, ang katatagan ng mga Pilipino sa pagkamit ng kalayaan at ang kanilang patuloy na pakikibaka, pambansa man o pang-indibidwal upang mapangalagaan ito ay maituturing na ikutang pangyayari sa kanilang kasaysayan bilang isang bansa sa anumang saklaw na panahon.



(The Quest for... from page 12)

When the Spanish-American war broke out, the Hong Kong Junta met with the Americans regarding the latter's proposal to ally Filipinos and Americans to win the war against Spaniards in the Philippines. Aguinaldo would return in the country to continue the war against the enemy assuring the United States' promise to occupy the Philippines.

He worked forces with his leaders and taught a joint attack against the Spaniards on May 31, 1898. He also formed a Dictatorial government on May 24, 1898, to give directions or command to Filipino fighting forces.

In his return, successive victories were noted. The Battle of Alapan, Imus, Cavite became the first victory that happened on May 28, 1898, wherein 270 Spanish armies surrendered to the Filipino revolutionaries. Filipino forces who won against the enemy were seen in the battles in Polvorin, Binakayan, Kawit, and in Bacoor on the same date. So with the other reports in Cavite, Noveleta, Tanza, Rosario, Naic, and from other provinces in the country, Laguna, the majority of towns in Bataan, Bulacan, and Mindoro that suggested the winning instances of Filipino forces. These successive victories were ripe for Aguinaldo to proclaim the country's independence. He immediately issued a decree on June 5, 1898, declaring June 12, the proclamation of Philippine Independence.

Aguinaldo had already in his mind this special day. While still in Hong Kong, he tasked Felipe Agoncillo's wife Marcela together with Lorenza Agoncillo and Delfina Herbosa de Natividad to sew and make the National Flag. It was purposely made to inspire Filipinos. Professor Julian Felipe, a pianist and music composer, composed the *Marcha Nacional Filipina*. It was first played at the San Francisco Malabon Church before it was heard in Kawit, Cavite. The *Acta de la Proclamacion de Independencia del Pueblo Filipino* was drafted and authored by Biñan, Laguna lawyer Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista.

The day of the celebration was witnessed by a huge crowd. Bautista read the *Acta*. The Philippine

Flag was hoisted; the National hymn was played by the San Francisco de Malabon Band. People were shouting. The independence proclamation draft was signed by 98 individuals but Aguinaldo did not sign it.

Apolinario Mabini became the adviser of President Aguinaldo. He engineered the formation of the First Philippine Republic. Through him, several aspects were changed and corrected. The act of independence was ratified in the Bacoor Assembly on August 1, 1898. Town heads from different provinces took an oath as confirmation of their respective decisions. Foreign recognition was achieved. The seat of government from Bacoor, Cavite was transferred to Malolos, Bulacan. The National Congress was inaugurated in Barasoain Church on September 15, 1898. The Malolos Constitution was promulgated after the treaty of Paris was signed and the First Philippine Republic was inaugurated on January 23, 1899, with Emilio Aguinaldo as President.

The first Philippine Republic failed to be recognized for international recognition of independence. Philippines became a United States territory. On February 4, 1899, the conflict between America and the First Philippine Republic erupted. Aguinaldo together with Filipino rebels established a revolt against the Americans; the US Congress deployed more troops to subdue the rebels. US General Frederick Funston captured Aguinaldo in Palanan, Isabela on March 23, 1902. Aguinaldo took an oath of allegiance to the American Government in April 1901.

On July 4, 1946, the United States of America granted the Philippines its independence. However, President Diosdado Macapagal, through Proclamation No. 28, s. 1962 declared June 12 as a special public holiday throughout the Philippines in commemoration of our people's declaration of their inherent and inalienable right to freedom and independence. In his June 12, 1962 address, he moved the commemoration of Independence Day from July 4, 1946, to June 12, 1898 – the Independence Day had to be declared by the Filipino as represented by the congress and not by the American Congress. Under Republic Act No. 4166 (August 4, 1964),

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when several towns anticipating the revolution, rose in revolt on the 28th, such that a Spanish contingent of 178 men, between Imus and Cavite-Viejo, under the command of a major of the Marine Infantry capitulated, the revolutionary movement spreading like wild fire to other towns of Cavite and the other provinces of Bataan, Pampanga, Batangas, Bulacan, Laguna, and Morong, some of them with seaports and such was the success of the victory of our arms, truly marvelous and without equal in the history of colonial revolutions that in the first mentioned province only the Detachments in Naic and Indang remained to surrender; in the second, all Detachments had been wiped out; in the third, the resistance of the Spanish forces was localized in the town of San Fernando where the greater part of them are concentrated, the remainder in Macabebe, Sexmoan, and Guagua; in the fourth, in the town of Lipa; in the fifth, in the capital and in Calumpit; and in the last two remaining provinces, only in their respective capitals, and the city of Manila will soon be besieged by our forces as well as the provinces of Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pangasinan, La Union, Zambales, and some others in the Visayas where the revolution at the time of the pacification and others even before, so that the independence of our country and the revindication of our sovereignty is assured.

And having as witness to the rectitude of our intentions the Supreme Judge of the Universe, and under the protection of the Powerful and Humanitarian Nation, the United States of America, we do hereby proclaim and declare solemnly in the name and by authority of the people of these Philippine Islands,

That they are and have the right to be free and independent; that they have ceased to have any allegiance to the Crown of Spain; that all political ties between them are and should be completely severed and annulled; and that, like other free and independent States, they enjoy the full power to make War and Peace, conclude commercial treaties, enter into alliances, regulate commerce, and do all other acts and things which an Independent State has a right to do,

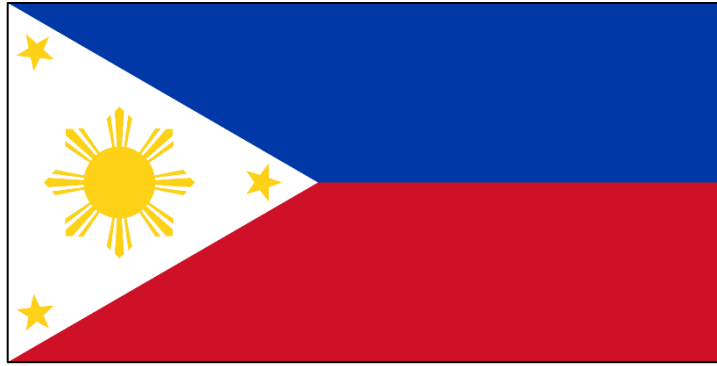
And imbued with firm confidence in Divine Providence, we hereby mutually bind ourselves to support this Declaration with our lives, our fortunes, and with our most sacred possession, our Honor.

We recognize, approve, and ratify, with all the orders emanating from the same, the Dictatorship established by Don Emilio Aguinaldo whom we revere as the Supreme Head of this Nation, which today begins to have a life of its own, in the conviction that he has been the instrument chosen by God, in spite of his humble origin, to effectuate the redemption of this unfortunate country as foretold by Dr. Don José Rizal in his magnificent verses which he composed in his prison cell prior to his execution, liberating it from the Yoke of Spanish domination,

And in punishment for the impunity with which the Government sanctioned the commission of abuses by its officials, and for the unjust execution of Rizal and others who were sacrificed in order to please the insatiable friars in their hydropical thirst for vengeance against and extermination of all those who oppose their Machiavellian ends, trampling upon the Penal Code of these Islands, and of those suspected persons arrested by the Chiefs of Detachments at the instigation of the friars, without any form nor semblance of trial and without any spiritual aid of our sacred Religion; and likewise, and for the same ends, eminent Filipino priests, Doctor Don Jose Burgos, Don Mariano Gomez, and Don Jacinto Zamora were hanged whose innocent blood was shed due to the intrigues of these so-called Religious corporations which made the authorities to believe that the military uprising at the fort of San Felipe in Cavite on the night of January 21, 1872 was instigated by those Filipino martyrs, thereby impeding the execution of the decree-sentence issued by the Council of State in the appeal in the administrative case interposed by the secular clergy against the Royal Orders that directed that the parishes under them within the jurisdiction of this Bishopric be turned over to the Recollects in exchange for those controlled by them in Mindanao which were to be transferred to the Jesuits, thus revoking them completely

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ACT OF PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

(Acta de la proclamación de la independencia del pueblo Filipino)

In the town of Cavite-Viejo (now Kawit), Province of Cavite, this 12th day of June 1898:

BEFORE ME, Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista, War Counsellor and Special Delegate designated to proclaim and solemnize this Declaration of Independence by the Dictatorial Government of the Philippines, pursuant to, and by virtue of, a Decree issued by the Egregious Dictator Don Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy,

The undersigned assemblage of military chiefs and others of the army who could not attend, as well as the representatives of the various towns,

Taking into account the fact that the people of this country are already tired of bearing the ominous yoke of Spanish domination,

Because of arbitrary arrests and abuses of the Civil Guards who cause deaths in connivance with and even under the express orders of their superior officers who at times would order the shooting of those placed under arrest under the pretext that they attempted to escape in violation of known Rules and Regulations, which abuses were left unpunished, and because of unjust deportations of illustrious Filipinos, especially those decreed by General Blanco at the instigation of the Archbishop and the friars interested in keeping them in ignorance for egoistic and selfish ends, which deportations were carried out through processes more execrable than those of the Inquisition which every civilized nation repudiates as a trial without hearing,

Had resolved to start a revolution in August 1896 in order to regain the independence and sovereignty of which the people had been deprived by Spain through Governor Miguel López de Legazpi who, continuing the course followed by his predecessor Ferdinand Magellan who landed on the shores of Cebu and occupied said Island by means of a Pact of Friendship with Chief Tupas, although he was killed in battle that took place in said shores to which battle he was provoked by Chief Kalipulako of Mactan who suspected his evil designs, landed on the Island of Bohol by entering also into a Blood Compact with its Chief Sikatuna, with the purpose of later taking by force the Island of Cebu, and because his successor Tupas did not allow him to occupy it, he went to Manila, the capital, winning likewise the friendship of its Chiefs Soliman and Lakandula, later taking possession of the city and the whole Archipelago in the name of Spain by virtue of an order of King Philip II, and with these historical precedents and because in international law the prescription established by law to legalize the vicious acquisition of private property is not recognized, the legitimacy of such revolution can not be put in doubt which was calmed but not completely stifled by the pacification proposed by Don Pedro A. Paterno with Don Emilio Aguinaldo as President of the Republic established in Biak-na-Bato and accepted by Governor-General Don Fernando Primo de Rivera under terms, both written and oral, among them being a general amnesty for all deported and convicted persons; that by reason of the non-fulfillment of some of the terms, after the destruction of the Spanish Squadron by the North American Navy, and bombardment of the plaza of Cavite, Don Emilio Aguinaldo returned in order to initiate a new revolution and no sooner had he given the order to rise on the 31st of last month

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