FOREIGN OCCUPATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF FILIPINO NATIONALISM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

The history of the Philippines is one defined by its regional, ethnic and geographical division. Early Malay immigrants spread throughout the archipelago, settling among its over seven thousand islands. The mountainous geography and jungle wilderness further isolated early communities, and even the largest islands of Luzon, Mindanao and the Visayas developed a variety of indigenous ethnic groups. Today, the Philippines is home to nine major languages and over a hundred minor dialects, all stemming from the multitude of tribal societies that arose in this period.[1] In the centuries after the first humans settled the islands, significant populations of foreign ancestry joined this indigenous mix—merchant sojourners from China and Persia, as well as the agents of colonial governments from Europe, America and Japan. Today, its official languages reflect the ongoing sense of division between Eastern and Western cultural traditions: Filipino (a modified version of Tagalog native to the island of Luzon) and English (the legacy of American colonialism).[2] In addition to this ethnic and linguistic diversity, there is the added dimension of religion. Though 80 percent of the nation is Catholic, numerous protestant and animistic religions also retain sizable shares of the total population. Though a national minority, a significant Muslim population dominates the southern island of Mindanao, and ongoing disputes over the matters of government representation and discrimination have developed into a number of nationalistic separatist organizations like the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Abu Sayaff. Lastly, Chinese

1 David Joel Steinberg, *The Philippines: A Singular and Plural Place*, 4th ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 39.

2 CIA World Factbook, "The Philippines," under "Languages," https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rp.html (accessed March 14, 2010).

ideas and culture as well as the imprint of Spanish, American and Japanese colonialism have deeply affected the fabric of Filipino society.

Despite this immense ethnic and cultural diversity, a strong sense of national identity emerged in the late nineteenth century. A new sense of "Filipinoness" supplanted ethnic and regional bonds as the principle identity of the average Filipino.[3] Though in the context of this paper the term "Filipino" refers to the people of the Philippines collectively—regardless of race, religion, language or social class—it is crucial to understand that *Filipino* as a national categorization did not carry its present day meaning until the late nineteenth century. When strictly addressing the term itself, in relation to its changing meanings and cultural association throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an italicized "*Filipino*" shall be used instead. This study seeks to understand how a region so historically divided could come to adopt a single national identity. Examination of the Philippines' three major occupations suggests that the crucial factor that enabled nationalism to take root was colonialism. Over the course of four hundred years, Spain, the United States, and Japan incorporated these isolated cultures under one rule. As a result, the disparate groups developed a common history from the shared experience of colonial exploitation. This redefinition of what it meant to be a *Filipino* began as a rhetorical tool of the elite, but eventually its use expanded to all corners of Filipino society as a response to colonialism, establishing itself as a popular identity and a necessary component of national resistance. As such, the Philippines provides an interesting perspective on the relationship between a society's national identity and its development as a nation.

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3 Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (New York: Verso, 2002), 65.

Beginning in the 1870s, a strong drive for the colony's full assimilation into Spain emerged. The educated members of the Philippine-born upper class known as the *ilustrados,* or "enlightened ones," initiated a massive public writing campaign aimed not only at the policy makers in Spain, but to the international community as a whole. The *ilustrados*' "Propaganda Movement" initially pushed for social reform and the equal representation of the Philippines as an official province of Spain, not merely as a colony to be exploited and neglected. In the course of their struggle to win philosophical and political support to their cause, the *ilustrados* introduced a new interpretation of the term *Filipino*, expanding its meaning from only *creole* residents (Spanish subjects born in the islands) to encompass all natives of the Philippines, including the Chinese *mestizo* elite and the *indios* (indigenous people of Malay ancestry).[4] However, because of Spain's inability to implement the desired reforms, the message of the propagandists evolved into a struggle for political sovereignty. The *ilustrados*' new national identity as *Filipino* took on a greater importance to their rhetoric—propagandists such as José Rizal, Antonio Luna and Apolinario Mabini seized upon the term to further connect their audiences to the greater cause of colonial reform, and in later years independence.

After the defeat of Spain and annexation to the United States, the concept of Filipino unity became a point of debate between colonizer and colonized. Filipino nationalists argued that the republican government of General Emilio Aguinaldo represented a stable and legitimate institution of a united people. In contrast, the United States government vacillated between denying this organized Filipino government existed and proclaiming the Filipinos as united in insurrection. The U.S. became embroiled in its

4 Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons,* 198.

own struggles at home—the Philippines' claim as a united and legitimate nation conflicted with America's own interpretation of democracy. Expansionists and Anti-Imperialists bitterly fought over the ramifications of colonialism and the proposed annexation of the Philippines, couching many of their arguments within attacks on the Filipinos' nationalist claims of unity and their capacity for democratic self-rule.

After thirty years of American administration and "Americanization," the Japanese occupation during World War II provoked a new wave of Filipino nationalism, one eventually leading to full independence in 1946. The lower class found both national and socio-economic unity in anti-Japanese resistance—guerrilla armies such as the Hukbalahap catalyzed this process through their military actions and propaganda. Founded by Luis Taruc and a coalition of social reformers from around Luzon, the "People's Anti-Japanese Army" united in opposition to the imperialist threat and embraced Filipino nationalism for the purpose of expelling the Japanese military, as well as addressing the growing need for agrarian reform. The lower class found themselves in a unique position: most of the upper class had either fled with the Americans after the fall of Manila or collaborated with the Japanese invaders to retain their own power. The upper class lost all credibility with the Filipino populace after this abandonment, and the Hukbalahap attracted civilian militia from all over the Islands as never before. Unlike the failed revolts against Spain and the United States, the Hukbalahap's leadership and the populace shared a common social and economic background—peasants leading peasants for the cause of homeland defense. This last, great conflict solidified the creation of an independent national identity. Filipinos continued to hold on to the regional kinship that defined them ethnically, but the era of colonialism under Spanish, American and Japanese

empires significantly strengthened nationalistic sentiments. In the end, the nationalist movements of the late nineteenth century gathered strength from anti-imperialism, the presence of a common enemy necessary to convince opposing factions to cooperate and mobilize as one. By the end of World War II, regional ethnic groups embraced their part within a greater *Filipino* community as well, a confederacy of these various regions united by a shared history of colonial oppression. From the 1870s to the end of WWII, this association became the central identity for Filipinos as a whole.

At the turn of the century, a collective *Filipino* identity formed in the minds of *ilustrados*—one defined by a shared colonial experience—and as it was adopted by the Filipino populace it transformed into an escalating resistance to colonialism, culminating in the attainment of independence in 1946. Though regionalism and ethnic division shaped early Filipino society, foreign powers molded these different cultures together under the umbrella of colonial rule. The shared experience of foreign exploitation united Filipinos of different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, and over time this national camaraderie became a permanent part of both personal and societal identity. It was a growing resistance to colonialism during the years of the Propaganda Movement that accelerated a national mindset and ultimately cemented a national *Filipino* identity among all Filipinos.

Chapter 1: The Early Philippines and the Foundations of National Identity

In his book, *Imagined Communities*, scholar Benedict Anderson explains nationalism as the result of changing social identities throughout the late nineteenth century. Nationalism depended upon what he defined as an "imagined community"—theorizing that societies construct models for themselves as a means of self-categorization. People tend to identify with and organize themselves according to their perceived kin groups. In the pre-Spanish Philippines, these groups were tangible entities; a community consisted of people who physically interacted on a daily basis, and leadership was only experienced through the literal presence of a chief and his warriors. However, as societies grow larger and more complex, they inevitably seek new models of self-identification. Nationalism particularly requires a constructed or "imagined" component.[5] Simply put, an individual develops a feeling of familiarity with other members of their society even beyond those they can literally perceive.[6] In a populous country, it is impossible to know every member of an entire nation. Yet within the imagined community, individuals develop a camaraderie based on the presumption of a shared values, goals and history with these other members of the nation.[7] Incidentally, Spain's pursuit of colonial interests began this process. Filipino values and attitudes—descended from those found in China—were further shaped by the Spanish to serve their imperial goals. However, these factors also aided the explosive spread of nationalism and anti-imperialism in the mid-1800s. Spain and later colonizers failed to meet Filipino

5 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised ed. (New York: Verso, 2006), 6-7.
6 Ibid., 6.
7 Ibid., 7.

expectations of leadership, which facilitated the creation of the *Filipino* identity during the late 1800s, and the conceptual reinvention of the Philippines as a nation.

Pre-Spanish Filipino Values

Consolidation of Filipino regional loyalties into a cohesive national identity began upon a foundation of pre-Spanish "Filipino values," cultural constructs that had guided Filipino society and government for centuries. These traditional attitudes and beliefs common throughout Filipino society, and shared with much of Asia, facilitated Filipinos' adoption of *Filipino* as an overarching identity in the twentieth century. The core values of *pakikisama* (social harmony), *utang-na-loób* (reciprocation), and *hiya* (shame) were already deeply ingrained in Filipino society long before the arrival of foreign imperialism, but colonizers embraced and encouraged these conventions as a means of control. Though an otherwise heterogeneous people, these basic values are nearly universal among indigenous Filipinos and help to explain Filipinos' general attitude toward colonial powers.

As with much of Southeast Asia, the Chinese had an early and lasting lasting impact on the development of the Philippines. Many of the core social conventions, or "Asian values," common to East and Southeast Asian countries originated from ancient China. The Philippines was no exception to this, and these principles found their way to the islands with the original Malay migrations. Beginning in the fourteenth century, a new influx of mainland values visited the islands via Chinese merchants. China maintained a slow but steady trade with the Philippines up until the arrival of European

explorers in the 1500s. Trade to the Philippines suddenly became quite lucrative, and Chinese merchants flocked to Luzon to take advantage of the Spanish galleon trade. The exchange of goods accompanied an exchange of culture and genetics, as many merchants took local wives and settled in the islands. Though colonial powers would co-opt and manipulate them to their own ends, the Asian values brought from China formed the core of Filipino values. As such, the basic principles of Asian values mirrored Filipino values, and examination of their similarities helps to explain Filipino expectations of government in the coming centuries.

Though the basic ideas of Confucianism had existed throughout Asia for at least a millennium, the Chinese philosopher Confucius first organized and outlined its fundamental principles during the fifth and sixth century B.C.E., describing a family-oriented hierarchy to society and government. Government's fundamental role was to create a class of powerful but benevolent rulers—men of virtue and wisdom, divinely selected to lead and reflecting the harmony of the nuclear family. In particular, these enlightened kings were symbols of fatherly authority, and paternalism was an integral part of Asian cultures. The first Filipinos also adhered to this paternalistic model: the *cabeza de barangay*, the chief patriarch of the village, was the principle source of authority for the earliest Malay settlers, acting as a father figure to the entire clan. Prior to the Spanish conquest, the power of these early patriarchs was conferred upon warrior chieftains called *datus*. The extent of a *datu's* influence was directly proportional to the political and military power he wielded, and more literally determined the size of his territory.[8] Kingdom borders were fluid—the more men a *datu* commanded, the larger his

8 Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines* (Chapel

sphere of control. As such, borders were a flexible and somewhat arbitrary concept for early Filipino tribes. Isolated villages existing on the outskirts of a *datu's* kingdom regularly switched allegiances, granting tribute to the most imposing chief to ensure their community's safety. Kingdoms swelled and shrank with regularity, and a *datu's* territorial control waned as it radiated further from his seat of power. It was not until the Age of Exploration that Western ideas of static borders and uniform government control arrived with of the Europeans. Though the establishment of a Western colonial structure dominated the Philippines as a whole, elements of the *datus'* rule persisted at the local level. When they conquered the Philippines, the Spanish knowingly took over the role of patriarchal figure, through the Church and colonial administrations set themselves up as caretakers and supreme authority.

Another cornerstone of Asian values is the idea of harmony. Confucian China applied the principle of Harmony to not only the natural world, but to society as well. Community harmony was paramount, and was ideally achieved through the honest and proper conduct of its citizens. In Asian cultures, peace and prosperity depended upon the respecting of duty and personal obligation. The Philippines have a similar concept they call *pakikisama*, which translates as "camaraderie." *Pakikisama* represents the desire to cultivate community harmony, which was accomplished through a system of social interaction founded upon reciprocation. Reciprocity worked in tandem with the principles of harmony in Filipino society. The "golden rule" of Confucian thought resembles the Christian ethic as well: "Do not do unto others what you would not have done to yourself." In the Chinese context, the enlightened rulers were expected to act

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Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 41.

with respect and compassion for those in their charge, and the ruled were to remain loyal to their leaders in return. Filipinos took the idea of duty and reciprocity further. In the Philippines, the principle of reciprocity is known as *utang-na-loób*, which means "debt of the soul," basically an unending cycle of cultural debt. To preserve community harmony, *pakikisama*, all people had reciprocal obligations. The *datu* was expected to promote the security and happiness of the village, and in return he could expect the villagers' continued loyalty.

The concept of *hiya* (shame) reinforced this unspoken but mutually understood social contract, and structures many Filipino actions. Protecting one's dignity is crucial to maintenance of harmony and community, and personal guilt is the mechanism by which Filipinos are expected to govern their own actions. *Walang hiya*, meaning "without shame," is a great insult in Filipino society, and severe transgression can elicit strong reprisal from the community. In the case of Filipino leadership, the result is a form of social contract where a leader—whether a *datu* or an elected official—and the community are obligated to serve each other. Even today, ideal leadership in the Philippines is one based on respect and gratitude rather than strict legal precedence. *Principales* (local leaders empowered by Spanish administrations) are expected to act generously for fear of losing the people's loyalty, and the people are obligated to support their leaders as children would honor their parents.

Ultimately, the West played a more direct role in shaping political development in the Philippines, but these prevalent values remained important in shaping future anti-imperialist nationalism. With the American conquest, the U.S. resorted to similar tactics as the Spanish, embracing Filipino values as a method of control. These foundational

Philippine values lend themselves to the ultimate explanation of democratization in the region as a whole. Not so much for its direct effect on nationalism and democratization, but instead, one must think of Philippine values as a characteristic by which Filipino society interprets these movements.

Early Spanish Colonialism

Magellan's discovery of the Philippines in 1521 did little to uproot these Filipino values. Indeed, the Spanish encouraged traditional conventions such as paternalism, and over the coming centuries bent them to their advantage. On April 27, 1565, Miguel López de Legazpi arrived on the island of Cebu to establish the first Spanish settlement in the Philippines.[9] These first Spanish explorers initially sought trade with China, and secured the Philippines as a convenient waypoint for Mexico-bound galleons. The Chinese also benefited from this new market, and new opportunities for China to trade with the West opened up. The slow and perilous overland route of Marco Polo, which ran through Muslim territory, was replaced by the less fatal and more profitable seaways of the Pacific galleon trade. In addition to the further influence on Filipino values, the population spike of foreign merchants resulted in the rise in power and prestige of *mestizos*—those born of Chinese-Filipino ancestry. During this boom, Chinese sojourners already living in commercial ports traded with the the Spanish, and new immigrants from the mainland flocked to Luzon to take part, selling Chinese merchandise as well as serving as money lenders to locals. Over time, these Chinese merchants

9 Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 44.

became exceptionally wealthy, even to the point of threatening Spanish monopolies; the Spanish responded by instituting numerous restrictions ranging from tax hikes to the expulsion of non-Christian Chinese. The void left by the Chinese departures was then filled by a growing population of the mixed-race children of Chinese merchants and Filipino women. Not subject to exclusionary laws because of Catholic conversion and only partial-Chinese ancestry, these *mestizos* inherited their parents' businesses and wealth. In time, they came to rule the Philippines as the wealthy *principalía* class—a rotating group of political families, charged with running local government for Spanish authorities.[10]

The legacy of these exchanges had a lasting influence upon the relationship the Philippines had with colonial powers. An understanding of the the *principalía's* origins helps to explain later social conflicts and insurrection. The Spanish called upon this elite to run local government in their place. The wealth they gained from lucrative trade operations, loans, and landholdings complemented administrative power. This privileged group used wealth and Asian leadership ideas to maintain their station. But leadership still had its obligations. The community expected the *principalía* to use their wealth to fund public projects and host festivals out-of-pocket, thus fulfilling the roll as patriarchs. This practice, known as "fiesta politics," developed from these paternalistic customs. The *principalía* needed to project a paternalistic image in order to maintain the loyalty—a festival before decreeing a work project smoothed over the prospect of *corvee* labor. It became a favor rather than a command. In keeping with the spirit of *utang-na-loób*, the community was expected to remain loyal to its leader, and turn a blind eye to a personal

10 Kramer, *The Blood of* Government, 42.

use of public funds.

Elections functioned in a similar way during the U.S. Colonial period, and these practices caused a number of problems as the Americans could not break the Filipino elite of these activities. Candidates hosted parties for the public to showcase their "generosity," rather than campaigning on their administrative credentials or professional integrity. Candidates instead sought to show who would best maintain reciprocity with lavish displays of generosity and promises to support their allies within the *principalía*. American administrators saw this disregard for the "rule of law" as corruption, whereas the populace itself did not consider it a serious threat to their own interpretation of democracy.

In May 1570, Lagazpi returned to the Philippines to further assert the presence of Spain, founding the settlement of Manila with the cooperation of a local ruler.[11] In a ritual later mythologized by Filipino nationalists, Legazpi made a blood compact with Rajah Sikatuna, sealing the *datu's* devotion to Spain and Roman Catholicism. Thus began the Philippines' three hundred year transformation from an independent region of Malay societies into a Western hybridization. Though the Spanish had little financial interest in the indigenous people at first, they were nonetheless compelled to spread Christianity to the "heathen" Filipino tribes they encountered. The Spanish promotion of Roman Catholicism began in earnest in 1565 and marked a significant watershed moment in the unification of the Philippines. Spain viewed itself as uplifting the backwater Philippines: bringing the natives salvation and civilization. With the introduction of Christianity to the Philippines, patriarchal devotion focused on the Church and Spain.

11 Karnow, *In Our* Image, 46.

Filipino nationalists later mythologized the Legazpi-Sikatuna pact, as it captured the principle of *utang-na-loób* (reciprocity), and symbolized the mixture of Spanish and Filipino blood.[12] Likewise, the Spanish embraced *utang-na-loób* because it reinforced paternalism, offering a convenient means for their representatives to maintain control. The conversion of many Filipinos to Catholicism crossed traditional ethnic boundaries and, along with the colonial oversight of the Spanish Empire, further bonded the islands in a manner not seen in the pre-Spanish era. It was the overarching control of a foreign power that made it possible for the distinct cultures of the Philippines to be brought together.

The introduction of Catholicism by the Spanish was the earliest foundation on which nationalism was built. For Benedict Anderson, language was also vital to this redefinition. The development of a common language, might expand a community beyond a single village, and the initial motivation is often a religious imperative. The universality of Latin as a standard for all Catholic rituals and rites tied its members together in a manner separate from race and geography. Over time, the common language shifted away from religious necessity to the more secular demands of capitalism and trade: much as English has become the global language of commerce today, so too did Spanish gain prevalence in the Philippines for inter-ethnic discourse. The secularization of a *lingua franca* is the basis for creating the nation: the imagined community now consists of the camaraderie among those that share this geographical and linguistic similarity.

12 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 59-61.

The promotion of a unified language is a key part of nation building, which manifests in the form of state-sponsored education efforts. The actual transformation of dynastic form of government into a modern nation is most apparent here. As seen especially in the Hispanization of South America and the Philippines, the Spanish sought to shape a populace via Church control in order to achieve their long and short term economic goals. They introduced Catholicism and the Latin language, but the religious education also had the unforeseen effect of uniting otherwise disparate tribes through an economic and social plight shared by all under the flag of Spain. Though it allowed the Spanish initial control, this unification also planted the seeds of future nationalistic resistance to their foreign rule, as over time these local communities associated themselves with other such territories, including the Caribbean and Latin American colonies.

Even after the establishment of Spanish colonial rule in the sixteenth century, personal identity for most Filipinos continued to follow one's ethnic ties—natives primarily identified themselves as *Tagalog, Ilocano, Ilongo, Cebuano*, or other tribal affiliation. Conflicting prioritization of national and regional loyalties for Filipinos affected the formation of what Benedict Anderson defined as the "imagined community."[13] Smaller, regional identities had to give way to a larger one for Filipino nationalism to succeed. Filipino society experienced a shift from their traditional regional-ethnic associations ("I am *Tagalog*," "I am *Ilocano*," etc.) to a broader identity defined by the imposed geopolitical boundaries of colonialism ("I am *Filipino"*). The change reflected not only who they were, but a growing awareness of who they were not.

13 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 5-7.

Filipino originally referred to Spanish citizens living in the the Philippines, but overtime it became a unique identity independent of peninsular Spain.

Anderson makes an important point about nation building in regard to Southeast Asia, using the much later example of Imperial Japan during World War II.[14] External factors—how others view a people—might change how a community views itself. Anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist nationalism played a particularly important role in the independence movement of the Philippines. Each new colonial master identified the Filipino as different, and this fed a general sense of opposition to intruders. Thomas Metcalf described this as a creation and ordering of difference in his studies of British colonialism in India and Malaya.[15] The British set to categorize the different peoples they encountered based on perceived racial attributes, seeking to "rank" how civilized these cultures were. What actually happened was that Western anthropologists imposed the very physical and psychological differences that they expected to find, imagining "scientific" racial differences where none existed. In this way, the colonizers created an identity for themselves by imposing one on others; they designated themselves as the standard.

A similar hierarchy of racial categories was prevalent in the Spanish Empire. In addition to the ethnic affiliations Filipinos traditionally valued, the Spanish now imposed another condition based upon Spanish descent. Occupying the upper tier of political and economic domination were the *peninsulares* (Iberian-born Spaniards), followed by the *creoles* (Philippine-born Spaniards), *mestizos* (mixed Chinese and Filipino), and *indios*

14 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 97-100.
15 Thomas R. Metcalf, "Chapter 2: Constructing Identities," in *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

(indigenous Filipinos).[16] The ordering of the races depended upon how closely the different ethnic groups reflected the attributes the colonizers valued in themselves. The colonized fell into a stratified hierarchy based on what was considered "civilized" by the West.

Despite the imposition, the perceptions of the Spanish colonizers clashed with the the Filipinos' perception of themselves. This disconnect became more visible during times of war. Within the Japanese "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" during WWII, a Filipino or Indonesian speaking perfect Japanese was not considered Japanese, and would never preside over Japanese affairs. Anderson claims that this was more than just racism: the government of the Japanese Empire was building a national identity—the "divine" Yamato race—while simultaneously resisting the influence of those peoples it conquered.[17] Nation building requires both an internal, unifying cultural construct, and a reinforcing recognition of other cultures, especially those perceived as threatening or hostile.

Over the course of many centuries, the different peoples of the Philippines redefined and re-categorized themselves in a number of ways before arriving at the modern conception of *Filipino*. With the Propaganda Movement of the late nineteenth century, Filipinos established a new unifying cultural identity from a variety of ethnic and regional communities. This array of social and cultural divisions did not lose their importance after the rise of Filipino nationalism—regionalism continues to play a major role in the Philippines even today. Regional divisions did not always take a backseat to greater national priorities. However, understanding the transformation of Filipino society

16 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 39.
17 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 110-111.

that occurred in the final days of Spanish colonialism requires familiarity with previous Filipino values and history. The influence of previous cultures like the Chinese, and the critical early years of Spanish rule, established the ideas and concepts central to Filipino social identity. Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, growing discontent with colonial powers pressured new ways of thinking for Filipinos—first with the elite, and later the masses. Exposure to a common imperialist domination pushed the different cultures to band together. In the process of finding a common history of oppression, many of these different ethnic and religious groups embraced a new image of themselves as *Filipino* instead. Historically, factional interests have continually competed with and often won out against greater national interests, making national unity in the Philippines seem unlikely. Ultimately though, it was the existence of a foreign adversary that made it possible.

Chapter 2: The Philippine Revolution and the End of Spanish Colonialism

A strong nationalist movement—one of the earliest and most advanced in Asia—emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and brought dramatic change to Southeast Asia. Though still only loosely united under the Spanish control, early Filipino society was quickly developing a new social identity. This growing commonality was sparked by Spain's introduction of a common religion and language. While regional, ethnic, and familial identities continued to play critical roles, three great wars against three powerful colonial adversaries further redefined the *Filipino* community to include any individual born in the Philippines. Social and ideological differences took a back seat to the more pressing issue of foreign occupation. During the Philippine Revolution, the Philippine-American War and the Japanese occupation of World War II, nationalism thrived in the face of colonial control—a common threat to the Philippines was critical for the overall mobilization of a Filipino nation. Between the early emergence of Filipino nationalism in the 1850s and final independence in 1946, Filipinos gradual expanded and embraced a unified, popular identity that superseded previous regional and ethnic associations. A widespread discontent with Spanish economic and social oppression created a suitable environment for the re-imagining of Filipino society. As colonial control moved from Spain to the United States, and then for a time to Japan, the consolidation of Filipino factions into a single nation accelerated.

One would expect the Philippines—with its ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity spread over thousands of islands—to defy any cohesive, national tendency. Yet the country, along with many of its neighbors throughout Southeast Asia, experienced a

profound transformation of identity. The term *Filipino* as it is used today did not exist until the late 1800s, and originally referred to Philippine-born Spaniards (creoles).[18] The new identity of the *Filipino* arose during the Propaganda Movement of the 1870s, when the writer Apolinario Mabini redefined the term with a nationalistic connotation in his essays.[19] The *ilustrados* embraced unity in their public rhetoric, yet still promoted their regional origins. Despite this, a significant shift had occurred by 1896, and the Philippines developed a broader understanding of nationhood and national identity. Foreign colonial control enabled the shift from a local to national consciousness. The Spanish occupation had created a large, cohesive territory encompassing the individual islands, and Spanish colonial control united the many disparate peoples as a common Filipino society. Over time, the shared experience of colonization strengthened this bond and united Filipinos in popular discontent. From these many islands and tribes emerged a new collective *Filipino* identity, and under the *ilustrados* the concept grew to encompass a wide range of peoples. The Philippines' first strong nationalist movements were based on anti-colonialism. The artificial borders imposed by foreign rulers crafted the Philippine nation as it exists today.

The Propaganda Movement

Throughout the mid-1800s, the waning control of the Spanish crown over its South American colonies inspired the ascending *principalía*, as did the sacrifices of

18 Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons*, 233.
19 Ibid., 233-234.

religious and political martyrs.[20] These individuals boasted enormous wealth, land and influence within the Philippines but were all but ignored beyond the islands' confines. Their mixed heritage as the mestizo offspring of Chinese, or sometimes Spanish, merchants and indigenous women barred them from the same international respect granted to their European counterparts.[21] Despite prejudice and oppression, the *principalía's* great farming estates thrived. Though barred from Spanish colonial administration, *principales* built local political influence through their commercial activities.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Filipino *principales* had experienced a great change in their cultural identity. It was from this elite base that the *ilustrados* sprang—the highly educated sons of *principalía* families. The ambition of these Renaissance men eventually drove them to leave the Philippines, pressured by the limited opportunities available in the Philippines and lured by the universities of West. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 accelerated the migration of wealthy scions to schools throughout Europe. Being of mixed heritage and trained in European universities,the *ilustrados* saw themselves as overseas Spaniards rather than abiding by traditional ethnic affiliations. Though they represented the best minds in the Philippines, they nonetheless faced discrimination from *penisulares* (peninsular Spaniards) in both Spain and the Philippines. While the *ilustrados* saw themselves as the Crown's subjects, Spaniards saw them as *indios* (indigenous Filipinos), and thus beneath them. Despite *ilustrado* efforts to distance themselves from the rest of Filipino society initially, racism eventually pressured them to organize with the rest of the Philippines. Bitter after centuries as second-class

20 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 38.
21 Ibid., 39.

citizens and emboldened by their education, the *ilustrados* petitioned Spain for greater political rights. The Propaganda Movement began in the 1870s and initially sought complete assimilation as a full-fledged province—with all male Filipinos as Spanish citizens.

Calls for reform and political efficacy were met with Spanish violence and ignorance from the beginning. A core belief of reformers and revolutionaries was r*azón* or "reason." The *ilustrados* felt themselves disciples of logical discourse, and that Spain was acting in an arbitrary and destructive manner. The propagandist Apolinario Mabini, in particular, believed in "natural laws" governed by r*azón*, such as *utang-na-loób* to which all Filipinos are bound. The Blood Compact between Miguel Lopez de Legazpi and Rajah Sikatuna allowed for the first Spanish settlement—a promise that Spain would bring civilization to the islands (education, protection, medicine, wealth and development) in exchange for loyalty and gratitude.[22] This mythology guided reformers and revolutionaries prior to the defeat of Spain.[23] Their chief complaint was that Spain failed to uphold that compact; that it failed in the execution of its duties. By not improving the lives of loyal citizens—much as the bad landlord might be labled "*walang hiya*"—Spain earned the disdain of its people. Spain violated Filipinos' right to domestic peace and the pursuit of happiness. As Spain no longer fulfilled its role as patriarchal teacher, and had failed to maintain reciprocity with its subjects, *ilustrados* felt that independence was only reasonable. *Principales* believed that the Philippines must be ruled by *jefe*-like individuals, enlightened leaders to direct the masses and uphold *utang*-

22 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 59-61.
23 Julian Go, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning: Elite Political Cultures in the Philippines and Puerto Rico during U.S. Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 101.

na-loób . "A superior is a superior only so far as he promotes the welfare of his subordinates."[24] The Spanish had tried to rule by force and not by *razon*, and so were no longer legitimate superiors at all. Jacinto adds that it is through *razon* that a just ruler rules by cultivating the love of his people.[25]

One of the first significant events leading to the Philippine Revolution took place in 1872 at Cavite. The Catholic Church had tremendous clout in the Philippines, and the friars had dominated most aspects of Filipino life for centuries. The friars maintained their power with threats of excommunication, massive land holdings, and through the control of education. Spaniards dominated the clergy and fought the growing pressure to open high church positions to Filipinos. By denying Filipinos access to the Catholic hierarchy, a chasm opened between Spaniards and Filipinos. Because of this connection, many of the first serious nationalists were religious reformers as well. The arrival of a new governor-general in 1871, Rafel de Izquierdo, prompted further discord that led to violent confrontation. Izquierdo was a hard-line conservative, and declared that he would rule "by sword and the cross."[26] He especially distrusted *creoles* (Philippine-born Spaniards), suspecting them of divided loyalties. Because of this, he rescinded many of the privileges *creoles* traditionally enjoyed, removing them from prominent military positions and replacing them with *peninsulares*. Infuriated, a *creole* sergeant named Lamadrid launched an ill-fated mutiny at the Cavite Arsenal on January 20, 1872.[27] News of the plot had reached the authorities and the guards were on alert—the rebellion

24 Emilio Aguinaldo, "Speech of Emilio Aguinaldo," (August 3, 1898) quoted in Julian Go, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 106.
25 Jacinto, *Santos Cristóbal*, (1918) 425-427, quoted in Julian Go, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning.* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 106.
26 Karnow, *In Our Image*, 66.
27 Ibid., 66.

was quickly put down. However, the colonial government used the event as a convenient excuse to round up Filipino reformers; it arrested or deported some thirty men, but visited a worse punishment upon Father José Burgos. Burgos had long spoken out against Filipino exclusion from high Church positions, and denounced accusations of Filipino "intellectual inferiority." His trial was a farce. The prosecution's only witnesses were unreliable or captured mutineers tortured into denouncing Burgos, making wild claims that he was working for the United States to topple the Spanish government.[28] On February 17, 1872, before a crowd of forty thousand, Burgos and two other priests implicated in the conspiracy were tortured and then garroted for the crime of treason. Governor-general Izquierdo intended the gruesome show as a warning to other subversives. Burgos became an example, but not in the way Izquierdo wished. Later *ilustrado* activists placed the execution prominently on a long list of Spanish crimes, and they made the priest the first martyr of Filipino nationalism.

His family closely associated with Burgos, Doctor José Rizal, the "father of Filipino nationalism," was particularly influenced by the execution later in life. Rizal's novels and articles called for social change, and his martyrdom on the same field as Burgos in 1896 touched off the Philippine Revolution. Rizal was born to a privileged, upper-class family in Calamba in June of 1861.[29] Like most *ilustrados*, he had a mestizo heritage, with Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and Tagalog ancestry.[30] From the age of ten, Rizal experienced the failings and corruption of Philippine justice. In 1871, a neighbor accused his mother of poisoning her, and despite a lack of any evidence, she was

28 Karnow, *In Our Image*, 67.
29 Ibid., 68.
30 Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons,* 229.

humiliated with a forced march and imprisoned for three years. In 1881, Rizal again faced discrimination firsthand. A gifted poet, Rizal took first place in a colony-wide literary contest, beating out *peninsulares* and professors.[31] In recognition, the governor-general Primo de Rivera honored him with a gold ring. Yet, soon after, a Civil Guard lieutenant beat him for a perceived slight, and Rizal appealed to Rivera, only to be ignored.[32] The Cavite Arsenal Mutiny had a number of important effects on his later life. Rizal's family had close ties to Father Burgos, and José Rizal's brother Paciano was almost arrested with his mentor following the mutiny. The pressure from the Spanish authorities eventually forced Paciano to abandon his education. José Rizal avoided serious harassment, but felt compelled to leave the Philippines as much to escape persecution as for the opportunities of European universities.

At the age of twenty-one, Rizal traveled to Spain in 1882 to study ophthalmology. As with many Propagandists, Rizal's university studies were but a small part of his true education. Along with other *ilustrados*, Rizal discovered that persecution of Filipinos extended beyond the colony. Spanish belligerence and racism thwarted the propagandists at every turn. Traveling *ilustrados* encountered the same contempt abroad that they encountered at home.[33] Antonio Luna, a prolific ilustrado writer of the day, noted with great contempt the overt racism he experienced throughout his travels in "Madrid Impressions of a Filipino."[34] In his biting critique of Spanish culture, he notes with disdain the hateful taunts of children and adults alike, who made no effort to stifle their insults, and openly mocked the eloquent, well-dressed intellectual by shouting "little

31 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 42-43.
32 Ibid., 43.
33 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 48.
34 Ibid., 48.

Chiiinese!—Igorot!!".[35] Luna noted, "[M]y surprise knew no bounds before the complete ignorance that these people generally have of the Philippines," determining that even Filipino exemplars would gain no recognition in the face of such disregard from the Spanish populace.[36] The counterattack of the Propaganda Movement manifested as what Rizal called "El demonio de las comparaciones," or the "spectre of comparison".[37] The propagandists, with Rizal at the forefront, intended to attack Spanish racist attitudes by holding Spain up to its own standards for the Philippines, as well as comparing it to the rest of the Western world. In particular, the Propagandists opposed the continued exclusion of the Philippines from representation in the Spanish *Cortes*. They knew that other European powers gave adequate representation to their own colonies: the French Colonies had delegates, and the British were in the process of granting representation to theirs as well.[38] Most hypocritical of all was that Spain's only remaining colonies, Cuba and Puerto Rico, had enjoyed representation for years, and yet the Crown refused the same right to the Philippines.[39] This became a common focal point at the heart of the movement, the discrepancy and hypocrisy central to the nationalist movement itself. It is through each group's observation and comparison to one another—Spanish and Filipinos—that they define an identity for themselves.

35 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, quoted from Antonio Luna, "Madrid Impressions of a Filipino"
36 Ibid.
37 Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons*, 229.
38 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 9.
39 Ibid, 9.

Noli Me Tangere—The World as Seen by the Propagandists

Though Rizal penned numerous political and cultural essays for the pages of *La Independencia* and *La Solidaridad*, his 1887 novel, *Noli Me Tangere,* ultimately garnered the most the most lasting recognition. The work covered many controversial topics, but articulated the array of societal ills plaguing the Philippines under friar exploitation and colonial neglect. In particular, Rizal focused on the widespread corruption among local clergy and colonial government in the islands, detailing the growing desperation of impoverished Filipinos unable to fight against them. Despite enjoying success throughout Europe and among Filipinos that could acquire copies, the Spanish government challenged the book for its subversive overtures. Despite its official banning under the Spanish Penal Code by mid-1888, *Noli* remained popular, with a steady supply of the books shipping from Barcelona to Manila.[40] It was only because of its fictional characters and obfuscation of his personal views—which were diffused between multiple character voices—that Rizal escaped direct accusations of subversion. Though it is a tale of love and tragedy, the real power behind the work lies in its underlying themes and its critique of Spain's mismanagement of the colony. Rizal's masterpiece was a passionate social commentary that accurately represented the Philippines under Spanish colonial rule.

On its surface, *Noli Me Tangere* is a drama about love, intrigue and tragedy. The protagonist, Juan Crisóstomo Ibarra, a wealthy *ilustrado*, returns from his schooling in Madrid after a seven-year absence. Upon returning, he finds that much has changed in

40 John N. Schmacher, *The Propaganda Movement: 1880-1895, the creators of a Filipino consciousness, the makers of revolution* (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1973), 90-91.

his hometown, as well as learning of the death of his father, Rafael. From this point, the tale meanders through the privileged life experienced by men in Ibarra's position: though heartbroken by the indignities suffered by his father—who was imprisoned on false accusations of subversion—Ibarra continues to establish himself as a positive influence on the community. He decides to attempt to solve some of the problems he sees by funding the creation of a new school, but the forces that maligned his father renew their attacks on Ibarra as well—chief of Rizal's villains is the Franciscan friar, Damaso. Over the course of the book, Ibarra's idyllic life is steadily ruined by Damaso's attempts to assassinate both his reputation and physical person. Meanwhile, the reader is introduced to a vast selection of minor characters, who in their own sub-plots also experience tragedy at the hands of both an arrogant Church and a merciless Civil Guard. The novel concludes with Ibarra implicated in a revolutionary conspiracy by his enemy—an eerie foreshadowing of the events that would end Rizal's own life in 1896. Unlike Rizal, Ibarra would escape prison and execution with the help of Rizal's other ideological voice, the revolutionary Elias. Now a fugitive, Ibarra's faith in the system is all but shattered, and he vows that after being falsely called a subversive for so long, he will now become one.

Overall, the story is a rich source of insight into Filipino society in the years leading up to the Philippine Revolution, faithfully represented by an author who deeply loved his country but was not blind to its faults. The most impressive facet of the novel, and Rizal's primary focus, was his analysis of the actual state of the Philippines in his day, his goal to awaken the Filipino people to "the horrible cancer gnawing at this society, rotting its flesh, almost begging for a violent extirpation".[41] For Rizal, the most critical

41 José Rizal, *Noli Me Tangere,* trans. Harold Augenbraum (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 400.

problems did not necessarily rain down from the highest seats of power—Rizal maintained his loyalty to the Spanish crown even to his death, but instead laid blame on the middling administrators at the local levels, both in the Church and the local police forces. This attitude was reflected in his novel, characterizing men such as the archbishop and the Captain-General as intelligent, reasonable and fair leaders. When Ibarra is first excommunicated, it is the Captain General that intervenes on his behalf. Likewise, Rizal addresses local corruption through his villains: the friars are largely concerned with their own petty affairs, demanding respect and tribute even at the expense of the poor. Two brothers, Basilio and Crispin, training as sextons, discover this when they are accused of stealing and imprisoned by the friars. Likewise, the unnamed ensign and his civil guards are notoriously corrupt in the novel. In one scene, the mother of the boys, Sisa, is marched through the streets by soldiers in much the same way as Rizal's mother.

The ensign's cruel wife, Doña Consolación is perhaps Rizal's most interesting metaphor for the Philippines. Consolación first appears to pluck the wretched Sisa off the streets, and whip in hand shrieks for her dance and sing. But as this utter cruelty plays out, the narrator takes the reader back to the young Consolación's beginnings as a scared, naive woman brutally tortured both emotionally and physically by her abusive husband. Rizal explains the conflicting natures within Consolación as an allegory of Spanish/Philippine relationships, and what results is a disturbing treatise on the destruction of native identity within an individual as much as within Filipino society. Rizal created a villainess as believable as she is horrific, and stands out among a cast of women whose only apparent contributions to the plot are being courted, falling ill, or

getting victimized.

Rizal is often cited as the "first Filipino" for his extensive work fighting for the dignity of Filipinos and their right to representation in the Spanish Cortes. However, true credit for the evolution of *Filipino* to its present meaning falls to Rizal's fellow Propagandist, Apolinario Mabini, whose writings pushed the nationalist cause in the years after Rizal's death.[42] Rizal's use of *Filipino* to mean "creole" throughout *Noli Me Tangere* suggests that the base upon which he builds his nationalist identity is to the Philippines as a homeland, and not upon the Filipinos as a singular people. For his literary counterparts Ibarra and Elias, who serve to passionately voice Rizal's chief arguments, the answer was in major reforms at the local level: holding the police accountable, removing the friars' stranglehold upon Filipinos' daily life, etc. Rizal's goal was not to incite rebellion, but to force Spain to finally respond to the pleas of Filipino reformers.

The Propaganda Movement, organized to fight for the equal respectability of Filipinos in the functioning of the Spanish empire had run its course by the end of the 1890s. It became increasingly apparent that Spain would never accept Filipinos as equal citizens politically or racially, no matter how many well-reasoned arguments and evidence they presented. Eventually many foremost *ilustrados*, convinced that Spain would never seek a non-exploitative relationship with the Philippines, changed their rhetoric to accommodate new demands for autonomy. Though Rizal still valued assimilation to the end, he came to a similar conclusion near the end of his tragically short life. He stated, "When [the Spanish colonial government] has to ask us for

42 Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons,* 233-234.

something, it puts a human nature in our bodies, and takes it away when we ask for representation in the Cortes, freedom of press, rights, etc.".[43] Rizal's comment reflected the growing belief that it was well within Spain's power to recognize the Filipino people as capable citizens, and yet both the Spanish government and its people only treated Filipinos with token respect to placate them. Likewise, when asked for the basic freedoms given to native Spanish citizens, they were quick to denounce the Filipinos as savage and incompetent. The mastery of the *ilustrados* over science, politics, philosophy and literature did not sway the biases of peninsular Spain, and as their frustration grew, the Philippines moved ever closer to revolution.

The Philippine Revolution

Though the *ilustrados* were the men speaking out internationally, it was the peasantry and artisan classes, organized under various religious and regional associations, that coalesced into a revolutionary underground—the Katipunan. Its founder, Andres Bonifacio, was a different kind of revolutionary than Rizal and the *ilustrados*. While the nationalist movements of the Philippines were dominated by the wealthiest members of society, Bonifacio was born to poverty in the Manila slum of Tondo.[44] Though he worked menial jobs, Bonifacio valued education and was an autodidact, tutoring himself with the works of American presidents as well as the works of *ilustrados* such as Rizal.[45] Inspired by Rizal's words and the ritual secrecy of the Masons, Bonifacio formed his own

43 José Rizal (1887). Quoted in Kramer, *The Blood of Government,* 35.
44 Kramer, *The Blood of Government,* 72.
45 Ibid., 72-73.

secret society in 1892—the absurdly named *Kataastaasang Kagalanggalang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* (The Highest and Most Respectable Society of the Sons of the People), shortened to simply *Katipunan*.[46] In its earliest stages, the organization gathered lower class artisans and laborers angry over the continued abuses of the Spanish, and plotted revolution.

The Spanish government sealed its fate in the Philippines when officials, discovering the Katipunan conspiracy, arrested and executed the uninvolved Rizal in 1896.[47] The incident that finally ignited the full-scale revolt of the Philippines began with an ill-fated meeting between Rizal and Bonifacio's representative, in a scene eerily reminiscent of Ibarra and Elias' meetings in *Noli Me Tangere*. As a respected member of the Propaganda Movement, and a champion of Filipino nationalism, Rizal was approached by a messenger of Bonifacio and asked to back the Katipunan's brewing revolution, to which he declined. Rizal warned against premature violence against the Crown, convinced the revolution would likely fail and many would die.[48] Despite his refusal of violence, Rizal was nonetheless implicated as a co-conspirator in the plot. The Spanish government had long viewed Rizal as a threat because of his subversive writings, and felt compelled to deal with him regardless of any actual involvement in the conspiracy. Rizal's martyrdom only served as the ignition source for a much larger store of revolutionary fuel—influenced by the Propaganda Movement's philosophy, subjects within the Philippine colony now saw themselves as a group with a shared history of abuse at the hands of Spain, the *Filipino*. The wrongful death of a beloved son of the

46 Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons*, 198-199.
47 Karnow, *In Our Image*, 71.
48 Ibid., 73.

Philippines, looked up to by all Filipinos, only further widened the divide between the collectively oppressed subjects of the colony and their neglectful, ignorant masters. The loss of the blooming nation's father sparked a widespread revolution throughout the islands, the Filipinos universally infuriated regardless of their ethnic affiliations and united by their provoked hatred of Spanish abuse.

Meanwhile, the Katipunan escaped the brunt of the Spanish crackdown because it existed as a loosely organized network of regional cells. As a result of the execution and fueled by an intense hatred for Spanish dominance, its membership exploded as more and more Filipinos banded together under nationalist and reformist ideology. However, the fervor and success of the uprising was short-lived. By 1897, the revolution had begun to falter. Due to wartime disruption and the natural isolation of the island chains, the lines of communication between the most concentrated sources of organized resistance in Luzon did not spread to the other islands effectively. Even if the lines of communication were not disrupted by geography and war-related obstacles, the commanders themselves acted as sources of conflict. Factional in-fighting and leadership power struggles ultimately tore the resistance apart at this incomplete state of national development.

The same amorphous quality that allowed the Katipunan to elude Spanish reprisal early in the conflict now plagued the cause with leadership crises. The *Filipino* identity had only begun to take root culturally, and old regional and political biases emerged to weaken the national struggle. The major weakness of the insurrection manifested as factional disputes between minor commanders. More often than not, these commanders were *principales* more concerned with controlling their own territories than achieving larger national victories for the Philippines as a whole. Nowhere was this more apparent

than in the growing rift between the two men heading the revolution as *Supremo*: the populist general and founder of the Katipunan, Andres Bonifacio and the politically savvy aristocrat, Emilio Aguinaldo. The wealthy *ilustrados*, the most fervent proponents of nationalism, espoused progressive reforms for all Filipinos in their rhetoric but desired to take control of the current system for themselves. The lower classes on the other hand, who had first founded the Katipunan and comprised the majority of its membership, embraced nationalism as an avenue for social reform rather than as an ideological construct. In short, the revolution was divided between these two camps, as best represented by its figureheads: "Where Bonifacio had represented an egalitarian ethos, Aguinaldo represented the *principle* (*principalía)* class and stood for a more conservative elitist republicanism."[49] In the end, this multitude of agendas, counter-aims and conflicting goals hurt the Filipino resistance, in both its battle with Spain and with the United States. The conflicting class agendas between the peasantry and the landed elite divided loyalties and was ultimately resolved with the execution of Bonifacio on charges of treason.[50]

With the original founder of the Katipunan dead, Aguinaldo successfully secured complete control of the revolution, as well as the future role as the President of the First Philippine Republic in 1899. The victory proved Pyrrhic however, as the quarrel had not only lost him a strong military ally, but also the loyalty of the lower class soldiers who followed Bonifacio. In the wake of this upheaval, the Spanish succeeded in cornering the revolution's leadership and quelling the rebellion for a time. In December, Aguinaldo and the other *ilustrado* leaders of the revolution signed the Pact of Biak-na-bato, in which

49 Unamuno, "Epilogo," in Retana, *Vida y Escritos,* 480. Quoted in Kramer, *Blood of Government*, 81.
50 Kramer, *The Blood of Government,* 81.

they submitted to exile and the cession of revolutionary activities. In return, the Spanish promised to institute several key reforms, including the dissolving of friar monopolies and their deportation, the appointment of Philippine delegates to the *Cortes*, and a payoff of 1.7 million pesos.[51] Despite the accusations of the remaining rebel factions that Aguinaldo had sold out, he proved a much more incurable nationalist than given credit. Suspecting the Spanish would fail to meet their demands, Aguinaldo and his fellow exiles continued revolutionary planning in Hong Kong while waiting to see Spain's next move. As predicted, the Spanish failed to keep up their end of the bargain, and implemented none of the promised reforms. Aguinaldo used the payoff to buy weapons to smuggle to the ongoing insurrection, all while petitioning for international allies to aid in retaking the islands, including the United States.[52]

Despite the defeat of Aguinaldo's revolutionary army, the war against Spain continued through the resistance of independent cells of rebels, Bonifacio loyalists and independent rebel factions. The entire region remained a hotbed of rebel activity up until the renewal of open war when the United States arrived in 1898. Overall, the insurrection at this time was not a unified, homogeneous movement, but a number of provincial struggles loosely united by what was occurring in Luzon with the Philippine Republic's struggle. The truth is that many popular movements existed at this time, such as the Katipunan and Colorum, each having its own principles and agendas. These same factional ties also divided the overall struggle for independence: primarily the conflicts between the *principalía* and the peasantry, as well as between *principales* commanders. The exiled revolutionary organizations stayed busy preparing for the resumption of active

51 Kramer, *The Blood of Government,* 81.
52 Ibid.

resistance, but revolution leaders bickering hindered the progress of Philippine liberation for the time being. However, this did not diminish the growth of nationalism even in the absence of elite leadership—if nothing else, the removal of the elite from the revolutionary movement only removed a key source of disunity as well, with the struggle between the rich and poor being one of the few sources of internal discord between infantry and their commanding *principale* officers. The struggle against Spanish colonialism had accomplished some very important things: for the first time in its history, the vast majority of lingual-ethnic groups had a common purpose and had largely united against a common enemy.

Chapter 3: Americans and Filipinos

The Philippine Revolution, and the subsequent Philippine-American War, requires an understanding that both the external and internal conflicts affecting the United States and the Philippines were matters of perspective. Within the United States itself, the divisions were largely partisan—the McKinley administration and the Republican Party consistently found themselves at odds with the Democrats over foreign policy, first over the issue of Cuban intervention and then later the colonialism. The issue of colonial annexation polarized Americans, with Congress' decision coming down to just a handful of votes, but the experience of the Philippines was far worse.

The war with the United States fared about as well as the one with Spain. Though the seeds of nationalism and a more unified "Filipino" identity had taken root since the Propaganda movement of the 1870s, the general populace had not yet fully embraced the ideology. Regional and patriarchal loyalties continued to trump obligations to the Philippine Republic. As the wars progressed, and the tide turned against the Filipinos, their alliances disintegrated and effective resistance quickly fell apart. Though the U.S. was dealing with its own internal strife, the country nonetheless enjoyed more stability as an established democracy than Aguinaldo's fledgling republic. The U.S. ultimately benefited strategically as much from the Philippines' tenuous unity as from its lack of military resources.

The Spanish-American War—Early Attitudes of American Imperialism

Half a world away, events were unfolding that would shape the course of national identity and independence for the Philippines. In the Philippines' sister colony, the Cubans had also taken up arms against their colonial masters, presenting a more visible spectacle for Americans than the distant Philippines. Even before the destruction of the USS Maine, at the time erroneously blamed on the Spanish, the prospect of war with Spain loomed in the minds of American politicians. The inability of Spain to quell the growing insurgencies in its only remaining territories, a once powerful empire collapsing under its own negligence and corruption, was viewed with disdain by not only the government of the United States, but more importantly by the American public. The abuse of the Cuban people, especially the rampant corruption of the colonial government and the “reconcentrado” camps, elicited genuine sympathy from the American public, and further stoked the fires of a coming war over Cuba. Word of the plight facing the Cuban people flooded the American papers, the press war between the media titans William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer escalated in their sensationalist articles and preyed on Americans' growing concerns for human rights.

Many Americans expressed growing resentment to the ongoing mistreatment of the Cuban people, but the deteriorating situation brought about differing opinions as to the best handle the situation. America's dealings with colonialism within its growing sphere of influence became a major source of debate. Though the actual stance of the U.S. on colonialism changed rapidly after acquiring its own territorial possessions, throughout this time the impact of Spanish colonialism reinvigorated manifest destiny

and polarized the nation. In his 1898 speech before the House, future Speaker of the House Champ Clark (D-MO) attacked the idea of willful ignorance of the Cubans' ongoing struggle to escape tyranny, but it was in how he framed his arguments and the particular attacks he made that were most striking.[53] Clark said, "For three years the insurgents have fought with courage and suffered with a fortitude which have[sic] challenged the admiration of all the world, save the McKinley Administration."[54] Clark, as did many Democrats, attacked President McKinley's reluctance to enter into open confrontation with Spain as a failure of compassion for the "three or four hundred thousand people" reported to have been killed in the revolt, and further claimed the administration "lifts not a finger to stay the slaughter."[55] This represented the primary argument for intervention in Cuba: end the death of Cubans at the hands of the Spanish colonial government. Clark was not alone in these accusations and McKinley—under pressure from Congress, the sensationalist press, and an outraged public—declared war on Spain on April 25, 1898. Even before the first volleys of American gunships, the rhetorical focus of the U.S. centered on liberation and freedom for the downtrodden victims of European colonialism. The role the Cuban crisis played became crucial to the development of the later Philippine crisis, as these same well-intentioned goals translated themselves to the later occupation. This moralistic focus in the early stages of the Cuban revolt served to highlight the different quality of the more liberally-minded American concept of colonialism, though it still resulted in disaster for the Filipino people

53 Champ Clark, "Cuba: The Monroe Doctrine as Interpreted by a Missouri Democrat" speech given in the House of Representatives. Thursday, January 20, 1898. Missouri State Historical Society, I C5472s. Washington, D.C. House in consideration of bill H.R.6449 "making appropriations for diplomatic and consular service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1899—."

54 Ibid., 4.

55 Ibid., 4.

themselves.

The year of 1898 brought vast changes for both the geographical landscape of Philippines and the political landscape of the United States. In response to the Americans' April 20th ultimatum, Spain broke off diplomatic ties and declared war on the United States. America, prepared for combat and anxious for a confrontation, answered Spain's declaration of war with its own on April 25. Only six days later, in the early morning of April 30, the U.S. Navy under the command of then Commodore George Dewey, obliterated the Spanish Empire's decrepit navy at the Battle of Manila Bay.[56] With all but one ship sunk and nearly two hundred Spanish killed, and the American Fleet suffering a single casualty (a death by heat stroke) it could hardly be considered a battle in the strictest sense.[57]

For the Filipinos, the war for independence soon took a turn for the worst. The entrance of the Americans into the conflict with Spain initially revitalized Filipino resistance and open revolt, and The leaders of the Katipunan, plotting from Hong Kong since their exile in 1896, finally returned to the Philippines with the aid of the U.S. Navy to take control of the rebellion once more. Aguinaldo himself was brought to the Philippines at the request of Dewey on the American revenue cutter, McCulloch, on May 7.[58] However, the same problems that had existed during the previous attempts at liberty remained—cross-class friction between the upper class leadership and peasant soldiers, as well as the conflicting local and national goals stemming from regional power struggles, hindered the rebel army's ability to make war efficiently.

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56 Karnow, *In Our Image*, 78.
57 Ibid.
58 Emilio Aguinaldo and Vicente Albano Pacis, *A Second Look at America* (New York: Robert Speller and Sons, Publishers, Inc., 1957), 36.

The first contingent of American ground troops, some 2,500 regulars and volunteers from California, arrived near the occupied port of Manila, and by the end of July, some 12,000 American troops had landed on the island of Luzon.[59] The arrival of these troops prompted US military commanders to worry less about the Spanish, and more about keeping the Filipino insurgents at bay after the Spanish were defeated—it was still unclear to the Army as to the future intentions of the US in the Philippines.[60] Fearing their inevitable defeat if they attempted resistance, in August the Spanish commanders in Manila contacted the U.S. forces with a proposal of surrender. In a number of secret dialogues, the Spanish agreed to relinquish the city, provided that the Americans kept their Filipino allies out, afraid of Filipino vengeance. Together, the commanders engineered a mock battle as a means for the Americans to appease their Filipino "allies," while also giving them a valid excuse to exclude the rebels from the fighting. On August 13, Army Commander Thomas Anderson sent a telegram to Aguinaldo warning him to not cross the Pasig River, or he and his troops would be coming under heavy fire.[61] This incident set a continued precedent of duplicity and misplaced trust throughout the remainder of the Americans' ephemeral cooperation with Aguinaldo's forces prior to the Philippine-American War. Already suspicious of their alleged ally's dubious actions, Aguinaldo was further upset to find that his troops were barred entry into the city they had helped to conquer. "Captured" Spanish soldiers roamed the city freely with the permission of the Americans. As it became increasingly clear that the Americans were merely supplanting the Spanish as the colonial masters, the Filipinos once more found

59 Resil B. Mojares, *The War Against the Americans: Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu: 1899-1906* (Manila: Anteneo De Manila Press, 1999), 8.
60 Kramer, *The Blood of Government,* 96 – 97.
61 Ibid., 97.

themselves united in opposition to a foreign power.

Over the following months, tensions continued to grow over the purpose of the American Army in Manila, until on December 10th, 1898, the Western Powers signed the Treaty of Paris, and the Philippines was sold for $20 million to the United States. The dream of independence with the ouster of Spain dissolved for Aguinaldo's Republic as the real intentions of the U.S. became clear—the Americans intended to occupy the Philippines as a colony, though the McKinley administration still refused to give any formal conformation, denial, or even a set goal. The political limbo period came to a sudden end on February 4, 1899: American sentries fired upon Filipino troops outside of Manila and war began in earnest. Ignorant of the early American hostilities in the Philippines as well as of the state of Filipino education and capability, American public opinion quickly turned against the Philippine Republic, believing that the Filipinos had rejected America's generous aid. Over the course of the war, further ignorance on the part of the American people as to the nature of the conflict developed into a belief that the Filipinos as an inclusive group were nothing more than savages incapable of self-government.[62]

Though the seeds of future national identity had already been planted, a unified Philippines had yet to fully mature. The effects of regional, ethnic and class distinctions remained potent at this early stage of development, and effective Filipino resistance to the superior military might of the United States was a much less feasible prospect. At the same time, the Americans themselves had an altogether different interpretation of the Philippine-Spanish War than the Filipino nationalists—not seeing the beginnings of a

62 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 111.

unified nation state, the American agenda changed from a mission of "liberating" the downtrodden victims of European imperialism to one of "benevolent assimilation" in which they would raise up Filipino society while enjoying Philippine ports and industry. Though the Americans themselves faced bitter strife between the pro and anti-imperialists, the U.S. had the advantage of a cohesive execution of whatever policy won out on the Senate floor. Furthermore, taking advantage of the aforementioned schisms in Philippine society, the Americans effectively divided and conquered the Filipino population before the fledgling Republic of Malolos could establish true national dominance. Strangely enough, the monolithic view of Filipino culture perpetuated by American beliefs only aided the Filipinos to unite as a singular group. Even as Filipinos re-imagined themselves as a nation, greater than their collective ethnic groups, the Americans also reinforced this unification through their prejudice.

The American Change of Heart—Expansionist Politics and Annexation.

American attitudes towards the Philippines over the course of the war, in particular its ongoing struggle to justify its foray into colonialism, is best examined in the partisan rivalries of Congress. For the United States, the 20th century ushered in a new era defined by its meteoric rise to prominence within the international community. In the wake of the Civil War, the newly unified country pushed forward in a new wave of exploration. The completion of trans-continental railroads and the establishment of urbanization on the West Coast consolidated America's continental territory, the last unconquered wilderness vanished. With the spirit of "Manifest Destiny" still calling to

many pioneers, the disappearance of unclaimed lands within the established American borders left many anxious to start a new life for themselves overseas. The year of 1898 brought to fruition the growing desire of Americans to continue their territorial expansion. The utter defeat of the once mighty Spanish Empire in the Spanish-American War, and the subsequent Philippine-American War, not only marked the first of many overseas military exertions of power, but the emergence of the United States as a significant new force of Western colonialism.

However, such temptations were not without resistance. Itself once a colony of Britain, the United States had observed other nations' dealings with overseas imperialism. As the self-assured defenders of liberty and democracy, Americans felt the dissonance in claiming to represent freedom while desiring to fulfill their destiny as leaders of the free world. Ultimately, the struggle between these incompatible ideologies culminated in the controversial annexation of the Philippines. The colonial subjects of Spain for over three hundred years, the Filipinos allied themselves with the United States during their war for independence. Much to the dismay of the Filipinos and anti-imperialists alike, the revolutionaries found themselves betrayed by their American allies and once again under foreign authority. Some of the most vicious debates between expansionists and anti-imperialists occurred within the Senate and House of Representatives, their arguments representing a wide array of grievances that continued for decades, but reached its apex between the years of 1898 and 1902: the height of the Philippine Republic's organized resistance.

An excellent focal point for analysis of the anti-imperialist agenda is presented in the writings and speeches of Champ Clark, Democrat and Missouri representative.

"Champ," born James Beauchamp Clark in Kentucky on March 7th, 1850,[63] began his long legislative career in 1888, when elected to the Lower House of the General Assembly of Missouri.[64] His most important role as a statesmen came later in his career, in which he served as a strong and respected leader of the Democratic party—first as the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives from 1907 to 1911, and later as the Speaker of the House from 1911 until 1920.[65] However, it was during his early career serving Missouri's Ninth District in 1986 that established Clark as a talented speaker and a principled legislator, especially in the areas of spreading democracy and opposing European colonialism. Champ Clark represented the anti-imperialist agenda in not only its passion, but in its fullest spectrum of motivations. From the many speeches Clark delivered before his fellow Representatives and Senators, one can appreciate the complexity of the Philippine annexation debates. Though not always couched in the most noble or sympathetic ideals, the ultimate goal of Clark and other anti-imperialists of the early twentieth century was the liberation of the Philippines from its occupation by the United States, as well as seeking to avert the consequences for both cultures the colonization would entail. Clark and the anti-imperialists focused on three key arguments against American colonialism: the immorality behind the oppression of a foreign culture, the dangers of foreign races upon American society, and the financial pitfalls of an unprofitable venture. These three components constituted the most important aspects of the anti-imperialists' debate arsenal, and were all used frequently in an effort to persuade policy change. However, the influence of partisan politics also affected the nature of all

63 Ethel Elizabeth Bevington, *The Legislative Career of Champ Clark*, Thesis (MU 1933. Missouri State Historical Society. F508.1 C547be), 1.
64 Ibid., 7.
65 Ibid., 8.

debates in a significant way. Regardless of the line of reasoning used, the framing of these arguments in partisan terms accomplished two tasks simultaneously: criticizing American foreign policy in the hopes of ending imperial designs, while also delivering vicious blows to the opposition party.

At the core of the annexation debate rests one question, asked many times by both sides of the imperialism debate: "One of two things is absolutely true. The Filipinos are either fit for self-government or they are not"—were the Filipinos capable of self-government?[66] This question not only addressed the capability of the Filipinos to conduct themselves in a democracy, but also their ability to defend themselves without aid. Shortly after the defeat of the Spanish fleet in 1898, a number of German cruisers arrived to the Philippines, under the command of Vice Admiral Otto von Diederichs.[67] Wrongly believing the Filipinos were open to monarchical rule and wishing to expand their Empire's influence in the Pacific, the German ships lurked just beyond the Manilla Bay blockade, waiting to see if the Americans would depart a now undefended Philippines. After almost sparking an international incident, the Germans backed down and left the Philippines to the U.S. However, the incident had shown American policy makers that the Philippines would be claimed by a colonial power—if not by the U.S., then another Western power. Convinced that American colonization was ultimately a far better alternative for Filipinos than the inevitable European takeover, McKinley sided with the expansionists to retain an American colonial presence in the region.

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66 Champ Clark, "Army Reorganization" Speech given January 30, 1899. Missouri State Historical Society, I C5472s. 14. Quoted from an unnamed article he had written at an earlier date.

67 Karnow, *In Our Image,* 125.

However, the question was also debated in another context:

> "In neither event do we want them. If they are fit for self-government, under what pretext can we refuse them the right? If they are unfit, how can we justify ourselves to ourselves for incorporating them into our body politic?"[68]

Should the Americans have anything to do with the Philippines, regardless of their capacity for self-rule? Regardless of the context, the question of involvement in Filipino affairs was first a matter of American obligation, and both sides argued to this effect. The question of self-government is at the heart of the imperialists' justification, as set by President McKinley's "Benevolent Assimilation" speech, read on December 21, 1898, which proclaimed that it was the duty of the United States to protect the allegedly naive and ignorant Filipino people from themselves.[69] This policy set in motion the tutelary colonialism model forwarded by the Americans for years to come, capitalized in President Taft's "uplift" message for training the Filipinos for eventual self-government. However, many anti-imperialists saw this as a ploy for the more important desire of profit from the McKinley administration. Both sides viewed the proposed annexation in terms of the allegedly devastating impact race would allegedly have on the United States. Though they spoke of the importance of human freedom, conjuring the exploits of Jefferson and Lincoln in establishing the equality of all men, Clark and most other representatives of his day nonetheless saw the Philippines in a very biased light. Though the imperialists saw our "little brown brothers" as lacking the basic capacity to care for themselves and in desperate need of American guidance, many anti-imperialists also established the Filipinos in just as racist terms while promoting their views, falling upon the attitude that it was not our business to deal with the Philippines for any reason.

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68 Champ Clark, "Army Reorganization," 14.
69 Kramer, *The Blood of* Government, 109-10.

The financial risk involved in annexation was perhaps the most pragmatic topic, but was itself complicated. A subtle but important argument that surfaced occasionally represented a debate over the business ethics behind the actual purchase of the Philippines from Spain. To understand the origin of this particular debate between Imperialists and Anti-imperialists, one needs to revisit the events of Biak-na-Bato, and in particular analyze Aguinaldo's role in the pact. Emilio Aguinaldo, recognized today by the Philippines as its first president despite the failure of his regime to achieve independence, continues to puzzle historians. His supporters cheered him as a patriot and state-builder, while his many detractors have labeled him an opportunist and murderer. Though most historians generally regard his role in the Philippine independence movement with neutral courtesy, most express a general disapproval of him for his more dubious actions: in particular his execution of Generals Bonifacio and Antonio Luna, and his swearing allegiance to the Americans after his capture.

Despite these questionable acts, most deny the accusation that he only took the Spanish payoff for personal gain. Scholars agree that the Pact of Biak-na-Bato was an empty promise for both sides. Though Aguinaldo had signed a non-aggression pact with Spain and accepted the payoff, he remained unconvinced of Spain's sincerity or its promise of reforms. According to Aguinaldo, he and the other *ilustrado* leaders of the revolution had not just been buying their own safety, but rather sought to pressure the Spanish reforms for which Rizal had died. The 400,000 peso down-payment of the total 1.7 million sum was intended as insurance: should the Spanish renege on their reforms, the exiled leaders would have the money (invested in Hong Kong banks) to buy arms and

approach foreign governments for military aid.[70] Aguinaldo stressed that they began work on this contingency the moment they arrived in Hong Kong, knowing full-well the Spanish could not be trusted. They retained some measure of hope that the Spanish would indeed listen to their demands and make the reforms necessary for the welfare of the Filipino people, but the revolution's leaders were soon disappointed. The Spanish did nothing to curb the "tyranny and oppression" of the friars, or to implement any of the proposed reforms.[71] Just as the Spanish had failed to keep up their end of the deal by not implementing any of the promised reforms, the revolutionaries violated the truce by actively plotting their return. Aguinaldo and the Katipunan generals continued to push for Philippine independence from their exile in Hong Kong, waiting for an opportunity to return to the Philippines and renew the fight against Spanish tyranny. As for those left behind in the Philippines, active resistance to Spain continued, especially from remaining Katipunan forces, lower class peasants and laborers still loyal to the reformist ideals of Bonifacio. Aguinaldo reinvested the Spanish bribe back into the revolutionary cause by procuring weapons and smuggling them to Filipino rebels, as well as secretly petitioning for international aid in reclaiming the Philippines, principally from the United States.[72] The incident of the Biak-na-Bato proved one of several key events that stood at the center of the legitimacy of annexation debate for one particular reason: did Spain or the Filipinos ultimately have a legitimate claim to the ownership of the Philippines?

The Pact of Biak-na-bato played a critical role in the financial arguments of both expansionists and anti-imperialists in the United States. Many expansionists cited the

70 Emilio Aguinaldo, *True Version of the Philippine Revolution* (September 23, 1899), Reprinted by Dodo Press, 6.
71 Ibid., 4.
72 Kramer, *The Blood of* Government, 81.

pact as proof that the revolution had fallen through, and that the widespread discontent with Spain did not constitute an organized democratic push by the natives as a whole. Anti-imperialists however agreed with Aguinaldo's assertion that the revolution did represent the will of the Filipino populous, and that the revolution was still being fought even in the absence of its original leadership. Regardless of the interpretation, the Congress focused upon whether or not Spain had any reason to claim the Philippines as a possession to sell to the US at all. In Senator George Turner's 1900 speech, the Biak-na-bato incident served as an important arguing point, as was seen in the brief exchange between Turner and Republican senator William E. Chandler (NH).[73] Chandler halted Turner's speech to ask for proof that an insurrection was active at the time of the destruction of the Spanish fleet. Turner replied that there was indeed, but Chandler insisted that he had never seen "any reliable evidence that the insurrection at that particular time had one particle of vitality in the Philippine Islands."[74] This exchange played out at other times as well,[75] and for a particularly interesting reason: imperialists argued that the revolution had collapsed before the arrival of the U.S. fleet in December of 1898—their leadership had fled after accepting the bribe, and that the current rebellion to American rule was thus unjustified belligerence by a habitually disgruntled populous. According to the imperialists, the Philippine Islands were still in the possession of Spain at the time of the Treaty of Paris, and thus represented a legitimate purchase on the part of the United States. However, anti-imperialists claimed that the revolution had persisted

73 George Turner, "Speech of George Turner," Monday, January 22, 1900, Sampson Collection, #3813, Folder 152, 14-15.
74 Ibid., 14.
75 William E. Mason, "Shall We Make Slaves of the Filipinos?" speech given before the Senate, 1902, Sampson Collection, #3813, Folder 152. 8. Senator Caffery also inquired of Republican anti-imperialist William E. Mason as to the time frame of the insurrection in regard to the American intervention.

within the Philippines up to the Spanish-American War. These proponents argued that this key reason invalidated the transaction itself—the Spanish could not maintain control or quell the widespread dissent to their rule even after the pact had established a formal "cessation" of hostilities. Lacking any actual control over the territory discredited Spain's claim to ownership, and as such challenged their legal right to sell the Philippine territory in any legitimate capacity. In short, the anti-imperialists insisted that the Philippines belonged to the natives, and regardless of the Filipinos' capacity to govern themselves, it was not the responsibility nor right of the United States to interfere.

Amid the high-minded idealism of ethical concerns, pragmatic attention to fiscal concerns, and racist fears, another context of the imperialism debate existed, ubiquitously set within the petty squabbles of partisan politics. All these factors worked together to create the anti-imperialist movement not only within the legislature, but throughout the nation itself. As representatives of their constituents' beliefs and desires, the congressmen of the early twentieth century were products of their times. The anti-imperialists ultimately desired a Philippines that was free of American interference—or more accurately, an America free of Philippine burden. However, it is clear from the pervasive nature of party attacks within *all* debates on the Philippine annexation that the real spirit of the arguments constituted partisan bickering as much as squabbles over foreign policy. Ironically, it was those few Republican voices that, breaking with their main party's lines of American manifest destiny, spoke out against the annexation and pleaded with their party for a return to the ideals of Abraham Lincoln as liberators.[76] In truth, these representatives were the few voices of dissent that saw beyond party politics,

76 Mason, "Shall We Make Slaves of the Filipinos?" Sampson Collection, #3813, Folder 152.

and yet saw the necessity to address them. Ultimately, they embodied the real champions of anti-imperialism, in that they went against their party and acted according to their own principles about the best course of action for the United States, as well as for the Philippines.

This is not to say that men like Clark, Turner and others were not genuine in their concerns, or possessed only a superficial commitment to the rights of Filipinos. Nor was the Republican party a monolithic bastion of expansionist avarice. Imperialists maintained their own opinions as to what was best for both Americans and Filipinos alike: in colonization, many Republicans saw an opportunity to access the rich markets of China; in the Filipinos themselves, they honestly saw an opportunity to uplift a "backward" people and train them to become a great democracy, albeit a misguided and self-deceiving belief. However, the series of debates by anti-imperialists like Clark showed a much longer list of preoccupations beyond just the ethical tropes touted in their speeches. Ultimately, Clark and his fellow Democrats were just as caught up in the partisan rivalries as their Republican opponents, and the polarization of the parties themselves lent as heavily to the contrasting ideologies of imperialism as did individual opinion in all but a handful of representatives. In short, to understand the dismay of anti-imperialists, one has to examine the main factors that drove their complaints: moral concerns, financial responsibility, and racial fears. These three major debate points presented openly in the forum of the American congress, each of these founded upon the concerns of all Americans at the turn of the century. But one must take their ideals with a grain of salt, as they were also motivated by the partisan political feuding that continues even to this day.

The Philippine-American War

The American public, unaware of the tensions that had led to the February 4th attack, were shocked by the "sudden" rejection of U.S. assistance and goodwill, but surprised few in the Philippines. The Propaganda Movement and the defeat of the Spanish had empowered Filipinos throughout the islands. Though regional and ethnic loyalties complicated national unity, the lower classes had mobilized in response to Spanish abuses, and after a difficult struggle felt entitled to sovereignty. The Americans had some awareness of Filipino desires, but little belief in their capacity for self-government. In November and December of 1898, two naval officers, L.R. Sargent and William Wilcox, traveled the countryside to observe the level of control Aguinaldo exercised.[77] They investigated Aguinaldo's claims of statehood, examining municipal institutions to judge if they constituted a nation state.[78] Aguinaldo granted permission as a show of goodwill, but provided no written passport; the two officers had to rely upon local *principales* for papers. During their journey through Luzon, Sargent and Wilcox noted that local responses to their presence varied from town to town: some greeted them cheerfully and extended warm hospitality, while other towns treated them to cold inquiry and harassment.[79] They noted that in all cases, local officials took every opportunity to launch ostentatious displays of patriotism and independence—military drills, speeches, public celebrations, and flag waving. When Sargent and Wilcox asked locals how they saw themselves politically, they invariably responded that they would "accept nothing

77 Kramer, *The Blood of* Government, 106.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid., 106-108.

short of independence."[80] Tensions, however, continued to mount even as the two made their tour. Word from Hong Kong about the Treaty of Paris squashed Filipino hopes that they would be allowed the right of self-government, regardless of their patriotism and enthusiasm for democracy. As a result, Sargent and Wilcox were eventually forced to return to Manila amid increasing popular irritation and suspicion.[81] Their final report concluded Aguinaldo's government was a legitimate republic, serving the interests of an independence-minded populace. The report was withheld from public record until 1900 and, like most dissenting opinions noting the capability of Filipinos, went ignored in favor of imperial designs.

Despite significant Filipino unity throughout the Philippines in response to the colonial threats, the struggle was not completely nationalistic. The Philippine Revolution and Philippine-American War were not unified struggles for independence, but they combined several cooperating factions, all loosely tied together through their communication with Aguinaldo's revolutionary government in Malolos. Individual *principales* sought to maintain an "oligarchy of intellectuals" and, despite their rhetoric, opposed universal suffrage. The Scholars Resil Mojares and Brian Linn come to the same conclusion, despite viewing the war from opposite angles.[82] Mojares claims that on the island of Cebu, during the early stages of the Philippine-American War, communication with the Malolos government of Aguinaldo was sporadic. The geographical isolation of the islands from one another coupled with war-related

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80 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 108.
81 Ibid.
82 Resil B. Mojares, *The War Against the Americans: Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu: 1899-1906* (Manila: Anteneo De Manila Press, 1999). Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

disruptions left individual commanders largely independent of a national chain of command. Left unattended in Cebu, two factions vied for control of the peasantry. The leaders of one revolutionary faction, Arcadio Maxilom and Climaco, who fought until defeat was inevitable, followed Aguinaldo and the Malolos government. The faction of Flores-Llorente opposed that of Maxilom and Climaco. Flores was lenient on those who collaborated with American officers; Flores sought to bring about a peaceful resolution rather than invite the U.S. military's wrath, while protecting his own political standing in the process. Maxilom and his allies believed in fighting the American occupation and winning total independence, whereas Flores and his allies wished to cooperate with the Americans. This Cebuano example illustrates the situation throughout the Philippines: the elite worried mainly about themselves and their own power. Their division impaired an effective resistance to the US military occupation.

In *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902*, Brian Linn looks at this factionalism, but from the perspective of the American military, focusing on the province of Luzon. Both scholars agree that most Filipino commanders recognized the Malolos government of Aguinaldo, but geographic isolation and petty feuding often undermined the hierarchy. Linn analyzes of the four districts created by the U.S. Army on the island of Luzon—the heart of the rebellion. By 1900, the heterogeneous Filipino resistance forced the U.S. military to adopt diverse methods to combat the rebels. The Americans divided the island of Luzon into four distinct zones, and local commanders adopted unique tactics to deal with insurgency. The First and Fourth Districts encompassed northern Luzon, while the Second and Third Districts covered the south. Linn examines each zone individually and carefully details each

district's characteristics, from their commanding officers' personalities to the level of rebel resistance. For instance, in the Third district, anti-Tagalog sentiment festered among the disgruntled Ilocano population of Bicol, thus fostering greater civilian cooperation with the Americans. Combined with conservative revolutionary tactics, this produced a relatively quiet American occupation. Linn contrasts this with the explosive insurgency of the Second District. The skilled command of Major General Miguel Malvar and massive civilian support throughout the region created a hostile environment for American troops, who in frustration turned to increasingly vicious tactics.

Despite the uneven levels of resistance, the common colonial threat to the Philippines did unite the factions. Regionalism remained a critical factor, but other considerations continued to grow in importance. Though outlying regions often found themselves on their own, and local *principale* leaders fought to protect their own interests, there was a loose national coordination. The arrival of American warships to Cebu, Negros, Samar, Iloilo, Batangas and Mindanao unified the resistance network.

The End of the Philippine-American War

The capture of President Aguinaldo in March 1901 heralded the eventual collapse of the republican government in Malolos. Auginaldo's successor, General Malvar, was defeated shortly thereafter in 1902. Brigadier General J. Franklin Bell had arrived in Batangas to put down Malvar's guerrilla army in November, 1901, and implemented a vicious scorched-earth policy.[83] He harbored no compassion for suspected rebel

83 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 153.

sympathizers, stating that "neutrality should not be tolerated."[84] Bell's savage tactics succeeded, and Malvar surrendered in April 1902 rather than see further harm come to the people.[85] This marked the end of organized resistance by the Malolos government, and strangled the Filipino dream of immediate national independence. Resistance from isolated communities would continue for some time, and Moro resistance in Mindanao had only begun to pick up momentum, but the war for independence had subsided. Though crushed militarily during the Philippine-American War, the movement for national recognition continued politically.

While the United States military suffered some 4,000 deaths in the Philippine-American War in 1902, nearly 75 percent resulted from disease or friendly fire—only around 1,000 soldiers actually fell to Filipino combatants.[86] Echoing the resounding destruction of the Spanish fleet, the Filipino resistance met with an equally lopsided defeat. An estimated 50,000 Filipino soldiers were killed, but the civilian population bore the brunt of the war's devastation.[87] The massive civilian casualties resulted from the actions of frustrated American soldiers, and these "isolated" incidents were a common and unspoken policy. Beginning in 1901, the U.S. military adopted the same "reconcentration" policies it had denounced in Cuba. Reconcentration had been a major focus of the yellow journalists in their push for intervention in Cuba. President McKinley himself declared "in firm and earnest protest" that "It was not civilized warfare. It was extermination."[88] However, as hopes of a swift victory faded, the attitude

84 Karnow, *In our* Image, 188.
85 Ibid.
86 Kramer, *The Blood of* Government, 157
87 Ibid., 157.
88 Ibid., 153.

of the U.S. government shifted. General Bell during, his campaign in Batangas, voiced the opinion that a "short and severe war" was preferred over a "Benevolent war indefinitely prolonged."[89] By this, he meant terrorizing citizens, burning rice stores and slaughtering the livestock of villages suspected of supplying rebels to make them "realize what war is."[90] The destruction left tens of thousands homeless and starving. Additionally, the Philippine Commission (a governing body installed by the U.S. just prior to the war's end) authorized the Reconcentration Act of June 1903 to deal with regions still in rebellion. The combined effects of malnutrition, unsanitary conditions, and overcrowding fostered disease, transforming the camps into plague factories. The Filipino death toll is estimated at between 250,000 and 400,000, but the exact loss of life is unknown.[91] The chaos of war and displacement of entire communities into the mountains make an accurate count impossible, and countless people simply disappeared; scholar Glenn May found 150,000 missing in the Batangas province alone, so the true total could be much higher.[92]

The United States took an inflexible approach to spreading democratic ideals in their campaign to win hearts and minds in the Philippines. The U.S. government offered modernization and democratic tutelage, but the Filipino refusal to submit to American supremacy provoked a brutal response from the occupation force. As the true scope of Filipino resistance became clear, the U.S. government re-branded their former rebel allies "bandits" rather than admit a wide-spread, legitimate national resistance. Where they

89 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 154.
90 Ibid.
91 Ibid., 157. Julian Go cites "at least 400,000" in *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning*, 6, and estimates fall somewhere between these figures.
92 Ibid., 157.

could not immediately win over Filipinos with promised reforms, the military sought to beat them into submission with scorched-earth campaigns and torture—such as the the infamous "water cure," a precursor to modern "water boarding."[93] However, the Philippine-American War was not a simple matter of American imperialism versus Filipino nationalism, but a conflict shaped by bitter divisions and debate on all sides. The U.S. Congress, far from being universal supporters of colonization, battled one another in heated debates over the future of the Philippines and American involvement. Likewise, the war provoked many conflicts among Filipino political and regional factions, each advancing their own agendas for independence rather than presenting a unified opposition to the American occupation. In the words of Apolinario Mabini with regard to Aguinaldo:

> In summary, the Revolution failed because it was not well led or guided ... he did not appreciate the worth of people based on their capacity, character and patriotism, but on the ties of friendship and relations which binded[stet.] them to him; and, as he wanted his favorites to be willing to sacrifice themselves for him, he stooped down to the point of condoning their wrong-doings.[94]

The highest levels of revolutionary leadership practiced the same cronyism of the Spanish patron-client system, and Aguinaldo was not the only *principale* to adhere to this tradition. The national identity the *ilustrados* had embraced still only applied to the upper class. The principal revolutionary goal of aristocrats like Aguinaldo was political and financial power for the Filipino elite, not Filipinos in general. National pride and *Filipino* identity had not yet fully taken root in the average Filipino laborers and peasants; they still worried most about survival, subsistence, and improvements in the standard of

93 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 140-142.
94 Apolinario Mabini, *The Philippine Revolution*, "Chapter X: The End and Downfall of the Revolution," 271.

living for their communities rather than grand ideologies. Although the Americans were generally unwelcome, and universally distrusted, the peace that came with the Republic's collapse was welcome. Over time, a sense of normalcy returned to the beleaguered islands. The path to a more unified Philippines and a new national identity began with the *ilustrados*, and war forged it into a potent force among the upper class. In their struggle against the Spanish and the Americans, they enlisted the aid of the lower classes; with writings and rhetoric, they convinced the peasantry of a shared oppression, and even though they gave only hollow promises for reform, they planted the seeds of future mobilization. Resistance to the American invasion left a legacy of cross-regional cooperation that would grow under American oversight and make the peasant armies of World War II possible.

Chapter 4: American Colonialism and Philippine Autonomy 1901-1935

In swearing allegiance to the United States, whether the result of coercion or political desperation, Emilio Aguinaldo had set a precedent for other *ilustrados* throughout the islands. Some of the more bellicose revolutionaries like Apolinario Mabini, Artemio Ricarte and Pío Del Pilar initially refused to stifle their outrage over American annexation. Because of their intransigence, these men were deported to Guam and imprisoned as subversives until they swore allegiance and denounced revolution.[95] The revolution collapsed in their absence. With defeat inevitable, even Mabini eventually submitted and the Philippine-American War ended. Although isolated conflicts continued in the southern Moro territory, the majority of Filipinos began to accept the American tutelage as unavoidable, but preferable to continued violence and destruction. Though many Filipinos still distrusted the Americans, and harbored resentment toward the conquest, cooperation opened new opportunities for the *principalía*. The initial decades following the American conquest brought about a wave of modernization. In many ways, the *ilustrados* found what they were looking for. The *principalía* quickly adapted to the American occupation, and Filipinos who collaborated with the Americans secured new positions of power.

While fighting the remnants of Aguinaldo's army during the war's final days in 1901, the United States faced the challenge of creating a post-war government.[96] The ideals of Americans on both sides of the expansionist debate fell before the reality of international power. Imperial aspirations, bigotry and greed poisoned the intention of

95 Apolinario Mabini, *The Philippine Revolution,* "Memoirs of Guam," (Tuesday, January 15, 1901), 195.
96 Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 171.

disseminating democratic ideals. The scholar William Appleman Williams called this the "tragedy of American diplomacy"—the flawed belief that people are entitled to self-determination and democratic freedom, but cannot legitimately do so "unless they go about it in the same way as the United States."[97] Despite the protests of the Filipinos and American anti-imperialists, President McKinley and later Republican administrations judged the Filipinos unable to achieve democracy on their own. Winning the "hearts and minds" of the populace after the enormous casualties and destruction made peace problematic at best. Nevertheless, the years between 1901 and the start of the Second World War saw a slow return to peace and quickened modernization, with the eventual attainment of significant Filipino autonomy.

As the Philippines stabilized, and cooperation produced the benefits the Americans had promised, *principales* and peasants found American leadership a preferable alternative to further conflict. Though the Americans were conquerors, they were more progressive and benign administrators than their predecessors, keeping many of their promises of modernization and democratization. Where the Spanish had neglected their colony for hundreds of years, leaving its rule to the abusive whims of friars, the Americans implemented programs that included expanded public education, new medical technology and upgraded sanitation and irrigation systems. Though the war had been catastrophic, the Philippines saw a general rise in living conditions in the decades after their surrender, especially in the fields of health and literacy. Finally, Filipinos experienced expanded control over their own affairs for the first time in centuries. The path to autonomy faced numerous road blocks, many the result of

97 William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1972), 13.

American opposition, but in less than forty years, the Philippines achieved more autonomy under American rule than under centuries of Spanish dominion. The islands achieved independence in all but name by 1935.

The real importance of this period was the maturation of national unity. The "Filipino" imagined community extended far beyond the Manila elite to include the majority of the population during these critical decades. This process began after the American victory, shaped by the U.S. policy and reforms, as well as by continued zones of popular discontent. Regardless of the benefits of a peaceful American relationship, Filipinos clung to the old Propagandists' nationalist message. Americans had said from the beginning they planned to "prepare" the Philippines for a democratic transition when they "proved" themselves ready for independence; Filipinos intended to make U.S. officials keep their word. Filipinos denied U.S. propaganda about their being racially or socially incapable of self-government, but, for the time being, they had no choice but to collaborate with American officials in the interest of future sovereignty. The development of a greater national identity and trans-regional associations begun by the Propagandists expanded during the relative peace that followed the American victory. The widespread modernization advanced by the U.S. drew the masses together as never before. Distant islands became more connected; improved communications and more attentive colonial oversight helped *Filipino* become a more potent social construct than ever before.

Puerto Rican and Filipino Reactions to America

Puerto Rico provides an interesting contrast to the Philippines as the two reacted differently to U.S. colonial control. Both colonies resented their former masters, the Spanish. The two sought reform and equality within the empire, but came to the conclusion that no such reforms would ever occur. The 1898 intervention of the United States, and its decisive victory, brought new opportunities and hope. However, the two colonies responded differently to American annexation: Puerto Rico welcomed the U.S. as liberators and sought American tutelage.[98] Confident of reform, they did not resist the American occupation. The Filipinos, however, had moved beyond assimilationist thought by this time. While men like José Rizal had died convinced that assimilation was possible, other *ilustrados* were much more jaded, and opposed the continued interference of foreign powers. The Katipunan advanced its revolutionary goal of full independence from Spain, while also welcoming American aid; they saw the United States as a defender of human rights and democracy (a belief supported by the Cuban intervention). However, once it became clear that the U.S. intended to take the colony for itself, elite and peasant forces violently defied the occupation. A comparison with the colonial tutelage in Puerto Rico highlights some of the developments occurring in the Philippines—the growth of nationalism in particular.

The Puerto Rican elite accepted U.S. rule for the same reasons the Filipinos ultimately would, but accepted U.S. annexation from the beginning, with elites and locals welcoming the Americans as liberators. In June 1898, General Nelson Miles' ship was

98 Go, *American Empire*, 55.

greeted by shouts of "Vivo los Americanos!" by "nearly all sectors of Puerto Rican society."[99] The Puerto Rican motivation to collaborate stemmed from a few key factors. The Puerto Ricans were glad to be rid of Spain. They openly criticized the Spaniards' monopolization of government and their plunder of Puerto Rico's agricultural wealth, and American patronage seemed to offer immediate benefits. The United States provided a vast, new market, and Puerto Ricans hoped to retain a greater cut of the profits. Free trade seemingly assured economic development, and thus modernization.

In American eyes, Puerto Rico had already developed an understanding of democracy, having acquired a modicum of autonomy from Spain. The U.S. tutelage project (as the elite interpreted it) was in line with their own planned development—the Puerto Rican elite believed the masses were ignorant and unfit for self-government. With American guidance—shaped by a capable elite—the island would eventually become ready for full autonomy or even statehood. Puerto Rico saw the United States assisting their goals better than Spain. Puerto Ricans had petitioned for equality as a province of Spain; with the U.S. they similarly hoped for statehood. The Puerto Rican elite believed that the U.S. was more likely to grant full autonomy or statehood, and that it offered a better example of democracy.

Despite Puerto Rican enthusiasm, U.S. officials tasked with testing their capacity for self-government were shocked to find overt corruption, nepotism, electoral violence and fraud. The system of "democracy" at work in Puerto Rico was the same patriarchal system as the Philippines. The "fatherly" land owner sustained a relationship between themselves and their workers through paternalistic displays of generosity and community

99 Go, *American Empire*, 55.

duty.[100] "Landlords provided plots of land, clothing, and food; they served as ritual coparents of the tenants' children; sponsored weddings and funerals; and provided workers with a fiesta at the end of the harvest season"[101]. In return, workers showed loyalty and support to the landlord. This scheme transferred into politics as well, with a patriarch (*jefe*) who grants favors and benefits to those within his circle—his political party—and who uses his influence to harm his enemies Bosses employed litigation, taxes, and hired thugs on election day to physically intimidate rivals.

By the 1890s in Puerto Rico, changes in the economy (coffee sales were up, but sugar values had dropped) further empowered the local elite, but Spaniards still dominated through their connections to Madrid. The Spaniards had formed the Incondicionales Party. The 1880s also saw the rise of the *Autonomía* movement, with some members of the elite pushing for full representation as a region of Spain.[102] The elite conceptualized Puerto Rico as a "gran familia" with them directing the masses. The *jefe* of the *Autonomists*, Luis Muñoz Rivera believed the masses were incapable of representing themselves effectively and felt it was necessary for the privileged to rule them, perhaps with the aid of American tutelage. The *jefe* would represent the people and reflect the "thoughts of all."[103] As had developed in the Philippine system, the *jefe* might be chosen by popular vote, but ruled with a personal mandate rather than adhering to a strict rule of law. So long as the *jefe* did his job of interpreting the majority's will, and provided the services of a patriarch, he could rule as he wished. Here, the American political philosophy diverged from the Puerto Rican: U.S. administrators always stressed

100Go, *American Empire*, 63.
101Ibid.
102Ibid., 65.
103Ibid., 69.

regulations and the rule of law. Puerto Ricans, however, prioritized the result—preservation of the community—and tolerated procedural flexibility so long as the community endured. What Puerto Ricans saw as benevolent paternalism, the Americans judged as corruption. When the Americans arrived, they incorporated Puerto Rican political language—the terminology of autonomy—to gain the support of the masses. In this way, tutelage did not produce cultural change; existing understandings of "democracy" and "autonomy" were reproduced and fortified despite reforming American efforts. Previous social constructs were perpetuated.[104]

This system of political bargaining was not unique to the Caribbean. In the Philippines, people also placed emphasis on the patron/client relationship than written legal statutes. Law was taken seriously, but ultimately local political families pushed public projects along rather than legislation. Even after American control, the most prominent social convention remained *utang-na-loób*; peasants repaid their landlords for the land as well as other patriarchal protections. However, should landlords overstep their bounds by not providing for the peasants or being excessively cruel, the landlords would be labeled "*walang hiya*" (without shame) and have to face an angery peasant revolt.[105] Politics replicated this system—privilege accompanied the status of *gobernadorcillo* and *cabeza de barangay*. Bribery and clientelism were viewed as "customs" rather than corruption—a necessary feature of politics. For Filipinos, the oppressive imperial control of the Spanish required equally undemocratic countermeasures—Spaniards would stuff ballot boxes, threaten and bribe their way into office, and so the Filipinos had to do the same. This was the traditional "battle" of

104Go, *American Empire*, 91.
105Ibid., 96-97.

Spanish colonial politics, quite familiar to the colonies, but the Americans were profoundly vexed by what they saw. They were unable to comprehend how a democracy built without strict adherence to Western concepts of "rule of law" could retain stability or legitimacy. Though there were some crucial differences between the Philippine and Puerto Rican situations and how they reacted to the American annexation, both yielded similar results in the end. Once accepted, the tutelage was co-opted by the locals, and rather than changing the culture itself (as was hoped for by the US) it was merely reinterpreted according to local social conventions, thus domesticating American ideals with regard to the preexisting social order[106].

In the end, this cultural gap made the American mission of tutelage a difficult one. The U.S. fought an uphill battle against centuries-old political conventions in their attempts to completely replace it with their own version of democracy. However, the American struggle to install a democracy after their own fashion proved important to the development of the Philippines in ways beyond just the formation of the government, but also in bringing about powerful social changes as well. The contrasts between the experiences and attitudes of Puerto Rican and Filipino tutelage provide enormous insight into the practice of democratic instruction in general. Puerto Rico, more or less coddled by Spain relative to its sister colony, saw the arrival of the U.S. an opportunity to "meet the new boss." The Philippines had an altogether different experience. An educated, metropolitan elite—jaded by exploitation—was far more cynical about any foreign control. The *ilustrados* wanted reforms, but by the time the Philippine Revolution had commenced, they had come to desire only autonomy rather than continued foreign

106Go, *American Empire*, 94.

control of any kind.

Democratization Under the Americans

True progress began to manifest as more and more rebel forces fell to the military. The U.S. was finally able to work on organizing a new government, beginning the process towards a Filipino-run government, even if this did not include independence. The Second Philippine Commission marked the first major step towards civilian government in the Philippines. Unlike the previous Schurman Commission, a political body organized only to study the Philippines and make policy recommendations, the new Commission assumed legislative authority in September 1900, and dealt with insular affairs directly through financial management and the Philippine Constabulary.[107] This became the first permutation of a colonial governing body after the fall of Spain, with its first civilian governor, William Howard Taft.[108] Theodore Roosevelt, now president after the assassination of McKinley the previous year, officially announced the triumphant end of the Philippine "Insurrection" on the convenient date of July 4th, 1902.[109] The proclamation confidently declared that fighting had ceased in all provinces but those under the control of *Moro* (Muslim) tribes. Roosevelt's optimism for the future of the "liberated" Philippines was alloyed with an ambition characteristic of expansionists. However, the speech itself reflected two distinct misrepresentations common for expansionists: the nature of the conflict and its true scope.

107Karnow, *In Our* Image, 173.
108Kramer, *The Blood of* Government, 112.
109Ibid., 154.

The labeling of the conflict that had ended in an estimated 400,000 Filipino casualties as an "insurrection" implied that the struggle was little more than an uprising against the legitimate authority of the United States. The controversy surrounding the Pact of Biak-na-Bato notwithstanding, the true legitimacy of American claims to rightful transference of ownership presented a murky situation of who was rightfully in charge of the "successful" operation that deposed Spain. Members of Congress begged the question in annexation debates, had the U.S. rightfully earned territorial concession from their defeated opponent, or had they hijacked an ongoing revolution from the Filipinos?

Though organized military violence was dissipating, belligerence continued in a variety of other fashions. The capture and humiliation of Aguinaldo March 23rd, 1901, had not proven as decisive a blow to Filipino resistance as the U.S. had hoped. Aguinaldo's republican ideals were not the sole source of anti-American resistance in the Philippines—the Katipunan in particular was the foundation of the early revolutionary government, but was not itself inextricably tied to it. After the collapse of the formal Philippine government, secret societies survived to present continued pockets of resistance. Though the defeat of several prominent Malolos generals throughout 1902 marked the end of the Philippine Republic, and thus the "official" war in American eyes, guerrilla resistance from remnant Katipunan forces—still loyal to the reformist ideals of Bonifacio—continued for years to come. Further south in Mindanao, the predominantly Muslim region found further reason to resist the American annexation after the defeat of the Republic than ever before. Despite a generally unfriendly disposition towards Islam, Spain had largely ignored Mindinao in favor of concentrating upon the more profitable centers of control in Luzon and the Visayas. The change to American control and the

overtures of a transition to a unified Philippines was particularly unfavorable to the *Moro* tribes; though the *Moros* represented a majority in their home provinces, they were still greatly outnumbered in the Philippines as a whole. The Moros feared that the pro-Christian sponsorship of the United States would only empower the Catholic majority of Luzon to oppress the Islamic south if the Philippines became independent. In the interest of preserving the relative autonomy they had enjoyed under Spanish rule, Islamic resistance to the American presence intensified after northern hostilities ended, persisting to the present..

In an effort to stem the growing tide of cultural resistance to American authority and to curtail the activities of these lingering Katipunan threats, the Philippine Commission passed Act 292 on November 4 1901.[110] This "Sedition Act," broadly defined the "crimes of treason, sedition, insurrection and targeted the formation of these secret societies particularly in Section 9, as well as making it illegal to speak ill of the American administration.

The next step forward for Filipino representation came with the Organic Act of July 1902. The law established the Insular Government of the Philippines, and for the first time created the trappings of democracy. It consisted of two houses: the Philippine Commission served as the "upper" house, and a popularly elected Philippine Assembly as the lower house. However, the Organic Act drew heavy criticism as well. Though the act included provisions to form a popular legislative house, it was not until 1907 that the Assembly actually had its first elections. Furthermore, due to the ongoing debates of the American Congress over American colonialism, the provision still refused to state the

110Kramer, *The Blood of* Government, 175.

United States' intent for the Philippines—whether or not it was to remain a colony indefinitely. This did not change much in 1916, when the Jones Act replaced the Organic Act. Though the act clearly stated to grant independence to the Philippines, it posited no timetable, set no date or even criteria for independence—only the vague condition of "such time as the Philippines is deemed capable of self-government." The Jones act was hobbled by American imperialists, and offered little more than a half-hearted "promise" of Independence. Despite this setback, the Jones Act did accomplish one particularly important thing, as it disbanded the American-run Philippine Commission and replaced it with a Filipino-elected Senate.

Now possessing a fully operational, popularly mandated legislature, the Philippines' final step towards independence came in the form of the Tydings-McDuffie Act of March 1934. Signed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the law established the Philippines as a Commonwealth and established a firm ten-year transition schedule to full independence. However, the sudden generosity of the United States after years of indecision was more the product of American interest than altruism. The imperialists had promised that the Philippines was a prudent investment, and that in annexing the island and training the natives in democracy, the U.S. stood to profit as well. However, even as early as 1902, the reality of the Philippines' true expense was revealed. Champ Clark protested the ongoing military expenditure to retain control of the colony in a speech to the house:

> "Up to this present day the holding of the Philippine Islands has cost the American people about $300,000,000, and it is costing them $12,000,000 a month now. The secretary of the navy wants 20 million more in funds than last year. Mr. Cannon's claim, though certainly not saying so openly, nonetheless indicates that we are to keep up this process of spending $12,000,000 a month forever and a

day."[111]

In addition to the financial burden of local defense against lingering rebel attacks and a rampant banditry problem, the larger issue of foreign defense emerged. The Japanese Empire had astounded the world with its decisive victory over Russia for possession of Manchuria, and again by defeating China in the Sino-Japanese War. The string of Japanese victories were a testament to the growing strength of the Japanese Empire. The U.S. grew concerned about the difficulty in protecting the Philippines economically or militarily from other nations. In addition to the Philippines' disappointing financial returns, racist dread over Filipino immigration now overshadowed previous expansionist optimism. Despite the ulterior motives of the United States, the result was the same: by 1935, the Philippines was independent in all but name. As a commonwealth of the United States, the Philippines enjoyed preferential trade and gained an autonomous, bicameral legislature chosen through popular elections. With true sovereignty only five years away, the Philippines had one more hurdle to overcome before independence could be theirs—the invasion of the Japanese in December of 1941 ushered in a new period of intense guerrilla resistance and popular mobilization.

111Champ Clark, "The Urgent Deficiency Bill," speech given Monday, January 20, 1902, Missouri State Historical Society, I C5472s, 4.

Chapter 5: The Japanese Occupation

Though it came at the cost of nearly half a million Filipino lives, the American occupation did bring some positive changes to the Philippines and its people. The Americans—though slowly, and with much resistance in some circles—had indeed made good on their pre-war promises of democratization and modernization. The gradual transition from a foreign-run government to one led by Filipinos reinvigorated Filipino nationalist movements—which despite being challenged by American officials, met with less violence than during the war. With rebel activity becoming more sporadic, a relative peace began in the Philippines after 1911, and the lull allowed for *ilustrados* to speak more freely and further develop the notion of a unified *Filipino* nation. However, the social identity of *Filipino* was now far more prevalent among the Filipino masses, and not only among the elite. For the first time in their history, Filipinos across the Philippines were able to participate in elections, select officials for the highest levels of government, and handle their own affairs with little interference. Though voting patterns still reflected regional bias, democratic agency—still limited by the continued exploitation of the *principalía*—made divisions between different ethnic groups less rigid than in the past. Improvements in communication between different regions, as well as greater access medicine, sanitation and education, also fostered camaraderie among peasants and a greater respect for national government.

Despite this trend towards national unity, there remained one crucial division within Filipino society. Socio-economic differences between the different social classes played a critical role in the struggle against colonialism. The traditional patron-client

relationship—a product of Spanish and Asian practices—provoked constant conflict throughout Philippine history. The friction between the upper class *principalía* and the lower class peasants and laborers fueled their revolutionary spirit.[112] Lower class mobilization sought social reform, and unfair labor and economic conditions provoked rebellion. However, these schisms also hindered the formation of a unified resistance to occupation forces as they created conflicts between *principalía* commanders and peasant soldiers. Many peasants fought for the nationalist cause in both the Philippine Revolution and Philippine-American War, but they did so only as a means to achieve much needed land reform. Once it became clear that the struggle against the American military did not benefit the lower class as much as the elite, they begrudgingly laid down their arms and returned to what remained of their villages. Even though Andres Bonifacio's Katipunan found strength in the shared economic hardship of the lower class, the elite eventually seized leadership of the movement and directed it to achieve their own goals. It was not until the Japanese occupation that these socio-economic divisions became an asset to resistance, rather than a liability. The Japanese takeover had presented the *principalía* with an unpleasant choice. Some *principales*, such as Commonwealth President Manuel Quezon, chose to flee to exile along with the retreating Americans. Many, however, submitted to Japanese rule. By collaborating with the Japanese, they hoped to retain their elite status, wealth, and control over their municipalities. Though this did protect their assets in the short term, it completely alienated them with the public—they earned the ire of peasant victims of Japanese cruelty, and invited the wrath of guerrilla assassins.

112Kramer, *The Blood of Government,* 42.

Regardless of which action *principales* chose, the result was the same: landlords and government leadership vanished or lost its popular mandate overnight, leaving large sectors of the peasant population to their own devices when not being directly oppressed by the Japanese army or its puppet government. As had not been seen even under the Philippine Commonwealth government, many Filipinos in the remote countryside now had a legitimate say in local affairs. This sudden lower class autonomy, in conjunction with the anger sparked by Japanese imperialism, spawned many underground anti-Japanese movements. Unlike the previous anti-colonial resistance of the Philippine Revolution and Philippine-American War, these guerrilla armies remained controlled by the lower class—both commanders and soldiers shared demands for land reform and national defense. The most impressive of these movements rose in response to the national threat posed by Japanese colonial control—the socialist Hukbalahap movement united the lower class in opposition to Japanese and *principalía* collaboration.

Luis Taruc and Agrarian Discontent

Of the many isolated village militias and guerrilla armies that rose to repel the Japanese military, the largest and most enduring of these organized resistance armies formed throughout the island of Luzon, founded by a peasant general, Luis Taruc. His memoirs offer intimate details of the final embodiment of Filipino nationalism via a shared social history rather than racial affiliations. Luis Taruc was born on June 21, 1913 to Nicanor and Ruperta Taruc, poor peasant farmers in the barrio town of Santa

Monica.[113] Life was hard for the Tarucs, but his father, who had taught himself to read and write in the absence of formal schooling, understood that it was yet possible for his son to succeed through his intelligence and hard work. Nicanor, believing that his son could escape the life of a peasant through formal education, insisted that Luis attend school. Though he did manage to gain acceptance, and Luis did not do well to begin with, and lost interest in his studies. He briefly dropped out to work as a baggage handler at a train station, fascinated by the travel. When his father found out, he was furious, and forced Luis work the hardest peasant job he could find: hand-cutting rice in the field with a *bolo* (a generic term for a farming machete or sword). His father's lesson hit home, and Luis returned to school with a new-found respect for the opportunity. Luis wrote, "I was made to feel what it meant to be an ignorant peasant. I was glad to go back to school."[114] Though his poverty eventually made continued education impossible, Taruc gained an appreciation for learning and continued to teach himself reading and writing, as his father had done. Even this modest education proved all the difference in his later life. His literacy opened him to the literature and philosophical works of the West, and he developed a great respect for American leaders such as Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson for their strong empathy with their people and nation.[115] Even from an early age, Taruc noted the disparities between the peasants and their wealthy landlords, and in the years before the Pacific War, he had noted the societal problems that stemmed from early colonialism.

113Luis Taruc, *Born of the People: An Autobiography* (New York: International Publishers, Co., 1953), 13-14.
114Ibid., 17.
115Ibid., 30.

Though American colonialism brought with it modernization, as well as significant strides towards democratic sovereignty, it was the elite that reaped the greatest rewards. The traditional landlord/tenant relationship had undergone a transformation from a barter system of payment to a free market/currency based economy. Landlords, as patriarchal figures, were expected to carry out the duty of *utang-na-loob* (the Filipino reciprocation principle) by assisting the community and caring for their workers. The most important way landlords accomplished this was through emergency loans and rasyon (rations) of rice in times of famine.[116] In return for ensuring the survival of the workers during even in the worst harvest seasons, the peasants provided their loyalty and hard work. This barter-based economy had existed for centuries; though it was exploitative, it nonetheless provided stability to the community, and ensured a dependable source of aid in the inevitable event of crop failure, disease or other catastrophe. By trading primarily in rice, peasants could always count on having something to eat, whether it came from their own fields or their patron's own stores. As the United States opened Philippine crops to the global market, landlords found the cultivation of profitable, but impractical, cash crops more lucrative. It was no longer prudent to manage wealth via physical exchange (exacting tax and trading service for rice), the end result was a more exact system of currency exchange. The successors to these landlords took on new policies that reflected a growing shift to currency-based economies. Resistance to these economic changes stemmed from the inconvenience of capital transfers for peasants. The change imposed by landlords vexed them, as they could not see the practicality of money, nor was it flexible enough to provide in times of

116James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 27-28.

famine—their primary concern. Investing cash profits from crop sales was easy for the elite, but not for traditional peasant farmers, who could no longer afford to buy the rice they once grew themselves. Furthermore, younger landlords now demanded stricter payment schedules, high-interest on loans and pushed out subsistence crops like rice in favor of more profitable cash crops. Peasants found themselves either submitting to these unfair practices or wandering the countryside searching in vain for a more traditional patron. By the 1930s, discontent was widespread among the peasant population, and led to clashes between the traditionalist peasants and their demanding landlords. Receiving only token reforms from the government, sporadic labor strikes and uprisings grew more frequent, even with the intervention of American colonial forces.

This situation was not lost on Taruc, who noted that peasants were becoming more "militant" during the American colonial period; though organized rebel attacks against the U.S. had become more sporadic, dissatisfaction with landlords and *principalía* had increased. Taruc claimed that little had changed for the core of Filipino society since the time of the Spanish: "When the Americans came they made boasts about having brought democracy to the Philippines, but the feudal agrarian system was preserved intact."[117]. Knowing little about Marxism at the time, but having a vague awareness of the class struggles going on around him, he began to fantasize about becoming an outlaw like Robin Hood, stealing from the rich to give to the poor.[118] It also opened his eyes to the plight of the people, and later turned him onto the path of Socialism. Overtime, his romanticism gave way to more traditional ideas about Communism, but his speeches were still couched in Christian imagery, not only because it made the points of his

117Taruc, *Born of the People,* 26.
118Ibid., 27.

arguments more accessible to common folk, but because he believed that once you "strip from the ideas and preachings of Christ the cloak of mysticism placed over them by the church, and you really have many of the ideas of socialism."[119] Taruc's work with the impoverished continued throughout the 1930s with his introduction to socialism through his associate Pedro Abad Santos, the founder of the Philippine Socialist Party.[120] In 1935, he began work with the AMT: Aguman ding Maldang Talapagobra (the League of Poor Laborers) was formed to organize strikes and go head-to-head with the land lords and push for reforms to ensure peasants were dealt with proper shares and end landlord price gouging.[121] Lacking organization, Taruc was asked to help draft a constitution.[122] The AMT membership exploded in the years leading to the war, with nearly 70,000 members at its peak, though many in an unofficial capacity.[123] On November 7, 1938, the Philippine Socialist Party merged with the Communist Party of the Philippines, and in doing so became the primary organization forming the core of the anti-Japanese guerrilla army, the Hukbalahap.[124] On the eve of war, the communist leader, Agapito del Rosario, predicted with surprising clarity "Long after a successful invasion by the Japanese and long after the reactionary Filipino leaders had stabbed the United States in the back, the members of the labor movement would go on fighting loyally on the side of the United States in the common struggle."[125]

119Taruc, *Born of the People,* 29.
120Luis Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger: The Story of an Asian Guerrilla Leader* (London: Geoffrey Chapman LTD., 1967), 13.
121Taruc, *Born of the People,* 38-39.
122Ibid.*,* 36.
123Ibid.*,* 46.
124Taruc, *He Who Rides the* Tiger, 17.
125Taruc, *Born of the People,* 53.

The Fall of Corregidor and American Supremacy in the Philippines

The Japanese takeover of the Philippines followed on the heels of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and in a matter of hours, Japan had exposed the glaring weakness of the American presence in Southeast Asia. However, the swift fall of the Philippines was not entirely the fault of American military strategists. The United States had considered defense plans since before the Philippines was officially annexed, initially prompted by the arrival of German warships seeking to claim the islands in 1898. The U.S. had also entertained the notion of Japanese invasion, even as early as 1905 after witnessing the surprising defeat of Russia in the Ruso-Japanese War.[126] The contingency plan the U.S. finally settled upon in the event of a full-scale Japanese attack on the Philippines was called the "Orange Plan."[127] Operating under the premise that "any plan was preferable to none," the Orange Plan consisted of just three main points unlikely to actually hold up to a significant assault: fall back to the island stronghold of Corregidor, fortify Manila Bay as best they could, and hold out for reinforcements.[128] Corregidor—once called the "Gibraltar of the Orient"—had served as an important feature of Manilla Bay's defense since the time of the Spanish.[129] Housing twenty-five batteries, Corregidor bristled with weaponry designed to fend off a naval assault—complements ranged from 3-inch to 12-inch guns and mortars.[130] As such, Corregidor maintained a formidable defense of the bay in the early years of American rule. However, the plan possessed a number of

126Karnow, *In Our Image,* 263.
127Ibid., 263-264.
128Ibid., 264.
129Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years: Japan's Adventure in the Philippines, 1941-1945* (Quezon City: R.P. Garcia Publishing Co. 1965), 234.
130Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years*, 235.

glaring weaknesses. The difficulty was once more with the Philippines' geography—thousands of islands spread U.S. and Filipino defense forces thin, leaving even high-priority sites such as Manila vulnerable to attack from multiple fronts. Easy to conquer but nearly impossible to defend, the Americans faced the same tactical conundrum as the Spanish had at the end of the nineteenth century. Beyond the uncooperative terrain was another problem: the advancement of war technology, and especially the rise aviation after World War I, greatly reduced Corregidor's effectiveness in stopping an assault on Manilla. The 1922 Washington Naval Treaty, as part of the United States' move towards transferring responsibility to Filipinos, further limited the military's renovation of Corregidor and Bataan's dilapidated fortifications, save the installation of some anti-aircraft batteries.[131]

The United States, seeing few options and having lost interest in its unprofitable venture, regarded any defense of the Philippines as a lost cause in the short term, and the Orange Plan reflected this. Though the Americans knew the strategic importance of the Philippines for control of the Pacific, it was just far too difficult to maintain a permanent defense force that could feasibly repel a full-scale onslaught. The core of the U.S. defense plan was to abandon the Philippines altogether in the event of a powerful Japanese invasion, and return with greater forces later. When the worst-case scenario became a worst-case reality, the plan held up as well as was expected. The Japanese army captured Manila, and entered the Capital on January 2, 1942, and shortly afterward established the Military Administration, enforcing martial law or working through

131Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years*, 234.

puppets in the Filipino government.[132] Though American and Filipino troops managed to fall back to Corregidor, the Japanese quickly secured the majority of Luzon, capturing thousands. Cut off from supplies, Corregidor fell in April 1942, and its defenders forced through the jungles of neighboring Bataan to P.O.W. Camps. With the capture or expulsion of Americans from the Philippines, and the dismantling of the democratic government, the hopes of Filipino nationalists also withered. Only a few years shy of the Tydings-McDuffy Act's promised independence, the Japanese invasion had jeopardized the Filipino's entire quest for democracy and autonomy.

Filipino Popular Resistance

Like previous colonizers, the Japanese quickly began a propaganda campaign to justify their encroachment and foster sympathy among the populace. Incidentally, their message was far better received at the beginning of the twentieth century than it would at the time of the invasion. The military successes of Japan before World War II, in particular its victories over both China and Russia, inspired Filipino nationalists in the early 1900s. Embittered by the devastation wrought by the war with the United States, some *ilustrados* turned to Japan as a model of Asian nationalism and strength, praising the Empire's successful rise to prominence in spite of some of its growing militarism. When Antonio Bautista, chairman of the Committee for Democracy and Collective Security, had urged the boycott of Japanese goods to protest its aggression, President Quezon ordered his arrest. Though Quezon likely did this only to make the Philippines

132Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years*, 308.

appear less threatening to the Japan, others fervently supported the Japanese cause and welcomed their leadership. However, by the end of the 1930s, many Filipinos had dramatically changed their opinion of the Japan's proposal. The Japanese had preached a message of a Pan-Asian Empire led by the Japanese example. This was an identical sentiment to America's "manifest destiny," except with the added appeal that it would unite the Asian races to challenge the West's exploitation and domination of the hemisphere. The concept of this "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" appealed to not only Filipinos, but other Western colonies throughout Southeast Asia who wished to free themselves from imperial oppression.

Over the course of the war, Filipinos learned the true nature of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere after the invasion of East and Southeast Asia. Between 1939 and 1945, 670,000 Koreans were forced to work industrial and mining operations throughout Japan, where ten percent died from the harsh conditions.[133] Some 300,000 *Rōmusha* (Indonesian laborers), Malayans, Tamil, Chinese, Thai, and Burmese were brought to forced labor camps along the infamous Burma-Siam "Railroad of Death," of which over 60,000 perished. In addition to the these reports from neigboring colonies, Filipinos witnessed firsthand the manner in which Japanese soldiers treated the non-Japanese races. The fall of Corregidor and the southern province of Bataan became symbols of Japanese war atrocities in the Philippines as thousands of Filipino and American prisoners died "Bataan Death March."[134] Though the Japanese were widely hated by Filipinos after the conquest, Filipinos who willing aided the Japanese in their

133John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 47.
134Ibid., 44.

crimes were despised even more. In 1935, Benigno Ramos and his followers, the Sakdalistas, fled to Japan in the wake of a failed revolution against the American colonial government.[135] These same expatriated Filipinos returned during the World War II invasion as thugs and mercenaries of the Imperial Army; now calling themselves the "Ganap," they formed the core of a Japanese-sponsored terror-squad called the Makapili.[136] In spite of the excessive brutality of the Japanese invaders, Japan continued to hold on to the message that the violence was a justified response to continued resistance, and that submission was the way to peace. For many Filipinos, the Japanese claims rang untrue. As more peasants became incensed, civilians began to actively fight the occupation—isolated pockets of resistance sprang up as daytime farmers became guerrilla soldiers and saboteurs by night.

Though American and Spanish colonialism had been destructive and hated, the Japanese occupation was proving a far greater blow to the cause of Philippine independence. The day after the fall of Manila, on January 3, 1942, the Japanese Commander-in-Chief issued a proclamation declaring the end of American sovereignty over the Philippines, and established martial law in all occupied territories.[137] The Military Administration dominated what remained of the Filipino government, and officially dissolved the last trappings of democracy with the banning of political parties on December 2, 1942.[138] The parties were replaced by the *Kapisanan sa Paglilingkod sa Bagong Pilipinas*—this "Association Service to the New Philippines," or KALIBAPI,

135Taruc, *Born of the People,* 29.
136Ibid.
137Agoncillo, *The Fateful* Years, 311.
138Ibid., 357.

was populated by Filipino collaborators in the puppet government.[139] Despite the complete liquidation of democratic government, a unique opportunity presented itself to the Filipino masses. Though the Filipinos had enjoyed over thirty years of relative peace under the American administration, the majority of lower class grievances that had prompted peasant mobilization during the Philippine Revolution still existed. The gap between the wealthy *principalía* and the poor laborers remained, and the issues of land reform, peasant exploitation, and lack of representation by the elite left the majority of Filipinos as unprotected under the American-Filipino collaborative government as they had under Spanish rule. World War II now completely turned Filipino society on its head. The *principalía*, whom had formally controlled the lower classes throughout each colonial occupation, had been either neutralized or completely vilified. The treachery of elite collaborators encouraged Filipinos—regardless of ethnicity—to form organized, rural armies uninfluenced by elite interests. The result was the mobilization of trans-regional, *Filipino* resistance armies: peasant soldiers lead by peasants commanders for the shared purpose of expelling the colonial invaders, reestablishing national autonomy, and attaining economic reform.

The Hukbalahap

For many Filipinos, the government had failed them. Taruc criticized Quezon, as President of the legitimate Filipino government, for sounding no national call to arms. The Communist Party, however, had presented Quezon with a twelve-point memorandum

139Agoncillo, *The Fateful* Years, 357.

in December of 1941 calling for the "all-out resistance to the Japanese," and warning that any Filipinos collaborating with the enemy "would do so at the cost of his life."[140] Despite the threat, opportunists—the traitors and the collaborators—quickly filled the void left by the Quezon's departure and took up prominent positions in the Japanese puppet government. This devastated established law and order, and banditry grew rampant. Villages strained to fend for themselves in the absence of police or government protection. To combat the rise in crime after the collapse of the government, villages set up *bantay nayon*—organized militia guards to combat the bandits.[141] Many of the "bandits" that plagued the townships were later discovered to be Ganaps—mercenaries and spies for the Japanese.[142] Village defense was a learning experience for many, and "made the people more ready for organized resistance"[143] It rested on the Filipino people to mount their own guerrilla defenses as best they could with limited resources and weaponry at their disposal. The Hukbalahap developed from these *bantay nayon;* villages created small forces to defend their own communities, but now with a more widespread understanding of the plight of the Philippines as a whole, these groups began to merge to defend provinces. Under the guidance of the socialist/communist leadership, turned its attention towards national defense and the expulsion of the Japanese from the Philippines altogether.

The *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon* (The People's Anti-Japanese Army), shortened to *Hukbalahap*, was founded on March 29, 1942 after a week-long conference held in the secluded forests of the tri-province border of Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva

140Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 20.
141Taruc, *Born of the People,* 56.
142Ibid., 58.
143Ibid.

Ecija.[144] Taruc and his fellow "Huks" drafted a document called "The Fundamental Spirit of the Hukbalahap" to outline the important virtues of their resistance army, especially those of equality, friendship and unity.[145] What made the Hukbalahap unique was its ability to unite people throughout Luzon and beyond, creating cells of Japanese resistance as far away as the Visayan island of Negros. The mission of the Hukbalahap was first and foremost the defeat of the Japanese military wherever they could, and the elimination of collaborators. Aside from its more traditional military regiments and conventional fighting, the Hukbalahap employed a task force known as the Department of Intelligence (DI) to great effect. As the "eyes and ears of the underground," the DI worked directly with the Hukbalahap GHQ and provided invaluable tactical information to the rest of the United Front, but its equally vital purpose was to discover, hunt down, and liquidate Filipino collaborators.[146] The DI drew distinctions between those coerced to help the Japanese and the truly corrupt—though inclined to give benefit of the doubt, the DI's assassinations of corrupt *principalía* collaborators terrified the enemy and drove home the message that willing traitors would not be tolerated.[147]

As the war progressed, the Hukbalahap joined other resistance groups in opposition to the Japanese military as a United Front—a small independent group called the Free Philippines operated in Manila and coordinated resistance through an underground newspaper.[148] Another, the League of National Liberation (LNL) formed in April of 1942 and worked by threatening Manila guards—compromising Japanese

144Taruc, *Born of the People,* 66.
145Ibid., 67-68.
146Ibid., 134.
147Ibid., 136-167.
148Ibid., 170-171.

security within the city.[149] Late 1942, Commander Dimasalang's squadron was ambushed "ineffectively" by an unknown group of Filipinos, whom they first assumed were Ganaps.[150] After flanking and capturing the assailants, the Huks discovered it was actually an American-led force, under the command of an officer Mackenzie.[151] Remnants of the American military had created its own guerrilla force in 1942 called the USAFFE. The Hukbalahap continued to have a difficult relationship with the USAFFE throughout the war, and despite fighting side-by-side in future battles, tensions ran high. Infuriated by being lectured on proper guerrilla warfare by peasants, Mackenzie had reported back to his C.O. Major Lapham how the Huks were dangerous bandits.[152] The Americans distrusted the motives of the communist-backed guerrillas. Furthermore, the Huks were frustrated by the USAFFE's attitudes: they had been quick to accept former Philippine Constabulary (PC) forces into their ranks—men who had worked as henchmen for the Japanese puppet government, and traitors in the eyes of the Hukbalahap.[153] The American policy of aiding the PC worked against the Huk's purpose to execute collaborators, hindering their operations between 1943-1945.

The Hukbalahap incorporated more than just military actions. It actively sought to spread Filipino national pride, and spark widespread Filipino civil and violent resistance. Not only was this accomplished through military enlistment programs, but also through a number of important governing institutions and public relation projects. Among these projects included the formation of BUDCS (Barrio United Defense Corps).

149Taruc, *Born of the People*, 175.
150Ibid., 147-148.
151Ibid., 148.
152Ibid.
153Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 106.

A form of democratic council set up by Huks in the villages of their territory, they approached local villages, and when possible helped them set up de facto governments. The purpose was to organize communities that had their previous leadership compromised, as well as bolster community unity by creating a network between the different BUDCs. In fostering national unity among Filipinos in the face of the Japanese invasion, the Hukbalahap employed another unexpected tool of resistance with the "Nueva Ecija Cultural and Dramatic Association" (NECDA). The NECDA was a theater and singing troupe that traveled with the army from barrio to barrio providing entertainment, as well as dramatizing the plight of the Philippines and the need for Filipino resistance.[154] The popularity of the performances drew such support that the Huks decided to make it an integral part of the Hukbalahap itself, renaming it the "Cultural and Information Department" (CID).[155] "Although we frankly designed it as propaganda, our CID units were welcomed effusively in the barrios, and the people would stay up all night to attend the performances."[156] The immense popularity of the shows aided in the organization of communities throughout the Huk territories, and now promoted cultural unity among different Filipino ethnic groups in addition to national unity.

Despite friction and distrust from the USAFFE, many Americans nevertheless acknowledged the significant contribution the Hukbalahap made to the liberation of the Philippines. Huk squadrons and returning American forces fought together to reclaim Luzon from the Japanese. More importantly, as Taruc had put it in a letter to President

154Taruc, *Born of the People,* 131.
155Ibid., 131-132.
156Ibid., 132.

Sergio Osmena and General Douglas MacArthur, the Hukbalahap had "strengthened the feeling of self-respect" the Filipinos had for themselves, reinforcing national pride and a collective esprit de corps as *Filipinos*. The public adoption of national *Filipino* community that grew from resistance to Spanish and American colonialism resulted in a different kind of resistance to the Japanese in the 1940s—namely one centered upon the lower class. The Hukbalahap represented the egalitarian ethos of a united Filipino people, and honored the legacy of Bonifacio's Katipunan. In the face of Japanese attack, and despite the absence of the *principalía* government, many Filipinos had finally embraced a wider definition of community—one determined by a camaraderie with other Filipinos base on a shared socio-economic plight and opposition to Japanese imperialism. The most important insights into the life of Luis Taruc do not come from his rise as a guerrilla tactician and leader, his evolving political philosophy, or his eventual revolt against the the Philippine Government after the war. Though sympathetic to socialist philosophy, his actions were always rooted in nationalist concerns, shaped by the practical mindset of a farmer. Though driving out the foreign invaders was the primary mission of the Hukbalahap, it was this common struggle against fascism that he hoped would "contribute toward the peace and national unity" of the Philippines.[157] Taruc respected the limitations of the common people, who only embraced ideology if it carried with it convincing promises of reform. Though the tactics and outcomes of Filipino resistance in World War II were similar to those of previous engagements, Filipino resistance armies such as the Hukbalahap possessed a unique attitude and purpose—one closely tied to a now popularly-embraced *Filipino* national identity. These peasant

157Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger,* 5.

armies, different from the *ilustrado*-led resistance of the turn of the century, drove the cause of Filipino nationalism to its fruition.

Conclusion

The earliest Malay immigrants to the Philippines settled the islands and survived by forming close-knit villages. Populations were both culturally and literally divided from the beginning— treacherous jungle and impassable mountain ranges isolated villages, while small but significant stretches of ocean further separated islands. Aside from the interactions common to primitive societies—casual trading, territorial disputes, or the occasional intermarriage—these communities developed independently from one another. This separation bred numerous ethnic groups, defined by their own unique languages, customs, festivals, ancestral territories and gods. Despite the overwhelming factors keeping Filipinos divided, there were certain elements that made later unification possible. The legacy of mainland Asian values propagated throughout the Philippines, and formed the basic foundation of their own value system. Though culturally diverse, Filipinos still shared the same general attitudes and expectations of leadership. The most fundamental "Filipino values" centered on paternalism and a system of reciprocation called *utang-na-loób*. These concepts created a distinct social contract between villagers and their *datu* (chieftain): the *datu* fulfilled his role as a patriarch by protecting the village and sponsoring its many important rituals. In return, villagers showed their gratitude as loyalty. A *datu's* failure to uphold this social obligation nullified this social contract, and gave justification to villagers to rebel against the *walang hiya* (shameless) leader. These key values were crucial to the future development of Filipino national identity under colonialism, as they not only represented common historical ground between all Filipino groups, but also set a precedent for a colonizer's obligations to its

colony.

With the cultural underpinnings in place, an outside force was required to drive the transformation of the Philippines and its people forward; this impetus was foreign imperialism. The Philippines underwent not one, but a succession of colonization projects; each ownership change brought with it a fresh wave of exploitation and conflict. Rather than further dividing Filipino society, however, the Philippines' disparate cultures were united by the shared experience of colonialism. Over the course of 400 years, escalating resistance to foreign occupation forced critical shifts in Filipino society as a whole. Mutual discontent bonded different ethnic and socio-economic groups, and over time temporary alliances transformed into permanent kinship. Spain was the first, and in many ways the most important, imperial influence on Filipino identity and society. The Spaniards' arrival in the late 1500s marked the beginning of several projects. Initially, the Spanish were more interested in trade with China, utilizing the islands of Luzon and Cebu as waypoints for the Pacific galleon trade. However, with the establishment and evolution of Manila into a major commercial hub, Spain devoted more attention to the Philippines as a whole: the mass conversions of indigenous populations to Catholicism marked the beginning of a larger plan of colonization. Spain, as it had done with its Latin American possessions, utilized the Church to maintain an authoritarian presence in the region. Finding traditional Filipino values convenient for their goals, the Spanish encouraged paternalism, placing themselves in the patriarchal role. For the first time in its history, the varied Filipino cultures were collected under the patronage and control of a single power. Filipinos saw this as a positive *utang-na-loób* relationship—the Spanish had brought Christianity and modern advancements to the Philippines, and so Filipinos

felt obligated to honor this partnership through their loyalty.

Throughout the Spanish Colonial Period, Filipinos adhered to their traditional ethnic categorizations. Though they were aware of their position as subjects to an overarching government, the majority of Filipinos principally identified with their regional or linguistic heritage—they saw themselves as *Tagalog*, or *Cebuano*, rather than as *Spanish*. This first began to change in the late 1800s with the introduction of a new use for the old term *Filipino*, and with it the growth of a national consciousness. The first true *Filipinos*, as used in this nationalistic context, were the *ilustrados*—the educated elite. As the Church and colonial government's abuse and neglect grew, more and more Filipinos began to question Spain's integrity. *Ilustrado* activists responded to this growing problem through their writings—falling back on their education in European universities, they turned the Spaniards' own scholarship against them. This "Propaganda Movement" was not initially about independence or Filipino sovereignty, but it took off in concert with the global rise of nationalism, elements of which integrated themselves into *ilustrado* philosophy. *Ilustrados* initially demanded assimilation into the Spanish government, demanding equal representation and full status as a province, and not just a colony. However, prominent activists did this by calling upon *Filipino* as a cultural label. Authors like José Rizal and Apolinario Mabini harnessed the term even before the movement switched to independence demands—they were not just Spanish subjects, but *Filipino*. *Ilustrado* activism continued for decades to no avail, and with little promise of Spain making any effort to change a new idea came into play. As the Philippines' patron, it was Spain's duty to care for its subjects; in failing this, it had violated the principle tenant of *utang-na-loób*, and so Filipinos were no longer bound to honor a *walang hiya*

Spain. Spain only further condemned itself by executing Rizal in 1896, whose death instigated the outbreak of the Philippine Revolution. In rising to challenge its colonial master, Filipinos enforced the core beliefs that predated Spain's occupation. Ironically, in reaffirming the most ancestral aspects of Filipino identity, they also created a new image of themselves. Filipinos focused on the mutual components of their collective past—Filipino values and a shared experience with foreign colonialism gave them a broader sense of kinship than before. Though still only truly embraced by the intellectual elite, the masses were nonetheless inspired by their leadership, and *Filipino* as a collective identity first gained appeal.

The next stage in Filipino nationalism came from the devastation of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars, followed by U.S. colonization. American colonialism shared some important similarities to that of Spain: The escalating aggression of a foreign colonial power, and its eminent threat to Philippines as a whole, resulted in violent resistance from all sectors of Filipino society. Organized under the Katipunan and the fledgling Philippine Republic, the Filipino masses were already mobilized and in a state of open revolt. The two conflicts blended together, and shared the same fundamental flaws and outcomes. Though nationalism, and the development of a *Filipino* national consciousness, had grown during the Propaganda Movement, regionalism and factional in-fighting still plagued the anti-colonial resistance at even the highest levels. Power struggles between *principalía* commanders, more concerned with their own regional interests than the greater national struggle, hindered Filipino resistance during the revolution against Spain. After the execution of Katipunan founder Andres Bonifacio by President Emilio Aguinaldo, the resistance was left too bitterly divided to

continue effective resistance. These same issues remained with the American occupation—even had they not been facing the superior forces of the U.S. Military, the Filipino populace was still too segmented to present a coordinated, unified opposition. The war was swift and brutal, and left massive Filipino casualties.

In many ways, the Spanish Colonial Period was characterized by Spain's acceptance and encouragement of Filipino convention, though it only did so to maintain imperial domination. By contrast, the American Colonial Period was defined by its strides to Americanize the Philippines, convinced that only a democracy modeled after the United States had any hope of succeeding. This condescending attitude of "manifest destiny" was responsible for the sudden desire to annex the Philippines rather than liberate it—American expansionists truly believed Filipinos were incapable of self-government There were nearly as many anti-imperialists as well, and heated debates raged in Congress throughout the conflict as to the morality and practicality of Philippine annexation. The Philippine-American War officially ended in 1902, but this had little basis in reality—sporadic rebel activity continued for nearly a full decade. But as time went on, the majority of Filipinos, initially inspired by the elite's nationalist rhetoric, became disillusioned as continued resistance proved more futile. Despite the defeat, there were several positive outcomes: the defeat of Spain by the Americans had given the Katipunan revolutionary leadership the opportunity to declare and establish the First Philippine Republic. It served as a significant point of pride for Filipinos, and gave the masses a taste of the nationalist pride the *ilustrados* had preached. Though these resistances were ultimately defeated by conflicting regional-ethnic loyalties, the inclusive *Filipino* identity had finally started to gain popular acceptance. It was during the peace

that followed the wars that finally saw the *Filipino* identity come into its own. The United States did in fact follow through with its promises, albeit slowly and after much resistance. Regardless, the Americans proved to be far more benign administrators than their Spanish predecessors. Modernization and a legitimate democratization aided the healing process, and by 1935, the Philippines was independent in all but name. As a commonwealth, the Philippines boasted its own Filipino-run legislature, selected through popular elections. This empowered the Filipino populace as never before—democratic agency reinforced a much greater since of national community, with the vast majority of Filipinos finally embracing *Filipino* as their principle identity, above their regional affiliation.

The outbreak of World War II and the Japanese invasion halted the Philippines' progression towards full independence, but only confirmed that Filipinos had already fully embraced a national identity even before achieving independence. Once more, it was colonial aggression that prompted popular mobilization, but as the writings of Luis Taruc indicate, the anti-Japanese guerrilla armies were unlike anything the Philippines had seen before. It had been a long process for Filipinos to look beyond regional-ethnic loyalties to achieve a new identity as *Filipino*, but now the general population had the opportunity to embrace the new association for themselves, independent of the upper class' persuasion. As the *principalía* had been discredited by abandoning the masses to the Japanese, or vilified by collaborating with the enemy, the remaining Filipinos finally achieved a true sense of the "deep, horizontal comradeship" necessary for the creation of a nation.[158] Anti-colonial resistance created the conditions necessary for this "imagined"

158Anderson, *Imagined* Communities, 7.

community to develop, with traditional identities giving way to a broader *Filipino* identity. Spain, the United States, and Japan all played significant roles in the formation of the modern *Republika ng Pilipinas*, and it is important to recognize their contribution to Filipino identity. Exploitation and violent oppression by foreign occupation forces promoted increased cultural unity across regional, ethnic, and in some cases socio-economic divides, these disparate groups joined by their shared history of domination and a growing sense of kinship defined by the colonial borders encompassing Philippine Islands collectively. Anti-colonialism formed the foundation essential to a national *Filipino* consciousness by consolidating an otherwise heterogeneous collection of independent societies into one united front against foreign domination. It was this shared experience with colonialism that ultimately strengthened Filipino camaraderie across regional, ethnic, linguistic, and economic barriers; in this way, *Filipino* as a national and personal identity was elevated above all other labels.

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