

History at the Service of the Nation-State

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The Philippine Centennial had to be very carefully crafted to suit the political, social and cultural requirements of the nation in the late 20th century. This essay explores the way in which the administration of President Fidel Ramos tried to conceptualize these celebrations in such a manner that they are inclusive of the entire population. To achieve these ends, however, the representation of history had to be modified to conform to the demands of a renascent but newly promoted state ideology, *Filipinism*, that seeks to unite the people through reference to a shared, but not necessarily authenticated, past. By commemorating the Centennial as the 'birth of the nation', the 1898 Revolution has been transformed into a nationalist origin myth whereby accuracy is less important than the construction of an appropriate historical identity for the present.

FILIPINOS HAILED THE CENTENNIAL OF THE BIRTH OF THEIR nation on 12 June 1998. In temperatures that soared into the mid-thirties centigrade, a reported five million people crowded into a few city blocks of central Manila to view a parade commemorating that historic moment when General Aguinaldo proclaimed his country's independence from Spain after 333 years of colonial rule. One hundred years ago, Aguinaldo declared the Philippines the first constitutional republic in all of Asia. The Centennial, however, is not so much a single celebration as a series of anniversaries marking the major events of the Philippine Revolution and the commencement of the Philippine-American War between 1896-1899: the 'Cry of Pugad Lawin' heralding the start of hostilities, the uprising in Cavite, and the execution of Jose Rizal in 1896; the death of Andres Bonifacio, the Biak-na-Bato Republic, and the exile of Aguinaldo in

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1897; and the fall of Malolos, the demise of General Luna, and the Battle of Tirad Pass in 1899. The period between 12 June 1898 and 23 January 1899, between the proclamation of the republic at Kawit and the ratification of its Constitution at Malolos, represents the culmination of these commemorations.

Commemorating the past, whether it be centennials, sesquicentennials or bicentennials, have become important national icons in the late 20th century. In recent decades, the United States has celebrated the 200th anniversary of its independence in 1976, Australia its European settlement in 1988, and France its Revolution in 1989. Yet there is seldom any unanimity over what those events signify or even when or where they took place. Accordingly, the Philippines has declared its independence at least three times: from the Spanish on 12 June 1898, under Japanese tutelage on 14 October 1943, and by American fiat on 4 July 1946.¹ Thus it was an act of considerable nationalistic significance for President Macapagal to change Independence Day from 4 July to 12 June in 1961, relegating the former to Fil-American Friendship Day, a date which is now no longer even a public holiday.

Yet historical events that are supposed to be commemorative of nationhood, and therefore presumably celebrations of unity, can actually have the opposite effect. As soon as any attempt is made to define 'the nation' in anything more than crudely geopolitical terms, all sorts of racial, ethnic and religious divisions can surface. Thus having resolved the occasion, independence wrested from Spain rather than granted by the United States, and therefore the date on which to commemorate the Centennial, the implications of what was actually being celebrated had to be confronted.

Whatever the nature of the Philippine Revolution, whether it was shaped more by an implanted European liberal ideology or whether it belonged more to an indigenous tradition of millenarian popular uprisings,² it was quintessentially a Christian affair. The main events surrounding its inception, the growth and leadership of the *Katipunan*³ (the secret society that instigated the revolt in August 1896), most of the soldiers who

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constituted the revolutionary army, the first president of the Republic, and the delegates who met at Malolos to frame the Constitution in 1899 were Christians, largely, in fact, from the Tagalog provinces of Central Luzon. But not everybody in what is now the Republic of the Philippines is Christian or was significantly involved in the events of 1896-1899, and so might view the Revolution that led to the emergence of a Christian nation in the archipelago from a somewhat less congratulatory perspective.

The Philippine Centennial, then, has had to be very carefully crafted to suit the political, social and cultural requirements of the nation in the late 20th century. This essay explores the way in which the administration of President Fidel Ramos tried to conceptualize these celebrations in such a manner that they are inclusive of the entire population. To achieve these ends, however, the representation of history had to be modified to conform to the demands of a renascent but newly promoted state ideology, Filipinism, that seeks to unite the people through reference to a shared common past whether or not that past is authenticated. By commemorating the Centennial as the 'birth of the nation', the Revolution has been transformed into a nationalist origin myth whereby accuracy is less important than the construction of an appropriate historical identity for the present.

FILIPINISM: THE EMERGING STATE IDEOLOGY

THE Centennial project is very much a program of the Ramos administration (1992-1998) and owes much to the support and patronage of the president (de Manila 1995). Despite the formation of a small committee under Corazon Aquino in 1988, it was not until the creation of the National Centennial Commission by Executive Order No 128 in October 1993 that planning began in earnest. For the new administration, the future was one of promise — indeed of vision, or what has come to be known as *Philippines 2000*. The 21st century was heralded as that of the Pacific and the objective was to transform the Philippines into a newly industrialized country by the year 2000.⁴ But parallel to Ramos' desire to rejuvenate the economy was his concern to regenerate society. As he noted during a state visit to the United Kingdom in 1997:

We no longer bow our heads in embarrassment at the abject poverty and demoralization that used to seep through the core of our national soil. We are no longer considered the Sick Man of Asia but [are] seen as Asia's Tiger Cub. (Tamayo 1997)

The ideological mechanism selected to effect this restoration of national self-respect is Filipinism. This is neither a new word nor a novel concept but has its origins in the writings of the national hero, Jose Rizal. As expounded by President Laurel in 1923, Filipinism is a form of nationalism but of a specialized kind: 'Nationalism could be used by any people, but only Filipinos could use Filipinism' (de Manila 1995). Its underlying theme is political unity and social renewal based on racial nobility and pride in a common heritage. As an ideology, it looks to the past in an attempt to recapture the 'true Filipino spirit'. Just as the national policy of other regimes in the region have sought political legitimacy through historical validation,⁵ so the emerging ideology of the post-Marcos state in the Philippines is founded on the celebration of its revolutionary struggle against Spain and the heroic qualities of its leaders. The Centennial, then, commemorates more than simply the 100th anniversary of the Philippine Revolution; it is also the central reference point in the country's history that marks 'the beginning of true nationhood' (Matubis 1998).

The nationalism being espoused here is not solely based on a glorification of the past but is also an attempt to promote an active commitment to the present and to project a clear vision for the future, 'something that goes beyond 1998' (MB 1997). The harnessing of the past to serve the present is made very apparent in the five official objectives of the Centennial Program: to revive love of country and appreciation of the true Filipino identity; to relearn the values of our historical struggle and use them for future development; to enhance participation and promote values essential for nation-building; to teach Filipinos love of nation to transcend love for oneself; and to propel Filipinos to work for the overall well-being and welfare of the

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nation (PDI 1997). Such noble aspirations have more than a passing affinity to the five principles of *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology.⁶

The task of organizing the centenary celebrations, indicative of the importance attached by President Ramos to the position, was entrusted to Aquino's estranged former vice-president, Salvador Laurel, who was appointed chairman of the newly reconstituted and greatly expanded National Centennial Commission (NCC). Apart from Laurel, the NCC's management included Cesar Virata as vice-chairman, a prime minister during the Marcos years, as well as former Presidents Dadong Macapagal and Cory Aquino as honorary chairpersons, reflecting the non-partisan and non-political nature of the endeavor. Other members of the Commission included the secretaries of government departments most involved in the centennial celebrations (such as Education, Defense, Interior, and Tourism) along with representatives from both legislative houses, the judiciary, the National Historical Institute, and the National Commission for Culture and Arts. Delegates were also sought from the private sector: business, NGOs, labor, women, youth groups and minorities. As Samuel Tan (1998), director of the National Historical Institute (NHI) and himself a commissioner comments: 'The composition of the NCC was so made that there was nobody left [out], nobody who was of significance whether it was media, whether it was money, whether it was power'. It was these commissioners, initially 33 but later rising to 48, organized into 29 standing committees and some 40 sub-committees who provided the main administrative structure for the celebrations (Tan 1998; *Today* 1995).

The NCC, however, was immediately faced with a conceptual difficulty. Though the occasion for staging these national celebrations was the centennial of the Revolution, their task was equally to promote the emerging state ideology of Filipinism. Unfortunately the two did not necessarily correspond: history and the geographical and ethnic borders of the modern state were at variance. Significant national minorities, Muslims in the South, the tribal peoples of the Cordillera and ethnic Chinese, together between 10-15 percent of the present population, did not really participate in the events of 1896-1899. Correspondingly the NCC decided to enlarge the emphasis of the celebrations, shifting the focus away from the Revolution to the more inclusive con-

cept of the struggle for freedom. One of its first actions was to launch a Centennial Logo and Slogan Contest in April 1994 that, with the incentive of cash prizes donated by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, attracted 5,326 entries nationwide (Diamante 1994). While the winning logo was both suitably historic and patriotic, a rising sun shining its rays over a red and blue-striped ribbon twirled to form the figure '100', the whole underscored by the same three stars as portrayed on the national flag, the slogan conveyed a somewhat different message. *Kalayaan Kayamanan ng Bayan*, the entry chosen by the NCC and which became the official slogan of the Centennial reads 'Freedom is the Wealth of a Nation'.⁷

Now 'freedom' is a much broader and all-encompassing concept than the specific historical events of 1896-1899. Filipinos of all religious persuasion and ethnicity have struggled for freedom over the centuries and can more easily identify with such an aspiration than with a revolution that was mainly fought by Christian Tagalogs. As Tan (1998) explains, freedom 'is the only one that unites the entire Philippine archipelago whether you speak in terms of indigenous people, the tribal group, or the Muslims, or the Christians. Only the idea of freedom is the one to excite them.' So, despite the historical specificity of the celebrations, the Centennial actually commemorates a modern image of the nation, one in which the past has had to make way for a present reality.

The flag, therefore, has taken on a disproportionate importance as a symbol of this imagined national community. Along with the national anthem,⁸ it is 'one of the very few instruments that fuse together this archipelago of 7,100 islands' (David 1994). In fact, as the NCC's first project, President Ramos issued Executive Order No 179 declaring the nationwide observance of Flag Days between 28 May to 12 June each year. As of 1994, all public and private buildings are required to display the national flag from sunrise to sunset (Diamante 1995; David 1994). But the flag is also a historical image, being the same as that embroidered by Marcela Mariño de Agoncillo in Hong Kong and waved by Emilio Aguinaldo on that fateful day in June 1898.⁹ As such the authenticity of its design has become a matter of considerable debate and its use or misuse a matter of grave concern.¹⁰

One of the most bitter controversies has raged over the technical specifications of the flag, especially the correct shade of blue to be used in its upper field. Modern usage has usually rendered this in navy blue but exhaustive research carried out at the NHI suggests that royal blue was employed in the original flag.¹¹ Moreover, the historical lapse in the use of the correct blue was shown to have its origins in the US colonial ban on the display of the national flag after 1907. With the relaxation of such prohibitions by Governor-general Francis Harrison on 30 October 1919, the hue of blue then available and popular was navy, the same as that used in the *Stars and Stripes* (MS 1998).¹² The implied neocolonial diminution of national sovereignty was deemed sufficiently serious for the NCC to establish a special Flag Awareness Committee to resolve such technical matters (David 1994).

However, a more serious matter for the Committee to address than the standardization of the color blue was the members' growing concern over the poor condition of many of the flags flown in public, some even from government buildings, and its improper display, especially for commercial purposes. As NCC commissioner and executive director, Luis Morales, notes, the flag 'will be a bestseller item this centennial year, and it cannot be avoided that there would be cases in which it would be wrongly displayed' (Bordadora 1998b). The NCC responded by issuing guidelines for the flag's correct usage: prohibiting the display of tattered or worn-out ones, banning its unfurling 'in places of vice', its use as a costume, to drape a monument, as a covering for tables, curtains and doorways, or as a 'staff whip' (Philippine Flag 1997). Despite such injunctions, the flag was still being used in a manner deemed to seriously detract from the dignity that this national symbol should enjoy. The NHI has complained of several glaring violations of these guidelines by companies featuring the national colors as part of advertising commercials. A noted example was the television campaign of La Tondeña Distillers that used the flag design as part of the costume worn by 'one of the talents' (Bordadora 1998b). Ultimately, the NHI guidelines were given the sanction of law with the passing of Republic Act No 8491 or what has since become known as the Flag Law by President Ramos in February 1998 (Feliciano 1998).

THE CELEBRATION OF HISTORY 1994-1999

HOWEVER, this focus on the flag as a national symbol was insufficient on its own to give substance to the concept of Filipinism as a state ideology.¹³ Under the powers granted to it by Executive Order No 128, the NCC was able to draw on administrative and technical staff from regular government departments from which it was able to assemble a Secretariat Task Force to plan and coordinate its activities.¹⁴ A Centennial Five-Year Plan was formulated to cover a whole spectrum of events between 1994 to 1998, each year dedicated to elaborating one aspect of a graduated program in the construction of a new vision of social and cultural renewal.

The theme for the first year was *Centennial Consciousness*, awakening the Filipino to 'the real meaning of Filipinism' by placing emphasis on the reorientation of values and the identification of national aspirations. In 1995, the NCC concentrated its efforts on creating mass organizations that would continue to promote the transformation and renewal of society beyond 1998. The *Year of the Filipino Hero* followed, celebrating the centennial of the martyrdom of Jose Rizal, the outbreak of the Revolution, and 'the anniversaries of all other organized struggles designed to end tyranny', a clear attempt to deflect attention from the exclusiveness of the events while not detracting from their importance. The motif for 1997 was *Propagating the Filipino Spirit*, a year 'devoted to reinforcing the Filipino's confidence and pride in the nobility of his race' and commemorating the spread of the Revolution to the Visayas and Mindanao. The whole plan culminated in 1998, the *Year of the Philippine Centennial*, commemorating the 12 June proclamation and continuing until the ratification of the Malolos Constitution on 23 January 1999. It was also to be a year of homecoming for the overseas contract workers, Filipino expatriates and migrants (MB 1995; PDI 1996).

Each year's theme was promoted by some major program or event. Thus the Philippine Centennial Movement (PCM) began its major recruitment drive in 1995, the year designated for promoting mass awareness of the celebrations. The goal was to enlist millions of Filipinos as card-carrying members of an organization that would both convey the ideals and principles of Filipinism and also contribute the necessary

labor and financial support for NCC priority projects and activities. As Commissioner Gloria Angara, PCM Chairperson, comments: 'The movement in itself is to inculcate in people the feeling of wanting to help the country, or putting the country before self and that is the true meaning of national transformation' (Diamante 1995). Recruitment was targeted at both individuals and institutions, using existing sociocivic organizations such as corporations, associations, unions and religious groups to fast-track the process. Membership fees ranged from as little as 10 pesos for individuals to 100,000 pesos for corporations (Tan 1998). The PCM proved very successful as measured by numbers and provided the NCC with its primary mechanism for generating grassroots support for the Centennial (MB 1997).

In stark contrast, the three-day international conference in 1996, held at the historic Manila Hotel on the theme of *The Philippine Revolution and Beyond*, was a lavish affair aimed at a very different audience. Opened by President Ramos and addressed by Dato Seri Anwar Ibrahim, former deputy prime minister of Malaysia, the over 90 speakers from 23 countries included a veritable galaxy of local and international luminaries in the field of Philippine history, some even recalled from retirement like Austin Coates and Nicholas Cushner, and many of whose expenses were met by the conference organizers.¹⁵ The papers were to address the significance of the events of 1896 to encourage, in the words of Salvador Laurel, 'an unhampered debate on all controversial issues on the history of the Philippine Revolution and independence' (PJ 1996a). The last of the three days was reserved solely for a discussion of the life and works of Jose Rizal in keeping with the centennial of his martyrdom and the celebration of National Heroes Week between 23-30 August. However, what effect these activities had on the wider Filipino public remains debatable. It is indicative, perhaps, that during the conference, 105 delegates and 125 members of the House of Representatives signed a resolution calling upon the media to give more space to articles and programs that 'inculcate values taught by the nation's heroes'. The resolution was in reaction to the heavy coverage given the every action of Mexican soap opera star, Thalia, on her visit to the Philippines compared to the scant attention given in honor of the nation's heroes (PJ 1996a).

The following year was supposed to see the inauguration of the Centennial Freedom Trail (CFT) commemorating the 1997 theme of *Propagating the Filipino Spirit* and the spread of the Revolution to the other islands of the archipelago. The Trail is a network of historical landmarks retracing the important events that occurred between 1896-1898 in the course of the struggle for independence. The 24 sites were selected on the basis that an event took place there during this period, that it was the first or foremost of its kind, that the occasion was of national or international significance, and that it 'exemplified the Filipino's excellence' (Alcalde 1995). Naturally most of these sites were locations in the Tagalog provinces of Central Luzon where the main events took place.¹⁶ But the CFT was supposed to be a 'flagship project' of the NCC, one where 'every Filipino, including the *balikbayan*, can go on pilgrimage' (de Manila 1995). So four sites in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and five (later nine) in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) were added to the list of landmarks even though neither of the populations of these two regions played any significant part in the Revolution (Alcalde 1995; MC 1995). 'If the Centennial is to unite the nation, the two areas' sustained efforts to protect their freedom from foreign domination are most significant', reported the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (1996b). Many of these sites, however, were either in a sad state of neglect and disrepair (obscured behind hen pens, clotheslines and make-shift stalls) needing extensive refurbishment or, as in the case of the CAR and ARMM, requiring actual construction (MC 1995). Consequently, restoration work on some locations was still not complete by 1998 (MS 1997).

The culmination of all these preparations and planning was the 12 June Centennial Parade commemorating General Aguinaldo's proclamation of Philippine independence. Millions crowded into central Manila to watch as over 40 floats depicting scenes

from the nation's past, some actually enacted by descendants of the original participants, passed before President Ramos and other local and foreign dignitaries at the Quirino Grandstand in

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Rizal Park before slowly winding their way down Roxas Boulevard to the Cultural Center (Lacuerta & Cueto 1998). The parade exhibited an extraordinary mixture of moving street theater and pseudo-historical pageantry all underlain by the vaguely-defined principles of the state ideology of Filipinism.

Thus the opening ceremony, a special 'Ritual of Peace and Thanksgiving' performed by 1,000 actors, was a wonderful evocation of a romanticized pre-Hispanic past that was also careful to include the culture of the present upland tribal populations. The parade was preceded by a fanfare of shell horns (*tambulis*), hundreds more playing on drums and various other ethnic musical instruments, and the chanted prayers of native priestesses or *babaylanes* driving away evil spirits (*Malaya* 1998a).¹⁷ This idealized vision of the past was also the motif of the first float depicting the archipelago's flora and fauna. 'The Philippines was a paradise as it was blessed by God with trees, flowers and mountains teeming with life', intoned the narrator as a stylized forest, birds and mountains passed before the crowd and roller-skaters dressed as butterflies danced around the float to the sounds of disco music (Bordadora 1998a).

Most of the floats, however, were a display of historical vignettes commemorating the principal actors and events in the development of the nation: Gomburza, the Propagandists, the Republic of Biak-na-Bato,¹⁸ scenes from the Revolution and its spread beyond Luzon, and the making of the national flag. One of the final floats bore a three-dimensional reconstruction of General Aguinaldo's house in Kawit, Cavite on which the details surrounding the proclamation of independence at 4:50 pm on 12 June 1898, were reenacted in front of President Ramos, who was then symbolically handed the flag to wave himself. Again, much care was taken to ensure that minority peoples were fully depicted among these historical representations. Some floats were labelled *The Struggle of the Filipino Cordillerans*, *Tribesmen Join the Revolution*, *the Engineering Ingenuity of the Highland Filipinos*, or *Ancient System of Laws/People of High Moral Values*. Still others celebrated the variegated Muslim heritage: Sultan Kudarat of Maguindano, Alimudin I of Sulu and Bantilan, the exploits of Amai Pakpak of the Maranao, and the non-Muslim peoples of the south such as the Lumad (*Malaya* 1998a;

MB 1998). The first float, however, to receive a rising ovation was that portraying the death of Ferdinand Magellan at the hands of the Mactan chieftain Lapu-lapu (Bordadora 1998a).¹⁹ The ceremonies concluded with the release of doves, a three-minute ringing of the 'sounds of freedom' (church bells, ships' sirens and bus and jeepney horns in celebration of the 'noisiest democracy in Asia') and a 30-minute 17-million peso fireworks display that transformed the night sky into designs of indigenous flowers, heart-shaped stars, and the national flag that could be seen as far away as five kilometers (Lacuarta 1998b).²⁰

All this celebration of history — the Five-Year Plan, the international conference, the Freedom Trail, the 12 June Parade and the numerous other centennial projects and programs — cost a great deal of money. It is very difficult to gauge a precise figure for the amount expended on these activities. An examination of the officially recorded budget allocation for the National Centennial Commission between 1994-1998, the period covered by the Five-year Plan, reveals an appropriation of only 589,465,000 pesos.

However, this sum is far too low given the scale and scope of the commemorations organized by that agency. Informed sources estimate a much higher amount, in the range of 1.7 to 2.5 billion pesos (Tan 1998). The media has reported a still higher expenditure on centennial related

Costly Celebrations?

Budget Allocation for the Centennial 1994-1998

Year	Budget (Pesos)
1994	25,000,000
1995	25,000,000
1996	112,024,000 ^a
1997	191,836,000 ^b
1998	235,605,000 ^b
Total	589,465,000

^a includes P15,600,000 allocated to the Centenary Celebration of the Martyrdom of Dr Jose Rizal

^b includes P4,000,000 yearly allocation to the National Committee for the Celebration of the Philippine Independence

Sources: General Appropriations Act, 1 January–31 December 1994-1998, II. Office of the President, A. The President's Offices.

projects of at least 3.5 billion pesos, between US\$80-140 million,²¹ to which needs to be added a further billion peso outlay on infrastructural projects (MT 1998).²² Regardless of the final costs, this outlay is deemed to be completely justified. As expressed by Tan (1998): 'anything that can enhance your acquisition of your own heritage, anything that can put value on your history, anything that can remind you of your sacrifice and your struggle...is worth the millions that is spent'.

EXPANDING THE HISTORICAL REPRESENTATION

MUCH of this multi-billion peso expenditure has been spent on promoting activities that, in one way or another, expand the representation of history so as to include all the peoples of the Philippines within the compass of the national celebrations. This process of historical accommodation, however, has been an ongoing one that the state commenced long before preparations for the Centennial began in earnest. The relative manner in which historical accuracy has been adjusted to suit the requirements of the present sociodemographic realities of the nation can be illustrated by returning to a consideration of the national flag and the symbolism inherent in its design. As already stated, the Philippine flag was designed by General Emilio Aguinaldo during his exile in Hong Kong in 1897 and its composition is highly symbolic: a white triangle containing a sunburst of eight rays at the center, a five-pointed star at each angle of the triangle, a blue upper field and a red lower field. (The relative position of these fields are changed in time of war.)

Interestingly, the symbolism of this new national emblem was thought sufficiently important to be explained at the end of the document proclaiming independence that was read out by Aguinaldo from the balcony of his Kawit home on that day in June 1898. Accordingly, the white triangle was said to represent the distinctive emblem of the famous Katipunan Society, which 'by means of its blood compact suggested to the masses the urgency of the insurrection'. The three stars represented 'the three principal islands of this Archipelago, Luzon, Mindanao and Panay, wherein this revolutionary movement broke out'. The sun represents 'the gigantic strides that have been made by the sons of this land on the road to progress and civilization — its eight rays symbolizing the eight provinces of Manila, Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga,

Nueva Ecija, Bataan, Laguna and Batangas which were first involved in the revolutionary movement. The flag's colors of blue, red and white were chosen to commemorate those of the United States of North America: 'in manifestation of our profound gratitude towards that great nation for the disinterested protection she is extending to us and will continue to extend to us'!²³

Comparing this definition with an explanation provided by a recent pamphlet prepared by the NHI on the national flag reveals a subtle reinterpretation of the symbolism to accommodate an expanded version of the nation. According to the NHI, the triangle with equal sides is representative of the equality among men rather than being associated with the Katipunan that is perceived as too closely a Tagalog organization. The stars now stand for the three major geographical divisions of the country — Luzon, Mindanao and the Visayas; the latter replacing the single Visayan island of Panay. More importantly, though, the national colors are now no longer directly associated with the flag of the USA but only with the characteristics of those hues: the blue field standing for common unity and the noble aspirations of the Filipino people; the red field for the willingness of the Filipino people to shed blood in defense of their country, and the white for purity (Philippine Flag 1997). In other words, the national flag is no longer simply an emblem whose origin is directly attributable to the Tagalogs of Central Luzon or is directly associated with the United States but has become more representative of all Filipinos and reinforces the general concepts inherent in the promotion of the national ideology of Filipinism.²⁴

While this more inclusory explanation of the symbolism of the national flag may have come about through a gradual process of modification over the years, there has been a more concerted attempt recently to expand the conceptualization of national heroes to meet the sociopolitical and particularly gender sensitive requirements of the modern nation state. The pantheon of national heroes has traditionally consisted of a central triad of popularly recognized figures — Jose Rizal, Emilio Aguinaldo and Andres Bonifacio — about which are clustered a larger group of less well known but still nationally recognized luminaries such as Apolinario Mabini, Marcelo H del Pilar, Gregorio del Pilar, Graciano Lopez Jaena, Emilio Jacinto, Pedro Paterno, the broth-

ers Antonio and Juan Luna, and the three priests Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora among others. In many cases, however, these figures have been further subjected to a process of simplification, shedding much of their historical personalities to become symbolic of certain attributes or characteristics. Thus

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Rizal becomes the theoretician, the intellectual one; Aguinaldo is commemorated as the military leader, the general; and Bonifacio, the *Supremo*, is represented as the 'man of the masses' (Tan 1998).

Anything that does not conform to these stereotypical historical personalities are glossed over or simply not mentioned: the trumped-up charges, trial and

execution of Bonifacio at the instigation of Aguinaldo are given as little recognition as the media and public awareness will allow. A formal petition presented to Malacañang by *Kamalaysayan* to have Bonifacio declared the first Philippine president and to accord him a state burial was denied by the Ramos administration in July 1994. After a year of deliberation, the NHI unanimously decided that 'the special and distinct national honor sought for him in this petition cannot be wholly and fully granted by the state without doing injury to historical truths and realities and doing injustice to national interests and unity' (Gonzalez 1996). This sudden concern with 'historical truths' stands in marked contrast to the picture presented by Glenn May, in his recent controversial book on Bonifacio, that shows how much of that national hero's life and works have been subjected to an intentional or inadvertent process of posthumous 'myth-making' to make his life and works accord with nationalist sentiments that he came from a lower class background and that the Revolution was not simply an oligarchic-led movement. According to this tradition, Bonifacio is often presented as the 'Great Plebeian' (Cristobal 1998) or even, at its most extreme, as 'a self-taught peasant' (PS 1996). May argues that of the five principal biographers of Bonifacio, three — Manuel Artigas, Epifanio de los Santos and Jose Santos — actually fabricated primary sources about his life

and writings, while the other two — Teodoro Agoncillo and Reynaldo Ileto — accepted material of dubious authenticity (May 1997).²⁵

National interests and unity have also been greatly served by expanding the traditional assemblage of heroes to include representatives from a much broader definition of the nation. Thus the Centennial celebrations have variously highlighted the heroic deeds and activities of Moros, tribal minorities, Chinese, Spanish mestizos, the people, the young, the aged, even the handicapped and particularly women. Such was clearly the aim guiding the policy and programs of the NCC. As its chairman, Salvador Laurel (1995), writes: 'The Philippine Revolution is the synergistic outcome of the combined contributions of exceptional men and women who defied the anxiety and peril of the times. There are no big heroes or small heroes. Every Filipino who sought to recreate a world steeped in oppression into a just and humane society IS A HERO. His or her role in the fight for freedom will forever be remembered.' A special committee was even established by President Ramos on 29 October 1993 (Executive Order No 75) to study the criteria required for heroism and for consideration as a national hero.²⁶

Consequently, the busts of Moro sultans and tribal chiefs were among the lesser known figures, some not even mentioned in history school texts, included in the 20 patriots selected to be represented at the Gallery of Heroes at the Teodoro Valencia Circle in Rizal Park unveiled on 11 June 1998 (Lacuarta 1998a). Sultan Kudarat of Maguindanao and the great Tausug warrior of Jolo, Datu Ache, were joined by the less well known but ethnically representative Muslim figures of Datu Taupan of Balanguigui, a Samal chief, and Amai Pakpak who died in the defense of Kota Marahui in Lanao. Here, too, are the busts of Mateo Carino, an Ibaloi chieftain from Benguet who headed the Igorot army during the Revolution and of Aman Dagat, the Ivatan leader who opposed the Spaniards at the rather obscure battle of Malacdang in 1791 (Luna 1998).

While there is no Chinese figure among the Gallery of Heroes, the important contribution of certain individuals has received attention in the media. The controversial activities of Aguinaldo's trusted gen-

eral, the pure-blooded Chinese, Jose Ignacio Paua, has been both denigrated and defended, including the cutting of his queue in celebration of the country's independence, 'thus fully transforming himself from being a *Tsino* to a full Filipino' and prompting the eminent historian, Teodoro Agoncillo, to describe him somewhat ambiguously as 'more Filipino than many Filipinos' (Ang See 1998).²⁷ Prominence, in what can only be described as a very astute and timely political move considering the spate in recent ethnically-motivated kidnappings, has also been accorded to the role of Chinese businessmen in the Revolution. Among those whose activities have been extolled, especially as financiers, are Telesforo Chuidian, a mason and member of the *Liga Filipina*, and Mariano Limjap, who donated money for the Propaganda Movement in Europe, both of whom were imprisoned in Fort Santiago for alleged involvement in the events of August 1896, and Roman Ongpin, whose store became a meeting place for students and intellectuals.²⁸ A similar process of identifying suitably heroic figures from among target ethnic groups has transformed Colonel Manuel Sityar, a Spanish mestizo who first served in the *guardia civil* (the elite Spanish colonial police force) but who later defected to the revolutionaries and was chosen by General Antonio Luna as director of the Military Academy of Malolos, into a minor national figure. His memoirs, *Rebolusyong Filipino — Memorias Intimas*, translated from the Spanish, has earned him belated public recognition as 'the hero tasked to oversee the training of more heroes' (Contreras 1998).²⁹

The exploits of the 'common man' have also received their share of attention: the unsung heroes of the Revolution, including 'the nameless, the hungry and dispossessed, the dreamer, the betrayed, the fighter' and 'the names and histories of the lesser known Filipinos who each laid a brick onto the monument of freedom' (Florendo-Imao 1996; Laurel 1995). President Ramos acknowledged their contribution in his speech at the Centennial Parade at which he praised the hero in every Filipino, the present generation standing on the shoulders of the martyrs of the past (Ramos 1998). Satur Ocampo, former spokesman and peace negotiator of the National Democratic Front, also understandably paid tribute to the heroism of the Filipino masses, 'they whose names are not recorded in history' but without whom 'there would be no revolution'

(Florendo-Imao 1996). One newspaper article even went so far as to boast that the Philippines had 'more heroes per capita than anywhere else in Asia' during the revolutionary period (Benigno 1996). The people were provided with a hero of their own in the form of Enrique de Mallaca. Mallaca, probably a native of Palawan and bought by Magellan in the slave market of Malacca, is credited with completing the first recorded navigation of the globe in a single direction but subsequently died from the wounds received protecting the historic navigator at Mactan. He has recently received international recognition as *Panglima Awang* or Henry the Black (literally sooty) and was hailed as a Malay hero by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in Santiago, Chile in April 1993 (Manlavi 1998). More substantially, 10 million pesos have also been allocated for the NHI's extensive local history project of seminar series, workshops and photographic exhibits around the country at *barangay* level that will culminate in a national conference to be held in Manila in November 1998 (Tan 1998).

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Nor have the young (comprising more than 50 percent of the nation's population), the aged or the handicapped been overlooked either. Attention has been drawn to the relatively young ages of the national heroes at the time they rose to historical prominence: Rizal being only 26 when he wrote *Noli Me Tangere*, Bonifacio being 29 at the launching of the Revolution, Aguinaldo the same age when he was elected president of the first republic in Asia (Gonzalez 1997). The old, too, have been celebrated, recognition being accorded to centenarians such as Jose Dualan, who is 'as young as Philippine independence', and Jose de los Santos, the 'Father of Philippine Orthopedics' (Doyo 1998). Much has also been made of Apolinario Mabini's physical disability from polio; the foreign minister and chief architect of the Malolos Constitution being frequently referred to as the 'Sublime Paralytic' (Lacuarta 1998a; MB 1998b).

While Moros, tribal minorities, Chinese, Spanish mestizos, the 'common man', the young, the aged and the handicapped have all found

representation and acknowledgement in this expanded pantheon of national heroes, the contributions of women have also received substantial recognition during the Centennial celebrations. No women are represented in the Gallery of Heroes but two, Melchora Aquino and Marcela Agoncillo. Both are among 10 chosen to be celebrated in the Heroes Commemorative Medal Collection minted by the *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas* (Malaya 1998b). These heroines encompass the full spectrum of female qualities from the Madonna-like figure of Rizal's mother, Doña Teodora Alonso Realonda, who gives up her son to the nation (Burgos 1996), to the rather traditional role portrayal of Doña Marcela Agoncillo's (of flag-sewing fame) self-sacrifice in selling the family jewels to help support her family in exile (del Rosario E 1998), to the much more earthy scenario presented by Lola Loreto filing the first recorded case of sexual harassment in Philippine history against a parish priest who had made lewd advances towards her and whom she unceremoniously pushed down the stairs of her father's house in 1894 (Garrucho 1998). Women of all means and social class have also been commemorated for their business acumen and their financial contribution to the Revolution whether it is the rice, carabaos and other necessities provided by Melchora Aquino or Tandang Sora to Bonifacio and his men in August 1896, or the welcome extended to the *Indios Bravos* or young *ilustrados* in the drawing room of Doña Juliana Pardo de Tavera in Paris (Silvestre 1998).³⁰

The importance of women in nation-building was also the subject of President Ramos' speech at ceremonies held in the Folk Arts Theater to pay tribute to the life of the newly declared Centennial Woman, *Kapampangan* Emilia Sandico Dizon, born over a hundred years ago on 8 February 1898. He admitted to the audience that 'the gigantic responsibilities of women, such as their contributions to the building of nations and institutions, are usually hidden by our parochial [patriarchal] view of women being just confined to housework, child care and reproduction', going on to confirm the truth in the old saying that 'women hold up half of the sky' (Nazareno 1998). A somewhat less patronizing view of women's historic role in the last 100 years of nation-building was proffered in the NCC-Women Sector's Report presented by Helena Benitez, chair of the Philippine Women's University. While

acknowledging the contribution of women in the creation of Filipinism, the report details a comprehensive agenda to be followed including ongoing research on women's role in Philippine history, archival and library research on Filipino women, monthly round-table discussions on women's issues and concerns, a national symposium entitled 'history makes women, women make herstory', and an international conference on the role of women in Philippine nation-building (Atencio et al 1997).

CONCLUSION

HISTORICAL anniversaries are not necessarily simply national celebrations; rather they can serve more to polarize a population than to unify it by requiring people to make an act of cultural identification. The Philippine Centennial, therefore, is much more than a commemoration of the 1896-1898 Revolution; it has become the centerpiece of an attempt to create a state-sponsored political ideology, Filipinism, that seeks to unite the people through reference to a shared history whether or not that past has any historical validity. In the process, historical veracity has been modified to accommodate the needs of the modern state: the definition of key concepts such as *kalayaan* have been broadened to suit the geographical realities of the present, the symbolism of national icons like the flag have been reinterpreted, and the pantheon of national heroes has been enlarged to include representatives of all the various ethnic and social groups who together compose modern Filipino society.

Far from being out of date or irrelevant, history, according to Serafin Quiason, chairman of the NHI, has become 'the usable past' and, as such, an essential factor in nation-building. The centenary celebrations have become nothing less than a 'solemn duty of recognition and perpetuation' in which the 'eternal legacy of a great past' is searched for meaning and inspiration about the 'spirit of a race' (Quiason 1996). And here the Centennial enters what Randy David (1996), professor of sociology and popular talk show host, calls the 'politics of memory' in which the official commemoration becomes a 'political project aimed at marshalling loyalty to a political community, namely, the Philippine state'. The need for such a program is pressing, he argues, as the mod-

ern state has singularly failed to inspire loyalty, conserve the national patrimony or deepen the cultural meanings of its people's lives, leading many Filipinos to deny their citizenship either by emigration or through joining the insurgency (David 1996).

The Centennial, then, represents a rare opportunity for the state to utilize a frustrated but latent sense of nationalism among its people to channel their energies into the construction of a common cultural tradition. But, since the origins of non-western nationalism are not usually based on loyalty to the state but rather on a tradition of civil

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society in revolt against the established order, it is frequently both anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist by nature (Norbu 1993). Philippine nationalism has been described in just such a manner, as parochial, anti-foreign, inward-looking, defensive, simplistic and naive, in which purity is the preserve of the indigenous community and vice attributed to external influences (Magno 1996). Accordingly, the attempt to harness the centenary cel-

ebrations to the needs of nation-building has resulted in the wholesale politicization of the historical record and the surfacing of nascent racism in the guise of a Malay renaissance.

In the first place, the history of the peoples of the archipelago has been completely recast as a 'national history' in which 'the heavy yoke of [Spanish] colonialism and slavery' is dated from Magellan's ill-fated visit in 1521 (del Rosario H 1998) and the Revolution of 1896-1898 is depicted as 'the culmination of four centuries of struggle for nationhood' (PJ 1996b). Such a reformulation has not passed unnoticed: Arnold Azurin (1995) accuses the NCC of 'peddling mythology, not historical accuracy' and attacks that most sacred of all historical fallacies, the 12 June proclamation of the first republic in Asia, arguing that General Aguinaldo was a military dictator at the time and that 'there was no intent or any opportunity to form a republican government, neither in form nor in substance'. A similar point is made by Renato Constantino (1996) when he cites Mabini as having considered the act

a personal one by Aguinaldo without the participation of the people and one which was subsequently set aside 11 days later by the establishment of the Revolutionary Government on 23 June. Constantino, Azurin and others also variously question the choice of 1898 as the focus of the centenary commemorations, arguing that it reduces the subsequent Philippine-American War of 1899 'into a non-event' and gives too much prominence to the 'bloody treacheries' and 'sell-outs' associated with the events of 1897-1898 (Constantino 1996; Azurin 1995). Despite the consensus reached by historians during a 1994 Senate Committee hearing that 1896 would be a more appropriate focus for the centenary as it marked Asia's first revolutionary struggle against western colonialism, such considerations were passed over in favor of a date deemed to commemorate the birth of nationhood.

While the resultant nationalism, according to Quiason (1996), has neither 'room for racial hatred nor does it condone the subjugation of ethnic groups by another', it does arise out of 'grievances against exploitation by aliens'. The ensuing sense of cultural pride finds expression in both a 'nativist revivalism' and a distrust bordering on fear of external influences. A deeper respect and awareness of autochthonous traditions, of the national language and of indigenous epistemological concepts begin to merge imperceptibly with the notion of a Malay renewal centered on the cult of Jose Rizal. Rizal becomes, 'the first Filipino', 'the extraordinary *indio*', 'the first true-blue Malay Renaissance man' (de Quiros 1998) and his manifold exploits are celebrated in monument, book, postage stamp, coin, car-plate, music and film (Aguila 1996). His figure even takes on pan-Malay and even pan-regional dimensions in the form of an international conference on his life and that of the Asian Renaissance held at Kuala Lumpur in October 1995 where he was declared 'an adopted hero of the ASEAN' (*Sun* 1996). Nevertheless, the ability to reclaim this collective memory as a people is considered to be continually undermined and under threat from 'the materialism of our times and the grip of western influence' (Laurel 1995).

The centennial of the Revolution is undoubtedly a historical event of national importance but its commemoration on such lavish proportions is not quite so self-evident. Compare, for instance, the Republic

of India's rather muted approach to the recent 50th anniversary of its independence from Great Britain. Perhaps President Ramos' decision to launch a five year, multi-billion peso centenary project may also have its origin in his perceived need to strengthen the fabric of national cohesion in the wake of the promulgation of the 1991 Local Government Code (RA 7160) that, for the first time in the history of the state in the Philippines, devolved substantial powers to Local Government Units (LGUs) in accordance with Article X of the 1987 Constitution. The Code transferred responsibility for the provision of many basic services and facilities in agriculture, health, social services, maintenance of public works and highways and environmental protection to LGUs as well as granting them certain powers of taxation (Tapales 1993; Pimentel 1993). Seen by President Aquino as the 'linchpin' of her political agenda to strengthen democratic institutions in the nation, it may also seriously diminish the state's ability to enforce national programs.

Whatever President Ramos' motives in promoting the scale and expenditure of the present festivities, history still appears to be far from the thoughts of most contemporary Filipinos. People are more concerned with the pressing problems of daily survival and the Asian meltdown that has seen their currency lose over 40 percent of its value in the last year than with the significance or otherwise of the past. As the nation approached the Centennial of its independence, public awareness of the occasion still remained surprisingly low despite the best efforts of the NCC and the implementation of its Five-Year Plan. An opinion poll conducted by the Social Weather Stations in June 1997 found that only 47 percent of respondents nationwide knew anything about the forthcoming celebrations and even 30 percent of those who had some prior knowledge knew nothing about its significance. Awareness of the Centennial was lowest among rural people, those in the lowest socioeconomic brackets, and those in the over 45 age groups (Rodil 1997). While the crowds certainly seemed to enjoy the fireworks that brought the 12 June celebrations to a close, the future of Filipinism as a state-sponsored ideology may prove to be as ephemeral as the pyrotechnic display in the night sky.

In the end, the more enduring significance of the Centennial may lie in the unique opportunity it has provided the state to define the na-

tional present by offering a revisioned image of the past: history at the service of the nation state. National time no longer commences with the Spanish but has been expanded to include tribal peoples, Moros and the Chinese who now equally have a place allotted to them in a newly constructed national identity as Filipinos. While this undertaking is laudable, the incorporation of these groups has largely taken place under the aegis of a mainly Manila-based ruling class that still fundamentally shares a Christian and Tagalog-centric image of the nation and are in a position to disperse their patronage back over the past. How long the majority of all Filipinos, regardless of ethnic or religious origin, are content to remain subaltern voices in their own histories and be inserted into agendas not of their own fashioning is a matter of considerable political moment. Perhaps the real lesson to be drawn from the 1998 Philippine Centennial is that history is not just simply a 'usable past' but a reusable one at the service of any who wish to employ it for their own interests.

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NOTES

1. Ambeth Ocampo (1993) argues that there have actually been a further three declarations of Philippine independence in addition to the ones already mentioned: by Andres Bonifacio in the Pamitinan Caves on 12 April 1895, the 'Cry of Pugad Lawin' on 23 August 1896, and in the decrees of the Revolutionary Committee signed by Emilio Aguinaldo on 31 October 1896. There is also considerable dispute over whether Bonifacio and his followers uttered their famous 'cry' at Pugad Lawin or Balintawak, the former only recently 'officially' replacing the latter (Ocampo 1993).

2. The principal exponents of these two views, the European liberal and the indigenous millenarian, are, respectively, Teodoro Agoncillo (1956) and Rey Ileto (1979).

3. The full title of the Katipunan is the *Kataastaasan, Kagalanggalang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* or the Highest and Most Honorable Society of the Sons of the Country.

4. The means of implementing this metamorphosis is laid out in the *Medium-Term Philippine Development Program* (MTPDP) that is sup-

posed to provide the economic blueprint required to convert the Philippines to NIC status by the turn of the century. The MTPDP provides an outline of measures sanctioned by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for structural adjustment, economic liberalization and other policies designed to fully integrate the Philippine economy with the world market (MTPDP 1993).

5. Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad sought to revitalize Malaysia by drawing on traditions from the golden era of the Malacca Sultanate, Lee Kuan Yew promoted programs inculcating shared Asian values in Singapore, Marshal Sarit (1958-1963) made the monarchy, nation and Buddhism the symbol of national loyalty in Thailand, and General Park Chung Hee (1961-1979) laid claim to a Confucian legacy dating back to the Yi dynasty in South Korea.

6. *Pancasila* comprises the vaguely defined principles of belief in god, social justice, international humanity, representation and consultation.

7. The winning logo was designed by Edgardo Santiago, a professional artist, and the slogan by Joachim Medroso.

8. The Philippine National Anthem is also a product of the Revolution and the ensuing Philippine-American War. The music for the *Pambansang Awit ng Pilipinas*, or Philippine National Anthem, was composed by Julian Felipe, a pianist and composer, at the instigation of General Aguinaldo and first played before him on 11 June 1898. The lyrics were originally a poem written by a 23-year old soldier, Jose Palma, younger brother of writer and academician Rafael Palma, and subsequently translated into Tagalog (Giagonia 1998).

9. Doña Marcela was reputedly helped by her daughter Lorenza and Doña Delfina Herbosa de Natividad, the niece of Rizal. However this attribution is also a matter of some dispute with Julio Nakpil ascribing the design to Feliciano Jocson in his account of the Philippine Revolution, adding that 'anyone who says otherwise is a liar and a usurper' (Ocampo 1993). The flag was first displayed at the battle of Alapan on 28 May 1898.

10. The design of the flag was modified by President Quezon in 1936 principally involving the removal of the face from the image of the sun.

11. The hue of blue controversy is not a new one. An attempt had already been made under President Marcos to change the color in the upper field from navy to light blue on advice from the NHI that the Philippine flag was closely modelled on the Cuban one. The light blue flags were subsequently withdrawn (Ocampo 1993).

12. The correct hue of blue for the Philippine flag is Cable No 80173 according to the standard color reference of America, 10th edition

1981, the Color Associate of the United States (Philippine Flag 1997). During this period of prohibition on the display of the Philippine flag, the portrait of Jose Rizal, the commemoration of whose death on 30 December 1896 was promoted by the US colonial authorities, became an alternative icon of national aspirations (Ocampo 1998c).

13. The relative success of this focus on the national flag as a unifying symbol can be measured by some of the activities suggested to the Centennial Flag Committee. *Operation Watawat*, for instance, proposed creating one of the biggest flags ever made by enlisting women from all over the nation to sew 'bits and pieces of the flag' each inscribed with the contributor's name. Once assembled this flag would then be raised to the accompaniment of the national anthem sung by a huge choral group composed of schoolchildren. However, the proponent did note that it might require two ships in Manila Bay to hoist the giant banner and that it may prove more practical to make ones on a provincial basis (Soliven 1996).

14. In reality, only the Department of National Defense and the Department of Social Welfare and Development responded favorably to the order and provided personnel (Diamante 1994).

15. Austin Coates, son of the composer Eric Coates and a former British colonial administrator and diplomat, is known for his biography of Rizal, the first to be published in Europe since 1907 (1968). Nicholas Cushner, a former Jesuit, is famed for his widely read one-volume history of the Spanish Philippines (1971).

16. The principal sites include: Elcano Street and Recto Avenue in Manila where the Katipunan was founded; Pugad Lawin where the first open declaration of independence was made; Pinaglabanan where the first battle of the Revolution was fought; Binakayan where the first victory was won; Calamba, Dapitan, Fort Santiago and the Luneta associated with the birth, exile, incarceration and execution of Jose Rizal; the location of the Tejeros Convention in Cavite; San Miguel de Mayumo where the Pact of Biak-na-Bato was signed; Alapan where the Filipino flag was first raised in victory; Kawit where independence was proclaimed; Barasoain Church where the Malolos Convention was held; and Santa Barbara in Iloilo where the flag was first raised in victory outside of Luzon.

17. Early accounts of the islands suggest that the various peoples of Luzon and the Visayas were mainly animist, venerating the spirits of nature and those of their ancestors while placating a host of malevolent ones. There were reportedly no temples or gathering places set apart for worship though certain topographical features or groves were held to be the preserve of particular spirits. More important ceremonies were performed by a numerous class of professional celebrants, mainly women,

known as *catalonans* (Tagalog) or *babaylanes* (Visayan) in private homes or at feasts in specially prepared bowers erected for that purpose close to the host's house.

18. Gomburza refers to the three Filipino priests Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora executed by the Spaniards on 17 February 1872 for supposed complicity in the abortive Cavite Mutiny of the preceding month. The Propagandists were a group of expatriate Filipinos living in Spain during the 1880s and 1890s who established the first successful publication, *La Solidaridad*, that called for reform of the colonial system and rallied against the abuses of the friars. The short-lived Republic of Biak-na-Bato was the first constitutional republican government established in the Philippines in November 1897.

19. Centennial parades were held in many of the principal regional urban centers throughout the nation, including: Cagayan de Oro City, Zamboanga City, Mati, Cotabato City and Davao City in Mindanao; Baguio City, Lingayen, Cabanatuan City, Tuguegarao, Palanan and Olongapo in Northern Luzon; Cebu, Ormoc, Tacloban, Roxas City, Kalibo and Bacolod in the Visayas (Riñen et al 1998).

20. Portions of the parade were even carried live on CBS, NBC and CNN to the West Coast of the United States.

21. The amount varies according to whether the pre-Asian currency crisis exchange rate of approximately 25 pesos or the present one of 44 pesos to the US dollar is applied. The amount, ironically, appears to decrease in dollar terms with the present exchange rate.

22. These figures also include private sector contributions.

23. A somewhat different interpretation of the symbolic meaning of the flag is provided by Mariano Ponce in an explanation sent to a friend: 'The blue, color of the sky, means our hope in a future prosperity, through progress; the red means the blood with which we bought our independence; the white represents peace which we wish for ours and foreign countries. The sun represents the progress, and sometimes means that the Philippine nation belong to [the] Oriental family, like Japan, Korea etc., who bear also one sun in their flags. The three stars are the great group of islands composing the Archipelago, the Luzon group, the Visayas group, and the Mindanao group' (Ocampo 1998b).

24. There is evidence that General Aguinaldo came to share a more inclusive concept of the nation. Ambeth Ocampo reports a speech by the President of the First Philippine Republic in which he describes the flag as stirring up Filipinos and 'spreading the light over their world piercing the clouds that enshrouded it; it is now the light that brightens every spot in the Philippine islands, and under its influence the Itas, Igorots, Manguians and Moros, all of whom I believe were made in the image of God, and whom I recognize as our brethren, now come down from

the mountains to join with us' (Ocampo 1998b). There are also those who currently favor modifications to the present flag design through the addition of a ninth ray to the sun or a crescent moon and *budong* cane to represent non-Christian Filipinos (Ocampo 1998b).

25. May, the man and his controversial ideas, has been the subject of intense criticism within the Philippines where he has been accused of 're-inventing' Bonifacio in much the same way as the nationalist school of Filipino historians that he criticizes in his book (Guerreo & Villegas 1997).

26. The NHI, asked to prepare a position paper on this matter, responded by reiterating the criteria selected by the late nationalist historian, Teodoro Agoncillo, at an earlier 1965 Commission of a similar nature: '1) The extent of a person's sacrifice for the welfare of the country. 2) Motive and methods employed in the attainment of the ideal (welfare of the country). In the attainment of the ideal, did the person concerned sacrifice purely and exclusively for the welfare of the country or was there any selfish or ulterior motive in making such sacrifices? Were the methods employed in the attainment of the ideal morally valid? 3) Moral character of the person concerned. Did he do anything immoral to attain his personal character? If there was immorality, how far did it affect his work to society or the ideal? 4) The influence of the person concerned on his age and or the succeeding age' (Ocampo 1998a).

27. General Paua was given the invidious task of arresting Andres Bonifacio and bringing him to trial though there is no evidence of his presence at the Supremo's execution at Mt Buntis.

28. Mention has also been made of a Chinese baker from Guagua who provided bread for the troops of General Maximino Hizon (Silvestre 1998).

29. Unfortunately, the location of Sityar's grave, along with those of scores of former Katipuneros buried in the specially reserved *Beteranong Maliit* section of Manila's North Cemetery, has long since vanished.

30. Doña Juliana and her sister Doña Tula were the heirs of Damaso Gorricho who owned most of the property on both sides of Escolta Street, the main shopping thoroughfare at the time.

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