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## **The Religious Character of the Revolution in Cavite, 1896-1897\***

JOHN N. SCHUMACHER

Ever since the Spanish clergy denounced the Revolution of 1896 as an impious and Masonic conspiracy to destroy the Catholicism brought by Mother Spain to the Filipino people and preserved only by the continuation of Spanish sovereignty, Revolutionary historiography - Spanish, American, and Filipino - has to a greater or less degree generally accepted an anticlerical or antireligious view of the Revolution, some enthusiastically, some apologetically. This article aims to show that not only is this image simplistic but that, in Cavite at least, one of the major factors in stirring up and especially in maintaining enthusiasm for the Revolution in 1896-97 was the religious character the Caviteños gave it. This was true not only in the minds of ordinary people, but even in those of most of the principal Cavite leaders. Even antifriar feeling entered into the motivation of only a minority, and chiefly only to the extent that the Filipino clergy, who were the mainstays of the Revolutionary cause, were unwilling to see the friars return to the parishes of which they had deprived the Cavite clergy during the past 50 years.

The anticlerical or antireligious character attributed by historians to the Revolution of 1896 would seem to be due principally to three causes, if we leave aside the possible biases of the historians themselves. First of all, there has been a tendency to read back into the period 1896-97 the anticlerical and anti-Catholic strains

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The following abbreviations are used in the footnotes:

AAM	Archives of the Archdiocese of Manila
APSR	Archivo de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario (the Dominican archives)
AUST	Archives of the University of Santo Tomas
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano (Rome)
PNA	Philippine National Archives
PRR	Philippine Revolutionary Records

which did exist among many of the *ilustrados* who came to control the Revolution after 1898 by their influence on, or manipulation of, Aguinaldo. Secondly, there has been a failure to recognize that the Katipunan (and even Masonry) in Cavite differed in character from the Katipunan in Manila, under Bonifacio's leadership.<sup>1</sup> Bonifacio, his fertile mind steeped in the reading of Rizal's writings, of *La Solidaridad* and other publications of the Propaganda Movement, and of anticlerical European literature, was fundamentally secular in his thinking, closely akin in this respect to the European-educated *ilustrados*.<sup>2</sup> The provincial gentry, in Cavite at least, were for the most part relatively unaffected by these secular ideals, and were bound by close relationships of friendship and even of blood with the Filipino clergy among them. Thirdly, there has been a failure to distinguish between the *Katipunan* properly so-called and the much wider *Revolution*. Though the Katipunan did indeed take the first step into open revolt against Spain, nationalist sentiment, rooted in the thinking of Fathers Burgos and Gomez and nurtured to maturity by the Propaganda Movement, was far more widespread than the actual organization of the Katipunan. Once the flame of revolt had been ignited by Bonifacio, the nationalist sentiments of countless others, only loosely connected with, or even completely

1. For the Katipunan in general, the most complete account is Teodoro A. Agoncillo's *The Revolt of the Masses: the Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1956). As the subtitle makes clear, however, Agoncillo concerns himself chiefly with Bonifacio and must therefore be supplemented for Cavite. Moreover, as will become clear, I differ considerably with some of Agoncillo's interpretations, particularly his identification of the Katipunan and the Revolution, and his effort to portray the Revolution as purely proletarian in character; it certainly was not so in Cavite. For the Katipunan and the Revolution in Cavite, one must supplement Agoncillo by Aguinaldo's own memoirs, *Mga Gunita ng Himagsikan* (Kawit, Cavite: C. A. Suntay, 1964); Carlos Quirino, *The Young Aguinaldo* (Manila: Regal Printing, 1969); and especially Pedro S. de Achutegui, S.J., and Miguel A. Bernad, S.J., *Aguinaldo and the Revolution of 1896: A Documentary Survey* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila, 1972).

2. I have tried to indicate this in my book *The Propaganda Movement* (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1973), pp. 207-8, 271-72; and more in detail in my as yet unpublished paper, "The Propagandists' Reconstruction of the Filipino Past," presented to the colloquium on "Southeast Asian Perceptions of the Past," held in February 1976 at the Australian National University. I remain unconvinced by Reynaldo C. Ileto's inclusion of Bonifacio in the religious tradition centering on the *Pasyon* in his 1975 Cornell University Ph.D. dissertation, "Pasión and the Interpretation of Change in Tagalog Society (1840-1912)," especially pp. 97-138. Ileto's ground-breaking examination of the religious character pervading the Tagalog revolutionary tradition does, however, help to explain the response that Bonifacio met among the Tagalog masses, and provides a valuable complement to the evidence advanced in this article as to the religious character of the Revolution in Cavite.

ignorant of the Katipunan, would be aroused to rally around the standard of the Revolution and the longed-for *kalayaan*.<sup>3</sup>

Cavite is of particular interest, of course, because it was in this province that the Revolution of 1896 achieved its fullest success, for a time driving the Spaniards completely out of the province and establishing a Revolutionary government. Here too, apart from Manila, the Katipunan had achieved its greatest degree of organization before the outbreak of revolt, with two provincial councils — the Magdiwang, centered in San Francisco de Malabon (modern General Trias) and the Magdalo, centered in Kawit. Though Bonifacio had founded the Katipunan in 1892, it seems to have remained a relatively small secret society confined to Manila until some time in 1895. Thereafter it spread through the Tagalog provinces, where in contrast to the predominantly lower middle-class or plebeian character it had in Manila, it was able to gain the adherence of men of relative means and prominence in many localities.<sup>4</sup> The discovery of the Katipunan in August 1896 precipitated open revolt, but Bonifacio proved to be far less successful as a military leader than as a charismatic revolutionary. Suffering one defeat after another, he was soon forced to retire to the mountains of Montalban, while the revolutionaries of Cavite succeeded in driving the Spaniards out of most of the province, and Emilio Aguinaldo in particular rose to prominence as a successful military leader. Though other small revolutionary bands remained active in various parts of the Tagalog provinces, Cavite soon became the real stronghold of the Revolution.

The Katipunan in Cavite differed considerably from that in Manila. So did the Revolution. The leaders of the Katipunan outside Manila were often landowners, provincial leaders, municipal captains of their towns, or otherwise locally prominent people. Such was Mariano Alvarez, municipal captain of Noveleta and head

3. Iletto ("Pasi6n," pp. 109 ff. and elsewhere) has a perceptive discussion of the difference between *kalayaan* as understood by the Tagalog-speaking masses and the *independencia* sought by the Spanish-speaking *ilustrados*.

4. Because of the failure to distinguish between the Katipunan and the Revolution, the most exaggerated figures have been given for membership in the former. See Agoncillo's *Revolt* (p. 122) for the moderate figure of 30,000 given by Pio Valenzuela (though at another time Valenzuela gave a different figure). It is clear from the context of Valenzuela's words (should his reliability be accepted), however, that very many of these members had only the loosest connection with the Katipunan and were potential revolutionaries and sympathizers rather than initiated members. See also the citation from Baldomero Aguinaldo in footnote 9 below.

of the Magdiwang council of the Katipunan in Cavite. Such too were Emilio Aguinaldo, municipal captain of Kawit, and his cousin Baldomero Aguinaldo, head of the Magdalo council. Alvarez, uncle of Bonifacio's wife, seems to have been one of the first in Cavite to be initiated into the Katipunan. It was his son, Santiago Alvarez, who invited Emilio Aguinaldo to join the society, and who accompanied him to his initiation in March 1895 in Manila. Aguinaldo soon became an ardent propagator of the Katipunan and made use of his position as municipal captain to attract recruits. From Aguinaldo's own account, however, one sees that the Katipunan in Cavite had evolved considerably from the small secret society that Bonifacio had begun with. Instead of the solemn ceremonial initiations of Bonifacio, large numbers of men were enrolled in Cavite by the simple expedient of signing their names in blood, even in the municipal tribunal itself.<sup>5</sup> By the same token, as will be seen below in detail, the Katipunan in Cavite never had the fundamentally anticlerical and antireligious color that Bonifacio gave to his organization. This difference was to prove important for the future.

The same may apparently be said of Masonry in Cavite. Aguinaldo had become a Mason shortly before joining the Katipunan, as had other Cavite leaders.<sup>6</sup> Masonry itself does not seem to have directly promoted revolution against Spain, but rather served to inculcate the liberal reformist and antifriar ideas which were to provide a fertile breeding ground for the further step of revolutionary activity. Aguinaldo joined the lodge "Pilar" of Imus, which had been founded by the coadjutor of that town, Father Severo Buenaventura. Apparently Juan Castañeda had succeeded Buenaventura as head by the time Aguinaldo was initiated.<sup>7</sup> It is not known precisely what relations Buenaventura may have had with Aguinaldo, but in July 1895 he managed to leave the seminary where he had been confined by the archbishop, and with the help of Faustino Villarruel, one of the leaders of the Grand Regional

5. Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita*, pp. 45-46, 51; Quirino, *Young Aguinaldo*, pp. 40-46. Quirino lists a number of other *cacique* leaders of the Katipunan in the provinces outside Manila.

6. Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita*, pp. 29-32.

7. Declaration of Juan Castañeda, in W. E. Retana, ed. *Archivo del Bibliófilo Filipino* (Madrid: Imprenta de la viuda de M. Minuesa de los Rios, 1895-1905), vol. 3 pp. 261-68; Teodoro M. Kalaw, *Philippine Masonry*, trans. Frederic H. Stevens and Antonio Amechazurra (Manila: McCullough Printing Co., 1956), p. 102; Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita*, p. 29.

Council of Masonry in the Philippines, he was able to escape to Hong Kong, where he joined Castañeda and other refugees in the house of Ildefonso Laurel. From here Buenaventura and Castañeda joined the group headed by Jose A. Ramos in Japan, where they were seeking Japanese help for a future revolution.<sup>8</sup>

Though Buenaventura does not seem to have returned to the Philippines to take part in the Revolution of 1896, it seems clear that he played an active role in the earlier stages of preparation in Cavite. Whether or not there were other priests active in Masonry, or whether there were any who joined the Katipunan once the Revolution broke out, most of the Cavite Filipino clergy certainly sympathized with the Revolution and several were to participate actively in the councils of the Revolution and even hold office in the Revolutionary government. In Cavite, though the Revolution was initiated by Katipuneros, it almost immediately became something much wider than the Katipunan, attracting widespread support from many who were not at all connected with the revolutionary organization.<sup>9</sup> Bonifacio's failure to recognize this fact would ultimately lead to his downfall. For when he came to Cavite and tried to exert his authority as *Supremo* of the Katipunan, he was to find that the Caviteños were loyal not to the Katipunan as such, but to the Revolution and their own Revolutionary leaders. The recognition of Aguinaldo's leadership was based not on his position as a leading figure of the Magdalo council of the Katipunan, but on his proven military leadership in Cavite. By the end of 1896, the Revolution in Cavite had outgrown the Katipunan and would cast it aside.<sup>10</sup>

Closely related to these facts is the fundamental difference in religious attitudes to be found on the one hand, in the Katipunan of Bonifacio and on the other hand, among the mass of the Caviteños, including Aguinaldo himself and many of the leaders. Bonifacio was fundamentally secular and anticlerical, self-educated as he was by reading the history of the French Revolution and

8. Retana, *Archivo*, pp. 261-68; Manuel Sastrón, *La Insurrección en Filipinas* (Madrid, 1897), p. 163. For the Filipinos in Japan, see Josefa M. Saniel, *Japan and the Philippines, 1868-1898* (Quezon City, 1969), pp. 171-75.

9. According to Baldomero Aguinaldo, there were less than 300 Katipuneros in Cavite when the Revolution began, but the following day there were 1000 Revolutionaries (Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita*, p. 154).

10. This was the result of the assemblies at Imus and Tejeros, culminating in the election of a unified Revolutionary government (see Agoncillo, *Revolt*, pp. 204-35; Quirino, *Young Aguinaldo*, pp. 94-99, 117-32).

Spanish translations of such anticlerical French novels as Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* and Eugene Sue's *The Wandering Jew*. Though certainly not an atheist, as he would be so accused in Cavite, he seems to have given up the practice of Catholicism, and was bitterly hostile to the friars.<sup>11</sup> The contrast between Bonifacio's attitude toward the friars and Aguinaldo's makes this clear. When the revolt first broke out in Kawit, Aguinaldo saw to it that the friar parish priest had sufficient warning to escape.<sup>12</sup> Later, when the Magdalo men captured some friars, Aguinaldo treated them with courtesy. Fearing that the Spaniards might recapture them after the loss of Silang, he later turned the prisoners over to the Magdiwang for safekeeping. The friars' lot quickly became worse under Mariano Alvarez, and much more so with the coming of Andres Bonifacio and his brothers to San Francisco de Malabon, where the friars were prisoners. Here they were tortured by the Bonifacio brothers, on the grounds that one of them had been responsible for the deportation of many Filipinos in 1872. Afterward, Diego Mojica, one of the high Magdiwang officials, intervened. In the end, however, Andres Bonifacio, with the consent of Mariano Alvarez, decided that the friars and some other Spanish prisoners should be sent to Maragondon to be executed. According to Telesforo Canseco, who was present in Naic at the time, the people of Maragondon sent the friars back to Naic, saying that they did not "want to bring on their town the disgrace of having killed the Fathers."<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, upon his arrival in Naic shortly afterward, Bonifacio ordered the friars' execution to be carried out imme-

11. Though he went through the church marriage ceremony, as the only legal one, he later had his marriage solemnized in Katipunan rites (Agoncillo, *Revolt*, p. 69; see also pp. 128-31 for his plans to assassinate the friar parish priest of Tondo). According to Artemio Ricarte's *Himagsikan nang manga Pilipino laban sa Kastila* (Yokohama, 1926), p. 34, it was Daniel Tirona who circulated leaflets in Cavite accusing Bonifacio of atheism, sacrilege, and other wrongdoing.

12. Quirino, *Young Aguinaldo*, p. 61; Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita*, p. 70, 85; Isacio Rodríguez Rodríguez, O.S.A., *Historia de la provincia agustiniana del Smo. Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas* (Manila, 1968), vol. 4, p. 392; Telésforo Canseco, "Historia de la insurrección filipina en Cavite," APSR, MSS, HCF, tomo 7, chapter 21, p. 95. Canseco was the Filipino overseer of the Dominican hacienda in Naic, Cavite. Taken prisoner during the early days of the Revolution, he was later released but remained behind Revolutionary lines in Cavite and hence was an eyewitness to many of the events. He wrote this account in 1897 for the Dominican Fathers. Though he was unsympathetic to the Revolution, his is one of the most extensive eyewitness accounts, which is particularly valuable for religious matters. The page references here are to a typed copy, now on microfilm in the Rizal Library, Ateneo de Manila University.

13. Canseco, "Historia," p. 69.

diately, as it was, on the border between the two towns. When the news became public, it met with general reprobation, especially on the part of Aguinaldo, who publicly condemned the act. Indeed it would appear that this was at least one of the causes that led Aguinaldo to bring about Bonifacio's death.<sup>14</sup> Certainly it contributed to making it possible, for it confirmed in the minds of many that Bonifacio was an atheist, and it was publicly said by Aguinaldo that the series of defeats which were occurring at this time, as the Spaniards pushed back the Revolutionary troops, was God's just punishment for the killing of the friars.<sup>15</sup>

Nor was this attitude confined to Aguinaldo. It is true that several friars had been killed in Cavite in the first days of the Revolution. However, all of these except two were killed in the heat of battle, while they were defending themselves in arms with other Spaniards.<sup>16</sup> There were three or four more scattered assassinations in other provinces, none of them involving Revolutionary leaders, and very likely the result of individual acts of vengeance.<sup>17</sup> The contrary was rather the rule: numerous local officials and even military leaders enabled the friars to escape. A contemporary Dominican source relates how at the very time it was being written, General Mariano Llanera, perhaps the leading military figure outside of Cavite, had a few days earlier presented himself to the parish priest of Cabiao, Nueva Ecija, kissed his hand, and assured him that he had nothing to worry about.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the circulars and proclamations emanating from the Revolutionary government in Cavite made no mention of the friars, but spoke only of independence. The same was true of the messages sent to

14. Canseco, "Historia," chapter 14, p. 70; also in Achutegui-Bernad, *Aguinaldo*, pp. 335-37. See also Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita*, pp. 114-18, 156.

15. "Lo que dice D. Domingo Martínez," *El Comercio* (Manila), 5 Mayo 1897, and the anonymous Dominican account in AUST, Folletos, t. 42., p. 41. Martínez had been a prisoner together with the friars, but had escaped.

16. Canseco, "Historia," chapter 22, p. 108; [Evaristo Fernández Arias, O.P.], "Apuntes sobre la insurrección," APSR, HCF, t. 6, p. 49. For Aguinaldo's account as told by him to Father Tomás Espejo, O.S.A., see Bernardo Martínez, O.S.A., *Apuntes Históricos: Filipinas* (Madrid: Imprenta del Asilo de Huérfanos del S.C. de Jesús, 1909), pp. 492-507.

17. In Hermosa, Bagac, and Morong, all in Bataan, in November and December 1896, and in O'Donnell, Tarlac, in October 1897. Cf. William Abbott, S.J., "The Status of War Prisoners under the Malolos Republic" (M.A. thesis, Ateneo de Manila University, 1971), pp. 144 ff.; Sastrón, *Insurrección*, pp. 458-59, 523-26.

18. AUST, Folletos, t. 42, p. 41.



towns in other provinces, urging them to join the Revolution.<sup>19</sup> The preoccupation of the ilustrados of the Propaganda Movement with the expulsion of the friars found relatively little echo among most Caviteños; it operated only among the few strongly influenced by Bonifacio, whose orientation in this matter was similar to that of the Propagandists.

Much less can it be said that the Revolution in Cavite was anti-religious. As was often true elsewhere, there seems to have been here a particularly intense religious fervor. General Ricarte would attest to this fervor in his memoirs. Speaking of the large attendance at Mass, he says "In the Philippines during the insurrection the holy love of God was demonstrated more than in normal times."<sup>20</sup> The Canseco account earlier mentioned, though reprobating the insurrection as Masonic and productive of license and abuses, went on to admit that the spirit in Cavite had in general been very religious. Not only was attendance at Mass generally high, even crowded on feast days, but some Revolutionary leaders had even given orders that all, particularly Katipuneros, should hear Mass on Sundays and holydays. In San Francisco de Malabon, the secretary of the government, who himself assisted at Mass almost daily, was untiring in preaching morality and in urging leaders to repress abuses on the part of the army. Other officials attended Mass in the sanctuary and even accompanied with candles the priest who brought the Eucharist to the sick. In another town the municipal captain ordered the Rosary to be recited daily, declaring that the Katipuneros were to be the first to give an example. Generally the recitation of the Rosary in the church was common in all towns of Cavite.<sup>21</sup> On different occasions both Baldomero Aguinaldo and Emilio Aguinaldo issued circulars urgently asking prayers for impending military operations. Not only were prayers ordered to obtain victory; after Revolutionary forces had repelled Spanish efforts to land at Binakayan and Noveleta, the Katipuneros

19. Ibid.; also Canseco, "Historia," p. 109; [Evaristo Fernández Arias, O.P.], "Apuntes sobre la insurrección," APSR, HCF, t. 6, p. 10. These sources insist that whatever anti-friar propaganda appeared came from Manila or Hong Kong, not Cavite. However, after Aguinaldo left Cavite, a manifesto of July 1897, allegedly issued by Aguinaldo, did attack the friars. This would appear to be the first time. See Achutegui-Bernad, *Aguinaldo*, pp. 434-39.

20. Ricarte, *Himagsikan*, p. 116. Although the incident occasioning this remark took place in Bulacan, Ricarte's remark is general, and his personal experience was in Cavite.

21. Canseco, "Historia," chapter 21, pp. 94-100. Unless otherwise noted, the details on religious practice come from this source.

were enjoined to devote three days of prayer in thanksgiving to the Virgin.<sup>22</sup> Even Mariano Alvarez on one occasion ordered exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with solemn prayers for three days in the church of San Francisco de Malabon. Interestingly enough, as Canseco notes (with disapproval), though the majority prayed for peace, a large number, including many pious people, prayed for the victory of the Revolution. Even more interesting was the novena composed by Diego Mojica, *Ministro de Hacienda* of the Magdiwang government, which was recited widely in San Francisco de Malabon and other towns. The novena was offered "to ask God for the triumph of the independence of the country. But if this was not fitting for God our Lord, and for the Blessed Virgin, and for our Mother the Church, they asked that Spain might not punish with full rigor those who had risen in arms against her."<sup>23</sup> Nor was the need for a Christian life in those who expected God's help forgotten. A circular of the *Ministro de Gracia y Justicia*, Felix Cuenca, exhorted the Revolutionaries to purity of life and avoidance of sin, otherwise sinful acts "might be the cause of our failure to free ourselves from slavery."<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to genuine Christian sentiment in official Revolutionary documents was the circular which ordered that "Masses be celebrated for the Revolutionaries who had died in battle, as well as for the Spaniards, inasmuch as, they said, all were Christians."<sup>25</sup> One may be permitted to wonder if Masses were being publicly offered by the Spaniards for slain Revolutionaries.

It is against this background that the Filipino clergy's relation to the Revolution must be seen. There were at the time some 20 parishes in Cavite, of which 7 were administered by Filipino secular priests. With the death or flight of the friar parish priests, the Filipino coadjutors took their places; in some instances, some of the coadjutors from towns which had two were reassigned by the Revolutionary government to take over the parishes without coadjutors. The Revolutionary government continued to pay the priests' salaries according to their status. Church funds in cash, however, were confiscated by the government, though no other church property was touched. In the latter part of the period,

22. Achutegui-Bernad, *Aguinaldo*, pp. 55-57, 116-18.

23. Canseco, "Historia," pp. 68-97.

24. Achutegui-Bernad, *Aguinaldo*, pp. 161-63.

25. Canseco, "Historia," p. 98.

when they were being driven from town after town, Revolutionary troops took with them the vestments, sacred vessels, and other liturgical ornaments and entrusted them to the priest of the next town within Revolutionary lines. Apparently all the Filipino priests remained behind in Cavite and accepted more or less willingly the authority of the Revolutionary government. None of them seem to have kept in touch with the archbishop, though it was necessary for them to send to Manila for Mass wine and for the liturgical calendar. Not all, without doubt, were equally enthusiastic for the Revolutionary government, but the fact that practically the entire province was subject to Revolutionary rule during a relatively long period explains partially why all accepted it. Canseco mentions that in the early days Father Valentin Velasco, coadjutor of Naic, urged the people not to follow the Revolution. Mariano Alvarez ordered his arrest, but on finding the priest sick the arresting official let him off with a small fine. From then on, Velasco supported the Revolution publicly, directing prayers for its success, urging the people to join the army in repelling the enemy, and taking regular part in the meetings of the local government officials. Though it seems clear that his adhesion was motivated originally by fear of the consequences of any other course of action, he became relatively rather active for one who was not fully a sympathizer.

Other priests were more fully committed to the Revolution, even from the beginning. The two most active in their support were Father Esteban del Rosario of Ternate and Father Manuel P. Trias of San Francisco de Malabon.<sup>26</sup> Both were older men, parish priests for a number of years. Though apparently many or most of the priests who reported to the archbishop in Manila after the Spanish victory in Cavite were confined to the seminary for some time, Del Rosario and Trias were kept there even after the peace of Biak-na-Bato. It was only after Governor General Primo de Rivera had more than once interceded for them at the instance of the Revolutionary generals Artemio Ricarte and Mariano Trias (nephew of Father Trias) that they were finally released in March 1898.<sup>27</sup>

26. Ibid., pp. 11-12, 96, 99. Canseco mentions that though the other priests were not allowed to collect stole fees, these two continued to do so.

27. Ricarte, *Himagsikan*, 139-40: AAM, Asuntos criminales, 1894-1915, "Manuel Trias"; AAM, Varios asuntos reservados, 1869-1900, "Párroco de Ternate."

Two sermons of Father del Rosario in favor of the Revolution, both delivered on major occasions, are reported. In the first, on the feast of All Saints (1 November 1896), he is reported as having "stirred up all the soldiers of Ternate and all the people to fight against the Spaniards, calling the current insurrection a holy war."<sup>28</sup> The result was new enthusiasm to work on the building of trenches to defend the beach. At the fiesta of San Francisco de Malabon in January 1897, which was attended by all the leaders from Magdiwang towns, Del Rosario (who was the deputed preacher) "exhorted all the leaders and all the Tagalogs to continue the Holy War against the Spaniards, and to work untiringly until the independence of the Philippines was won."<sup>29</sup> The sermon inspired enthusiasm among the people, who were encouraged to continue their efforts in the rebellion.<sup>30</sup> Recounting the same incident, Ricarte similarly reports about Del Rosario's success: "By Father del Rosario's discernment of the great purpose of the Revolution, he kindled the hearts of all to struggle for the reconquest of the liberty long ago lost to our beloved race."<sup>31</sup>

Even more active was Father Manuel P. Trias. He was uncle of General Mariano P. Trias, the *Ministro de Gracia y Justicia* of the Magdiwang government, who at the Tejeros Assembly of 22 March 1897 would be elected Aguinaldo's vice-president for the unified government. Father Trias not only regularly took part in the government meetings in San Francisco de Malabon, where he was parish priest, but was also summoned to meetings in other towns as well.<sup>32</sup> Mention is made by Ricarte of his presence in the meeting of disgruntled Magdiwang members, who were summoned by Andres Bonifacio the day following the latter's repudiation of the election results at Tejeros. Since his nephew the vice-president was already aligned with Aguinaldo, Father Trias's being invited is an indication of his prominence in the Magdiwang hierarchy.<sup>33</sup>

By the latter part of 1897, when most of the people in the Cavite towns conquered by the Spaniards had presented themselves for the amnesty offered by Primo de Rivera, San Francisco de Malabon was singled out by Canseco as still largely loyal to the Revolution.

28. Canseco, "Historia," p. 56.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

31. Ricarte, *Himagsikan*, pp. 39-40.

32. Canseco, "Historia," pp. 99-100.

33. Ricarte, *Himagsikan*, p. 60.

This he attributed to Father Trias, in spite of the priest's being confined to the seminary by this time: "Many remain in the insurrection, and almost half the town, who are relatives of the parish priest Father Manuel Trias, continue disloyal, some actually in rebellion and the others favoring it as much as they are able."<sup>34</sup> Del Rosario, on the other hand, seems to have been less successful, at least as far as his own parishioners were concerned. For Canseco says of them: "Obeying the advice of the former captain D. Vicente de Leon rather than that of the parish priest, they did not take great interest in the revolt."<sup>35</sup> Only 40 to 50 of them had not yet taken advantage of the amnesty.<sup>36</sup> The difference in reaction in the two towns can also be explained, however, by the fact that San Francisco de Malabon had already been heavily organized by the Katipunan before the Revolution and served at various times as capital for both factions. Ternate, on the other hand, was a remote town, far from the center of action, and is not known to have been a center of conspiracy before the Revolution.

Two other ardent clerical partisans of the Revolution, who came to Cavite from outside, were Father Pedro Dandan and a certain Father Teodoro, coadjutor of Taguig. Dandan was one of those exiled in 1872, but by this time had become a member of the cathedral chapter of Manila.<sup>37</sup> At the beginning of January 1897 the Revolutionary troops under Crispulo Aguinaldo pushed out of Cavite and attacked the Manila province towns of Taguig and Pateros. It is not certain whether Dandan was simply by chance in Taguig, or as seems more likely, went there to contact the Magdalo forces. The fact is that when the Magdalo soldiers were forced to retreat again to Cavite, among the many inhabitants of these towns who fled with them to Cavite were Fathers Dandan and Teodoro.<sup>38</sup> From the way Father Dandan is spoken of in the sources, it seems

34. Canseco, "Historia," p. 104.

35. Ibid. p. 105.

36. Ibid.

37. Ricarte (*Himagsikan*, p. 39) says he was a canon of the cathedral. Actually he was *capellán del coro*, a lesser position.

38. Canseco, "Historia," p. 99; Ricarte, *Himagsikan*, p. 39; AAM, Asuntos criminales, 1894-1915, "Pedro Dandan, 1897." According to Father Manuel M. Marco's letter to the archbishop dated 13 January 1897, Father Dandan had disappeared from Quiapo on 11 January 1897. Since the Revolutionary troops had entered Taguig on 1 January and Father Dandan is recorded as having disappeared from Quiapo church on 11 January, it would seem that he went to Taguig precisely to join the Revolutionaries (AAM, *ibid.*; Quirino, *Aguinaldo*, pp. 93-94; Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita*, pp. 147-49). From Aguinaldo's account, it is clear that not only Crispulo but Emilio, too, was in the expedition.

likely that he had been in contact with the Revolutionary forces previously, perhaps even with the Katipunan. He was certainly well-known to them, as may be seen from Bonifacio's letter to Emilio Jacinto in early 1897 expressing the growing split between the Magdiwang and the Magdalo:

Here the discord between the two Councils is greater, because those of Magdalo demand that they rule the whole Philippines; they say that only the government of Imus is recognized among them, and even in the whole of Europe. This happened three days ago, when they came to [San Francisco de] Malabon with Father Dandan, who is one of their faction.<sup>39</sup>

Though we are ill-informed on much of Father Dandan's activity, he seems, together perhaps with Father Teodoro, to have exercised considerable influence in rallying the Revolutionary forces as well as the clergy. According to Canseco,

Father Dandan and Father Teodoro, who came from the province of Manila to join the insurgents of this province, were without any doubt the reason why the secular priests of this province who were not in favor of the insurrection were persuaded to follow it, or at least not to work against it . . .<sup>40</sup>

The influence of Dandan and the rest of the priest supporters of the Revolution soon became evident in the peace proposal to Aguinaldo made through the Jesuit superior, Father Pío Pi, in a letter of 14 March 1897.<sup>41</sup> In answer Aguinaldo and the Magdalo leaders agreed to negotiate, not on Spanish territory but within the territory of the Revolutionary government. In preparation for these negotiations, they drew up a set of conditions for effecting peace. Heading these was the demand for the expulsion of the friars from the Philippines. Canseco, commenting on this, says:

. . . The first condition laid down by Aguinaldo for peace, I suppose to have been imposed by the priests of Imus and Bacoar, and by Father Dandan and Father Teodoro . . . in order that with the expulsion of the friars the secular clergy would come to possess the parishes.<sup>42</sup>

Though Aguinaldo answered Pi's letter agreeing to negotiations in spite of the Magdiwang's opposition, they never actually took place, since the Spanish side refused to deal with Aguinaldo as an equal. Hence, the conditions for peace were not made public. It is certain, though, that expulsion of the friars headed these condi-

39. Undated letter, in Agoncillo, *Revolt*, p. 410.

40. Canseco, "Historia," p. 99.

41. Pi's letter to Aguinaldo and the latter's reply, together with other documentation, can be found in Achutegui-Bernad, *Aguinaldo*, pp. 304-23.

42. Canseco, "Historia," p. 75.

tions, since Bonifacio also mentions it in a letter.<sup>43</sup> While it is impossible to verify the correctness of Canseco's supposition that the Filipino clergy were responsible for this stipulation, it would explain more satisfactorily why Aguinaldo changed his position with regard to the friars. As a matter of fact, if we are to believe Canseco, many of the Magdiwang leaders were opposed to this stipulation. They reasoned that only the friars were able to promote the material progress of the towns. Moreover, they said, should the Revolution fail, only the friars could effectively intercede with the Spanish government not to apply the full rigor of justice on the revolutionaries. From the ordinary people came the complaint: "If the Spanish priests go away, who will remain as parish priests? [Only] the Tagalog priests? If so, then the majority of us will become Jews."<sup>44</sup> As a result, the Magdiwang voted for the suppression of this condition, even before rejecting the idea of negotiations.<sup>45</sup>

The other two priests named by Canseco as participating with Dandan and Teodoro in the Magdalo deliberations both held office in the Revolutionary organization, it would seem. Father Eulalio Almeyda, coadjutor of Imus at the beginning of the war, was later said to have been made supreme military chaplain, though it is not clear when this appointment was made.<sup>46</sup> The other was Father Cornelio Ignacio, coadjutor of Bacoar.<sup>47</sup>

As the Revolutionary forces were pushed back by the Spanish offensive, all the priests likewise retreated with the army, remaining behind Revolutionary lines. Some time after the election of Aguinaldo as president of the Revolutionary government at the

43. Letter of 16 April 1897 to Emilio Jacinto, in Agoncillo, *Revolt*, p. 413. Bonifacio adds a condition — representation in the Cortes — not found in Canseco's account, but both agree on the expulsion of the friars.

44. Canseco, "Historia," p. 109.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

46. U.S. Army, Division of the Philippines, Annual Report of Major General George W. Davis (Manila: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1903), p. 211. The report gives the name as Eladio; the coadjutor of Imus, however, is named Eulalio Almeyda in PNA, Patronatos: 1858–1898, exp. 385, 19 Julio 1895. Almeyda succeeded Father Buenaventura when the latter was removed by the archbishop and confined to the seminary (see p. 402 above).

47. Canseco, "Historia," p. 75. He does not give names, but says "los clérigos de Imus y Bacoar." Elsewhere however he refers to a Father Cornelio as the coadjutor of Bacoar. Father Cornelio Ignacio was acting parish priest there after the departure of the friar incumbent in November 1898 (PRR, SD 167.3). He had been coadjutor since at least 1866 (ASV, Arch. Nunz. Madrid, 447, "Estado general de los pueblos del Arzobispado de Manila," with letter of 27 October 1866); see also Marcelino Gomez, "P. Mariano Gomez," *Readings on Burgos, Gomez, Zamora* (Part 3, for Colleges and Universities), comp. Burgos-Gomez-Zamora Centennial Commission (Manila, 1972) p. 108.

Tejeros Assembly in late March, the clergy came together in Maragondon to elect an ecclesiastical leader. Father Cornelio Ignacio was chosen *Presidente eclesiástico*. It is mentioned that a number of Revolutionary leaders assisted at the meeting, but apparently only the clergy voted, since the absent priests from Indan, Mendez-Núñez, and Alfonso sent in their written votes.<sup>48</sup> Whether or not Ignacio attempted to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction is not known, but it would appear that there would have been little occasion to do so, for only a month later the Revolutionary army had been driven out of all the towns of Cavite. After the arrival of Spanish troops, the priests, except Fathers Dandan and Teodoro, went to Manila to present themselves to the archbishop, who ordered at least some of them confined to the seminary for a period. Evidently the period was short, except for Fathers Trias and Del Rosario, who remained there, as has been noted, until Generals Ricarte and Trias were able to obtain their release through Governor General Primo de Rivera in early 1898.<sup>49</sup>

On 14 May 1897, Magallanes, the last town of Cavite, fell to the Spaniards, and Aguinaldo and his men escaped to the mountains. With them went Fathers Dandan and Teodoro. An indication of the role of Dandan is Canseco's final comment:

As long as Father Dandan continues in the insurrection it will not be easy to get the Revolutionary leaders to present themselves for amnesty, because of the great prestige this Father has among the revolutionaries.<sup>50</sup>

After the fall of the Cavite towns, Aguinaldo left Cavite for Talisay, Batangas, and after further fighting, gradually made his way north to Bulacan, where he would eventually establish himself at Biak-na-bato. After Filipino troops had defeated the Spaniards on 14 June at Mount Puray, Aguinaldo remained at Minuyan in this area for the next two months. Here in the latter part of July Aguinaldo authorized Teodoro Gonzales to create the Departmental Government of Central Luzon, comprising all the Revolutionary provinces except Cavite and Batangas.<sup>51</sup> In the elections

48. Canseco, "Historia," p. 100.

49. Ibid. Canseco speaks in general terms of the confinement of the priests, though at the time that he was writing (end of 1897), only Trias and Del Rosario were still confined. No record has been found of the others in AAM; most likely they simply made a short period of spiritual retreat and then returned to their parishes. See also note 27.

50. Canseco, "Historia," p. 100.

51. Achutegui-Bernad, *Aguinaldo*, pp. 422-39; Teodoro M. Kalaw, *The Philippine Revolution* (Mandaluyong: Manila Book Company, 1969), pp. 58-59. That the event



of the new government, Father Dandan was made president, it is said, by a majority of 200 votes over his nearest rival.<sup>52</sup> He had clearly become one of the leading figures of the Revolution, at least apart from the military.

It is doubtful, however, that the departmental government ever functioned significantly. Shortly after its creation, Aguinaldo retreated to Biak-na-bato with most of his followers, and though several guerrilla units still continued to operate, by the nature of things their operations must have been largely independent of any central control. Moreover, Dandan's letter accepting his new post implied that he had to join Aguinaldo's forces in Bulacan in order "to perform the duties of my new office and carry out the proposed measure."<sup>53</sup> He assured Aguinaldo that he was anxious to get there as soon as possible.<sup>54</sup> When Pedro Paterno was contacting the various Revolutionary leaders to get their consent to the proposed agreement, he found Father Dandan acting as chaplain to the forces of General Emiliano Riego de Dios in the Pico de Loro mountains in Cavite and bitterly opposing Paterno's proposals for negotiation.<sup>55</sup> Later reports have him apparently in command of guerrilla forces in Laguna, perhaps after Riego de Dios left for Biak-na-bato. A year after his death, the Revolutionary newspaper *La Independencia* paid tribute to his memory in laudatory phrases:

In Laguna Father Dandan, that valiant and battle-worn old man, never surrendered, nor did his people abandon him either. They say that the venerable old man died of chagrin and sorrow, but we have not been able to find out what the reason was.<sup>56</sup>

He was apparently never able to join Aguinaldo. Of his companion, Father Teodoro, there is no further report.

Other priests took part in the Revolutionary government in various ways. Priests are often mentioned as being present at executions — Father Manuel Trias at that of Municipal Captain

took place in the latter part of July is deduced from the fact that the oath for the Consultative Assembly was administered on 23 July 1897. See Achutegui-Bernad, *ibid.*, pp. 442–44.

52. Sastrón, *Insurrección*, p. 283.

53. Undated letter in John R. M. Taylor, *The Philippine Insurrection against the United States* (Pasay City: Eugenio Lopez Foundation, 1971), vol. 1 exhibit 35, p. 336.

54. *Ibid.*

55. Pedro Paterno, *El pacto de Biyak-na-Bato* (Manila, 1910) pp. 65–66.

56. "Recordable," *La Independencia*, 29 Septiembre 1898. Taylor (*Philippine Insurrection*) speaks of him as "in command of a band of insurgents." Ricarte (*Himagsikan*, p. 39), says that he died "in the Magallanes mountains shortly before the signing of the pact of Biyak-na-Bato."

Eugenio Viniegra in San Francisco de Malabon in September 1896, Fathers del Rosario, Frutos Tirona (brother of Magdalo leader Candido Tirona) of Maragondon, and (probably) Arcadio Resurreccion of the town of Rosario at that of the friars executed by Bonifacio. It is mentioned in each case, however, that the priests were present as confessors to assist the condemned men, and their presence need not imply any part of theirs in the executions.<sup>57</sup>

More significantly, Father Cenon Villafranca administered, in Santa Cruz de Malabon on 23 March 1897, the oath to President Aguinaldo and to the other officials of the government elected at Tejeros. Afterward he "called on God to witness this solemn moment and gave his blessing."<sup>58</sup> Bonifacio denounced him as having gone over to the Magdalo.<sup>59</sup> Canseco mentions four or five priests coming to San Francisco de Malabon for the deliberations by the Magdiwang government.<sup>60</sup> It is likely that the same was true in Magdalo territory, as has been already noted of at least a few. To what extent all of these priests were fully committed to the Revolution is of course impossible to determine with any degree of certainty, except in the case of those already mentioned by name above. Canseco, speaking from the Spanish point of view, judges them severely as a group, while admitting that some were more passive than active sympathizers.<sup>61</sup> What is clear, however, is that their participation was welcomed, even sought out by the Revolutionaries, particularly Aguinaldo, and that those who did take an active part enjoyed prestige and influence, even in policy making.

It would be absurd, of course, to pretend that all the Revolutionaries in Cavite were models of Christian virtue, or that all the priests who played prominent roles in the Revolution were exemplary priests. An examination of the sources employed in this paper makes clear that some were far from being such. What is demonstrable, however, is that in spite of the identification of loyalty to Spain with loyalty to the Catholic faith so often preached in sermons and writings by the Spanish clergy, there was a large body of

57. Ricarte, *Himagsikan*, p. 19; Canseco, "Historia," pp. 54, 70. Canseco calls the last only Father Arcadio; Father Arcadio Resurreccion was acting parish priest of Rosario in 1898 (PRR, SD 167.3).

58. Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita*, p. 185.

59. Ricarte, *Himagsikan*, pp. 60-62; Quirino, *Young Aguinaldo*, pp. 130-31; letter of Bonifacio to Jacinto, 24 April 1897, in Agoncillo, *Revolt*, p. 418. Aguinaldo (*Mga Gunita*, p. 185) mistakenly calls the priest Father Cenon Fernandez.

60. Canseco, "Historia," p. 74.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

Filipinos in Cavite who did not accept that identification. What is more, without excluding a priori the possibility that some leaders of the Revolution manipulated religious feeling to attract mass support, it seems clear that in general the military and political leaders of the Revolution of 1896 did see their struggle for freedom from Spain within a religious context, as a struggle sanctioned by God, as a "holy war." Such a conviction would not have been possible without the presence of a Filipino clergy to replace the Spanish friars, and without their cooperation and counsel. In the second phase of the Revolution in 1898, the clergy would also play an important role, and religious motivation would sustain the guerrilla war against the American invaders in many parts of the country through long periods against overwhelming odds. But on the national level, the secular-minded ilustrados would dominate the government, and the specter of schism would complicate and confuse the religious and national loyalties of many Filipinos, clergy as well as laymen. But the role of the Filipino clergy and of religious motivation in Cavite in 1896-97 should give one pause before accepting such one-sided and simplistic views of the Revolution as "the fury of the oppressed people against the friars," or "an agrarian revolt," or even as a secular nationalist revolution. Cavite undoubtedly was to a certain extent a special case, but at least it indicates that research on the Revolution which ignores the Catholic character of nineteenth-century Filipino society is unlikely to lead to a profound understanding of the emergence of the Filipino nation.