
KARTILYA NG KATIPUNAN

By Emilio Jacinto

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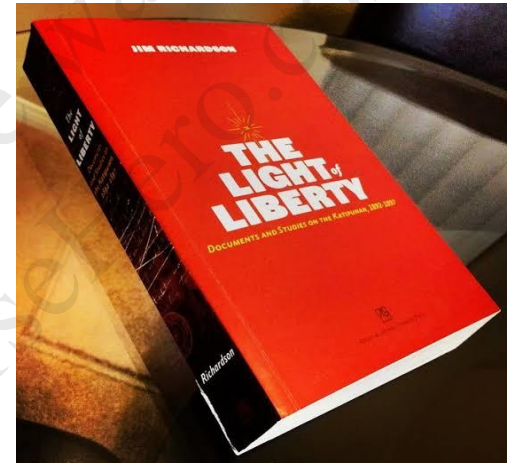
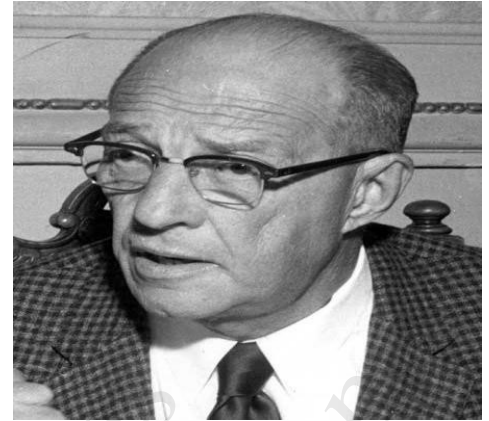
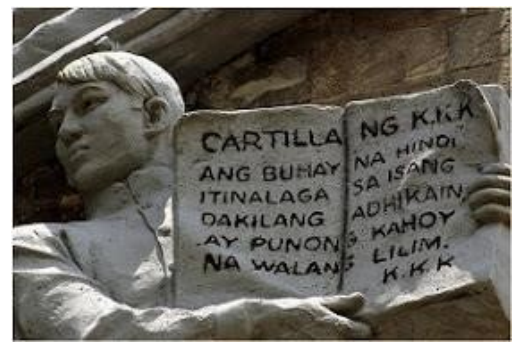
Readings in Philippine History

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Kartilya ng Katipunan About the

Text:

- According to Jim Richardson, “Kartilya is the best known of all Katipunan texts”
“...the only document of any length set in print by the Katipunan prior to August 1896 that is known to be still extant”
- Kartilya was printed as a small pamphlet for new members. (Cristobal 1997)
- Jim Richardson released a book entitled “The Light of Liberty”, allowing us to dig deeper with the primary source stated in his book. We can now read Jacinto’s Kartilya with other Katipunan texts, transcribed from difficult tagalog, freeing us, too, from deciphering the codes, as in the case of documents written in ciphers, penmanship common in that era. The Light of Liberty “ presents 73 Katipunan documents—56 of which have not yet been published in book form, 52 of which come from the Archivo General Militar de Madrid (AGMM). In other words, documents that the Spanish colonial regime confiscated from the revolutionaries and then managed to keep. The AGMM documents are particularly important for one more reason: None of them were used in the writing of the main books on the Katipunan that generations of Filipinos have grown up on, such as Teodoro Agoncillo’s “Revolt of the Masses.”



Background of the Author:



Name: Emilio Jacinto

Historian accolade: “The Brain of Katipunan”

Born: December 15, 1875

Died: April 16, 1898

“Whether their skin be dark or white, all human persons are equal; one may be superior in knowledge, in wealth, in beauty, but not being a human. “- Emilio Jacinto. Kartilya ng Katipunan

Emilio Jacinto was an eloquent and brave young man, known as both the soul and the brain of the Katipunan. In his short life, Jacinto helped to lead the fight for Filipino independence from Spain.

Early life: We do know that Emilio Jacinto was born in Manila on December 15, 1875, and he is a son of prominent merchant. As stated by MO1 (2011) in a blogsite mandirigma.com, Emilio receive a good education, and was fluent in both Tagalog and Spanish. He went to the San Juan de Letran College briefly. Deciding to study Law, He transferred to the University of Santo Tomas, where a future president of the Philippines was among his classmate that is Manuel L. Quezon. Jacinto was just



19 years old when news arrived that the Spanish had arrested his hero, Jose Rizal. Galvanized, the young man left school and joined with Andres Bonifacio and others to form the Katipunan, or “Highest and most respected society of the executed Rizal on trumped-up charges in December of 1896, The Katipunan rallied its followers to war.



Revolution: Emilio Jacinto served as the spokesperson for the Katipunan, as well as handling its finances. Andres Bonifacio was not well educated, so he deferred to his young comrade on such matters. Jacinto wrote for the official Katipunan newspaper, the Kalayaan. He also penned the official handbook of the movement, called the Kartilya ng

Katipunan. Despite his young age of just 21, Jacinto became a general in the group’s guerrilla army, taking an active role in the fight against the Spanish near Manila. Unfortunately, Jacinto’s friend and sponsor, Andres Bonifacio, had gotten into a heated rivalry with a katipunan leader from a wealthy family called Emilio Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo, who led the Magdalo faction of Katipunan, rigged an election to have himself named president of the revolutionary government. He then had Bonifacio

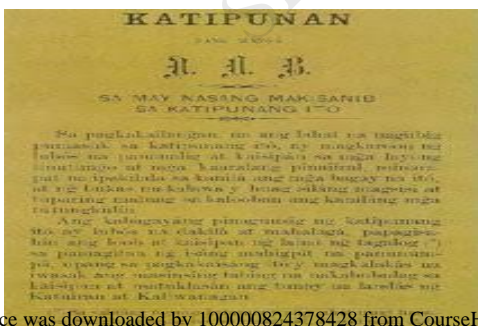
arrested for treason. Aguinaldo ordered the May 10, 1897 execution of Bonifacio and his brother. The self-proclaimed president then approached Emilio Jacinto, trying to recruit him to his branch of the organization, but Jacinto refused. Emilio Jacinto lived and fought the Spanish in Magdalena, Laguna. He was seriously injured in a battle at the Maimpis River in February of 1898, but found refuge in the Santa Maria Magdalena Parish Church, which now boasts a marker noting the event. (Emilio Jacinto Biography 2018).

Although he survived this wound, the young revolutionary would not live for much



EMILIO JACINTO

longer. He died on April 16, 1899, of Malaria. General Emilio Jacinto was just 23 years old. His life was marked with tragedy and loss, but Emilio Jacinto's enlightened ideas helped to shape the Philippines Revolution. His eloquent word and humanist touch served as a counter-balance to the blunt ruthlessness of revolutionaries such as Emilio Aguinaldo, who would go on to become the first president of the new republic of the Philippines.



As Jacinto himself put it in the *Kartilya* "The worth of a person is not being a king, not in the shape of his nose or the whiteness of his face, nor in being a priest, representative of God, nor in the loftiness of the position he holds on this

earth. That Person is pure and truly noble , even though he was born in the forest and knows no language but his own, who is possessed of good character, is true to his word, has dignity and honor, who does not oppress others nor help their oppressors who knows how to feel for and care for his native land.”(A direct translation of Kartilya from Tagalog by Epifanio delos Santos)

There are numerous documentaries about Emilio Jacinto’s Life you can watch it at:

- NHCP’s documentary about Emilio Jacinto <https://youtu.be/ZE8d7uAluL8>
- Lourd de Veyra about the Emilio Jacinto’s life that was released on April19,2011 <https://youtu.be/Myaq1Usq0c0>

Historical Background of the Document:

Aside from ill-treatment experiences felt by katipuneros under the Spanish rule, there were other influencing factors causing the creation of Katipunan and the conceptualization of Kartilya. (Dela Costa, H. (1992)

1. Enlightenment in Europe

- Immanuel Kant summed the definition of enlightenment in the following terms: "Dare to know! Have courage to use your own reason! "
- Enlightened rationality gave way to the rise of Romanticism. By the 19th-century it paved its way to Liberalism and Classicism then in the 20th-century, Modernism.
- During this period, secret societies like the Freemasons, the Bavarian Illuminati, the Rosicrucian—flourished. Coffeehouses, newspapers and literary salons emerged as new venues for ideas to circulate.

2. French Revolution

- The French Revolution of 1789 was the culmination of the High Enlightenment vision of throwing out the old authorities to remake society along rational lines.
- A legacy of the Age of Enlightenment, the motto "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité" inspired the French Revolution.
- The ideas of enlightenment and the French Revolution inspired the Ilustrados in Europe and in the island. These two events in the globe encouraged the Filipinos to take up a stand for reforms and later independence. Books from Europe easily reached the Philippines thru the Suez Canal and thus this leads to the spread of the idea of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

3. Coming of Masonry in the Philippines

- In 1856, Freemasonry was introduced in the Philippines, however, native Filipinos were not allowed to join the organization.
- In 1889, Graciano Lopez-Jaena organized the Logia Revolución in Barcelona thru the support of Grande Oriente Español hence the root of true Philippine

Masonry. • Pedro Serrano Laktaw, with the help of Moises Salvador (initiated in Madrid) and Jose A. Ramos (initiated in London), organized Logia Nilad and it was approved by the Grande Oriente Español as Logia Nilad No 144 on March 20, 1892.

- As the Fraternity grew, the Spanish friars were alarmed and therefore branded all Masons as insurrectos. Masons were arrested, tortured, exiled. These events became the voice for freedom and democracy.
- Most of the prominent personalities in the Katipunan were members of the Masonry. The influence of this fraternity to the members were very evident in the Kartilya written by Emilio Jacinto.
- During the revolution, the Spanish Friars believed that the root of all the problems was Masonry and Katipunan. Katipunan as considered by the friars as “Huwad sa Masonerya.”
- Jesuit Francisco Foradada wrote in his book that Filipino filibusterism (subversion) was not the son of righteousness, morality or justice; but of Masonry – the enemy of God.

4. Propaganda Movement

- The death of Gomburza in 1872 awakened strong feelings of anger and resentment among the Filipinos. They questioned Spanish authorities and demanded reforms. The Filipino ilustrados aimed for reforms and so they created a systematic movement and they used a peaceful means of battling the Spanish government called the Propaganda Movement.
- The writings produced by the Propaganda Movement inspired Andres Bonifacio and other radicals to establish the Katipunan and set the Philippine Revolution in place.

5. La Liga and the Cuerpo de Compromisarios

- In 1892, Jose Rizal arrived home and with the support of the Masonic Leaders, he established the La Liga Filipina. However, he was arrested and soon deported to Dapitan.
- Andres Bonifacio and other members of Logia Taliba saw Rizal's deportation as a sign that reforms were no longer attainable. Before the revival of the Liga, Andres Bonifacio had conceptualized a new secret society called the Katipunan to advocate separation from Spain. Thus, Katipunan was established on July 7, 1892.
- On April 3, 1893, Andres Bonifacio of Logia Taliba, Domingo Franco and Apolinario Mabini, both of Logia Balagtas, led the revival of the Liga Filipina.
- Six months after the Liga's revival two factions emerged: one that wanted to continue the society's aim of peaceful reforms, and another which advocated the

overthrow of the colonial government. In October of 1893, the Liga was dissolved.

- Mabini and other moderates formed the Cuerpo de Compromisarios, they tried to continue sending funds to finance the Propaganda Movement in Spain. However, most of the members became increasingly disappointed over the apathy of the central government in Madrid.
- Some Filipinos were convinced that separation from Spain was the only alternative – some members united with the radical movement - Katipunan of Bonifacio, Arellano, Plata and other Logia Taliba members.

Kartliya ng Katipunan Content:

According to Xiao Chua the Kartilya ng Katipunan has 13 points.

1. The life that is not consecrated to a lofty and reasonable purpose is a tree without a shade, if not a poisonous weed.
2. To do good for personal gain and not for its own sake is not virtue.
3. It is rational to be charitable and love one's fellow creature, and to adjust one's conduct, acts and words to what is in itself reasonable.
4. Whether our skin be black or white, we are all born equal: superiority in knowledge, wealth and beauty are to be understood, but not superiority by nature.
5. The honorable man prefers honor to personal gain; the scoundrel, gain to honor.
6. To the honorable man, his word is sacred.
7. Do not waste thy time: wealth can be recovered but not time lost.
8. Defend the oppressed and fight the oppressor before the law or in the field.
9. The prudent man is sparing in words and faithful in keeping secrets.
10. On the thorny path of life, man is the guide of woman and the children, and if the guide leads to the precipice, those whom he guides will also go there.
11. Thou must not look upon woman as a mere plaything, but as a faithful companion who will share with thee the penalties of life; her (physical) weakness will increase thy interest in her and she will remind thee of the mother who bore thee and reared thee.
12. What thou dost not desire done unto thy wife, children, brothers and sisters, that do not unto the wife, children, brothers and sisters of thy neighbor.
13. Man is not worth more because he is a king, because his nose is aquiline, and his color white, not because he is a *priest, a servant of God, nor because of the high prerogative that he enjoys upon earth, but he is worth most who is a man of proven and real value, who does good, keeps his words, is worthy and honest; he who does not oppress nor consent to being oppressed, he who loves and cherishes his fatherland, though he be born in the wilderness and know no tongue but his own.

Xiao Chua narrates about the history of the Kartilya ng Katipunan. A document written by General Emilio Jacinto also known as the “Utak ng Katipunan”. This is the articulation of thirteen teachings in how should a Katipunero should live to achieve freedom and happiness for everyone. You can look it up in <https://youtu.be/eFgiTJZd57I> (Xiao Chua - Secondary Source) or in <https://youtu.be/0QQGZXaQgQ> where the Kartilya ng Katipunan was explained with scrutiny.

Contribution to the Grand Narrative of Philippine History

According to Pasamonte, D. (2019), the various contributions made by the Jacinto’s Kartilya to the Philippine History are:

- It serves as a guiding principle.
- It enhances sense of nationalism
- It advocates an anti- enslavement
- It promotes spread of liberal ideas

Relevance to Contemporary Times

Kartilya is a source of moral beacon for self-transformation for the contemporary times. (Pasamonte December 05, 2019). It can be used as guide:

- To institutionalize good governance among our government officials.
 - To teach honor and dignity and curtail corruption among politicians
 - To inculcate generosity and compassion among us
 - To practice respect for women and love for our family
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Video References:

- Xiao Chua's Documentary about Emilio Jacinto and his Kartilya <https://youtu.be/eFgiTJZd57I>
- A video where the Kartilya was explained with scrutiny <https://youtu.be/0QQGZXaQgQ>
- NHCP's Biography of Emilio Jacinto <https://youtu.be/ZE8d7uAluL8>
- Lourde de Veyra on Jacinto's Life <https://youtu.be/Myaq1Usq0c0>

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