

the heroic participation of the people of Mindanao in the revolution against Spain and the fight against American rule from 1896 to 1901.

## **B. *Mindanao's Participation in the Philippine Revolution***

This paper will show that in different places in Mindanco, the people rebelled against Spain and later fought the Americans who replaced the Spaniards.

### *I. Northern Mindanao: Bukidnon, Camiguin, Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental and Misamis Oriental*

#### *a. Iligan City (Lanao del Norte), Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon*

The revolution against Spain was started in Northern Mindanao in Iligan city when a group of disciplinarios (Filipino soldiers under the Command of Spanish Military Officers) adhered to the cause of the Katipuneros and mutinied against the Spanish army in the early months of 1897. They killed all their Spanish officers and left Iligan. These disciplinarios who numbered 300 soldiers belonged to the Third and Fourth Companies of the regular Spanish Army stationed in Iligan<sup>13</sup>.

They went to Cagayan but found it heavily defended by the Spanish Regiment No. 72 and the Tercio de Voluntarios de Cagayan, a group of Cagayan volunteers who were primarily responsible for the defense of the town. They skipped Cagayan. In an encounter at Santa Ana, Tagaloan, the disciplinarios were defeated and some of them went on to Bukidnon and lived there with the Bukidnons and some went on to Surigao<sup>14</sup>.

Before the Spaniards departed from Misamis Oriental the people organized a new government based upon the laws and regulations of the Revolutionary Government at Malolos. The first resolution passed by the Provincial Council contained provisions to fight any invader, to organize armed forces and to secure arms and ammunition<sup>15</sup>.

Later, Anselmo Abejuela arrived from Manila. He had been appointed by the Revolutionary government of Malolos as the Military chief of the Province. He organized the local forces and continued the war preparation but later resigned due to poor health<sup>16</sup>.

---

<sup>13</sup> Mardonio LAO, «History of Cagayan de Oro, 1622-1901», in DEMETRIO (ed.), *The Local Historical Sources of Northern Mindanao*, p. 392.

<sup>14</sup> «The Bautista Manuscript on the Philippine Revolution in Misamis Province, 1900-1901», in *The Local Historical Sources of Northern Mindanao*, p. 253.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* p. 256.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* p. 257.

### 1. *The Battle of Cagayan*

The Americans had occupied Cagayan without resistance. However, General Nicolas Capistrano had ordered all rebel forces to meet at Gango Plateau, 12 kms. southeast of Cagayan, on the same day that Cagayan was occupied by the Americans<sup>17</sup>. Joining the rebels were Bukidnons who came to help the Cagayan revolutionaries.

On April 7, 1900, the Cagayan Revolutionaries attacked the American barracks and thus started the Battle of Cagayan, for almost an hour, the battle raged on. Capt. Apolinario Pabayo of the macheteros succeeded in entering the barracks and wounding some Americans but was himself killed. Two American soldiers were killed and eleven wounded. On the side of the revolutionaries, 53 were killed, with 18 were wounded. The Americans had superior might and so General Capistrano's troops had to retreat<sup>18</sup>.

In the fight against the Americans, the Bukidnon lumads had promptly responded to the appeal of their coastal brothers. In the Battle of Cagayan, fifteen Bukidnon patriots died. They also helped not only in warfare but also by giving quarters and provisions during the war.

### 2. *Battle of Agusan Hill*

On May 14, 1900, Capt. Vicente Roa led the Cagayan Revolutionaries in the east in an encounter with the 40th Regiment U. S. Volunteer Infantry. Captain Roa when told that all his men had been killed, kept on fighting with his revolver until he ran out of ammunition. When he fell, an American soldier snatched one of his medals of honor. On Agusan Hills lay dead 34 brave soldiers of the First Company of the Mindanao Battalion with their gallant captain<sup>19</sup>.

### 3. *Battle of Macahambus*

The Cagayan revolutionaries in the west had fortified Macahambus cave. On June 4, 1900, Capt Eliot of the 40th Regiment decided to capture Macahambus cave. As the Americans climbed the narrow trail to the fortress, the revolutionaries ambushed them from their trenches. Nine Americans soldiers were killed and more than ten were wounded. Only one died, Apolinario Nacalaban and three were wounded on the side of the Cagayan revolutionaries<sup>20</sup>.

### 4. *Surrender of General Capistrano*

The surrender of Gen. Capistrano on April 6, 1901 ended the Misamis phase of the Filipino-American war which lasted for about one year.

---

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 268.

<sup>18</sup> LAO, p. 401.

<sup>19</sup> BAUTISTA, p. 282.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 286-287

*b. Misamis Occidental*

There were people from Misamis Occidental who fought with Aguinaldo's forces in Luzon. One of them was Mariano Garcenes, a Spanish mestizo who returned to Misamis after the signing of the Pact of Biak-na-Bato. Upon his return, he joined the resistance group organized by Simeon Ledesma<sup>21</sup>.

On May 14, 1900 Captain Lambdin of the American forces with 40 men who were stationed at Loculan, 4 miles east of Misamis, were attacked by Misamis revolutionaries armed with daggers. Fifty seven revolutionaries were killed and twenty wounded. Because of superior weapons, the revolutionaries were repulsed<sup>22</sup>.

The revolutionaries in Misamis Occidental were headed by Rufino Deloso. His force of 400 insurgents continued the struggle against the Americans by raising funds from the people, securing arms and initiating encounters with the Americans. There were no less than twenty encounters between the revolutionaries and the Americans in Misamis Occidental from May 14, 1900 up to January 6, 1901<sup>23</sup>.

To the natives of Oroquieta - Laungan area, Capitan Daligdig led numerous assaults against the Oroquieta garrison of the Americans. He was known as brave, a fencing expert and possessed with supernatural powers<sup>24</sup>.

*c. Camiguin*

On January 27, 1899, Severino Reyes, organized the Corp of Liberators (Cuerpo de Libertadores) equipping them with arms to maintain public order and defend Camiguin against invaders<sup>25</sup>.

On February 12, 1899 General Simon Gonzalez who had been appointed by Gen. Aguinaldo as the Military Chief of Mindanao arrived in Camiguin and commended the local revolutionaries on their war preparations<sup>26</sup>.

On December 6, 1899, American gunships appeared along the coast of Camiguin. Gunship No. 5 dispatched a small boat to attack a banca which was aligning for port space. The Cuerpo de Libertadores defended the banca and volleys of shots were exchanged. The small boat retreated and went back to the gunship which then shelled the island for 3 to 4 hours<sup>27</sup>.

---

<sup>21</sup> Fellina M. MADRID, *Insurrection in Mindanao*, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* p. 8-10

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> DEMETRIO, *Brief Data on the History of the Philippine Revolution (1896 - 1901)*, p. 552.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* p. 552

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* p. 553.

On December 10, 1899, Gunship No. 5 of the Americans destroyed the steamship *Minerva*, owned by the provincial government when it resisted the assault by the gunship at the waters around Cagayan<sup>28</sup>.

On March 31, 1900, the Americans were able to take over the capital town of Mambajao.

## II. *Caraga Region (Agusan Norte, Agusan Sur, Surigao Norte and Surigao Sur)*

The Gonzalez family of Surigao was headed by Don Juan or Jantoy. In 1892, the Spanish governor of Surigao exiled the brothers Simon and Wenceslao Gonzalez for their anti-Spanish activities to Jolo. They would have been vanished to the Marianas Islands but Fr. Pastells, Superior of the Jesuits, intervened on time. Simon and Wenceslao returned to Surigao after almost four years of exile in Jolo<sup>29</sup>.

In April 1896, the Spanish governor again exiled Simon and Wenceslao to Manila. Earlier, their brother Florencio was executed by Spanish authorities in Cebu for his Katipunan activities there. Both men never got to Manila because war broke out between Spain and the U.S. and they were detained in Iloilo<sup>30</sup>.

In September 1896, they obtained permission to go to Hongkong. They stayed only for a short time there and they later went to Manila where they got in contact with Aguinaldo's revolutionaries. After September 15, 1898, they attended sessions of the Malolos Congress. On January 2, 1899, Aguinaldo appointed Simon Gonzalez as Military Commander of Mindanao and Wenceslao as Governor of Surigao. On February 11, 1899, they returned triumphantly to Surigao<sup>31</sup>.

Returning in triumph to Surigao, the Gonzalez brothers declared it a free territory and part of the Republic of the Philippines and with the assistance of their legal supporters imprisoned the priests and missionaries, Jesuits and Benedictines alike<sup>32</sup>.

Simon was the first person to hoist the Philippine flag at Casa Real in Surigao while Wenceslao became the first person to hoist the Philippine flag in Butuan on January 14, 1899<sup>33</sup>.

When the Spanish-American war erupted, General Simon Gonzalez and Governor Wenceslao Gonzalez made military preparations and geared the

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* p. 553.

<sup>29</sup> Fernando ALMEDA, Jr., *The Revolution in Surigao: Heroes and Anti Heroes*, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> Leo A. CULLUM, "Notes on the Revolution in Surigao", *Philippine Studies*, p. 489.

<sup>31</sup> Peter SCHREURS, *Angry Days in Mindanao*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>32</sup> PRISCILLA GONZALEZ-ANEIUM, *The Gonzalez Freedom Fighters*, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2.

people in Surigao and Agusan for resistance against the Americans. However, their nationalistic efforts were thwarted when Prudencio Garcia, the general from Banganga, executed a coup d'etat and toppled and arrested the Gonzalezes after only 83 days in power<sup>34</sup>.

The year before, specifically on September 23, 1898 this Prudencio Garcia had taken matters into his hands and led a swift and successful uprising against the undermanned Spanish detachments at the Banganga-Cateel line on the Pacific coast of Surigao. After deposing the Spanish officers and other government officials, he installed himself as head of the new local government unit<sup>35</sup>.

On April 4, 1899, Garcia's men took Simon and Wenceslao, together with their father, Don Juan to the beach of Cortes where they were shot to death. Later, Gen. Garcia peacefully welcomed the Americans upon their arrival in Surigao<sup>36</sup>.

### III. *Central Mindanao (Lanao del Sur; Maguindanao, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat)*

From the Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao<sup>37</sup>, we learn that the people in Central Mindanao also rose up against the Spaniards. From the letter of Mariano Suarez to the Mission Superior, the father reported the plans of the deportees in Cotabato to rise against Spain as early as November 1896<sup>38</sup>. However, this was aborted by alert Spanish authorities.

In October 1898, Fr. Suarez wrote to the Superior about the plot of the Spanish Infantry to mutiny. However, the Spanish governor learned of the plot and the infantry men were disarmed, shackled and detained at the barracks<sup>39</sup>.

In November 1898, the Spanish authorities executed by firing squad in Cotabato forty nine of those who plotted against the Spaniards<sup>40</sup>.

In Pollok, Maguindanao, Father Baltazar Ferrer also wrote to the Mission Superior on December 7, 1898 that a conspiracy, probably planned jointly with those in Cotabato, was to take over the two gunboats of the Spaniards namely the Gardoqui and Bravo by killing the officers of the ships. But their plot was discovered and twenty -two persons were apprehended and brought on board the *Panay* to Isabela<sup>41</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> José ARCILLA, *Philippine Revolution and the Jesuit Mission in Mindanao, 1896-1901*, p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> José ARCILLA, *Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao*, p. 449.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 449-450.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 463-464.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* p. 467.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

In the same letter, Fr. Ferrer also mentioned the arrival a month earlier of more than 370 political exiles and convicts. Shortly on arrival, 101 were executed, some in Malaybay and Baras and others in Parang<sup>42</sup>.

After the Spanish withdrawal from Cotabato, Datu Piang declared himself Sultan of Mindanao. On January 6, 1899, with a thousand warriors, he occupied Cotabato and later on Tamontaka. The churches and convents were badly damaged and the pent-up wrath of the Maguindanaos against the Christian colonizers reached a peak of expression. The memory of indio participation against the Maguindanaos was still very strong<sup>43</sup>.

However, Datu Piang's reign in Cotabato was short-lived. In December, 1899, American occupation forces arrived in Pulangi, putting an end to the armed conflicts<sup>44</sup>.

Although Datu Piang co-opted with the American establishment, resistance to American rule was led by Datu Ali, a descendant of the Buayan ruling family and a former follower of Datu Uto. Datu Ali attempted to raise the whole Cotabato Valley in revolt. His fortress in Cotabato was the largest ever constructed in Mindanao. It would easily hold five thousand men. Although this fortress/garrison was eventually overrun and taken by the Americans he was not captured. Datu Ali of Buayan was the last Muslim of reknown to resist American rule through armed means<sup>45</sup>.

#### IV. *Western Mindanao (Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Zamboanga Norte and Zamboanga del Sur)*

At the beginning of Philippine revolution, a sergeant and a corporal attached to the 68th Regiment garrisoned in Jolo succeeded in winning members for the Katipunan. On the 4th of September, 1896, the native soldiers rose in arms at Fort Alfonso XII and engaged the government troops in various skirmishes. However, the movement was quickly suppressed and trial was summarily conducted with two sergeants, five corporals and two soldiers sentenced to death. The rest of those arrested were condemned to life imprisonment<sup>46</sup>.

By 1898, the repercussions of the revolution in Luzon were felt in Zamboanga where General Vicente Alvarez led the revolutionaries against the remaining Spanish contingents<sup>47</sup>.

---

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* p. 482.

<sup>43</sup> Reynaldo ILETO, *Maguindanao 1860-1888*, pp. 96-97.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* p. 97.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* p. 98.

<sup>46</sup> Antonio MOLINA, *The Philippines through the Centuries*, Vol II, pp. 73-74.

<sup>47</sup> Nelson GANANCIAL, *Moro Raids, Piracies or Offensive Operations: The Case of the Moros and the Philippine Revolution*, p. 12.

In April 1899, the rebels had captured a large storage of machine guns and rifles from Spanish gunboats off Basilan and on May 13, 1899 they began a siege of Zamboanga. The Spaniards finally evacuated the town; but at embarkation, Montero, a Spanish general was fatally wounded. General de los Rios surrendered the city to Gen. Alvarez on May 18, 1899 and evacuated his troops to Manila the next day.

After the Spanish evacuation, a petty civil war between the principalia of Zamboanga and a faction of the revolutionary militia broke out. On March 16, 1899 the American attacked Zamboanga with little resistance from the battle weary citizens.

In Jolo, when the first U.S. troops under Captain Pratt landed on May 18, 1899, the Tausugs did not resist. In July 1899, Military Governor Otis sent General John Bates to Jolo to negotiate an agreement with Sultan Jamulul Kiram II of Sulu. On August 20, 1899, the Bates Treaty was concluded establishing friendly relations between the Sultanate and the U.S.

#### V. *Southern Mindanao (Davao Norte, Davao Oriental, Davao Sur, South Cotabato)*

The Philippine revolution of 1896 caused no significant reaction in Davao. In November, 1896 Fr. Saturnino Urios, Superior of the Jesuits in Davao, wrote how much they thank God for the people in Davao continued to be friendly, unaffected by the revolution<sup>48</sup>.

In September, 1898, the Spanish officials in Davao received orders to vacate the place and turn over the government to the local authorities. When the Spaniards left Davao in mid January, 1899, a new council of government was installed but other refused to abide by it and so anarchy reigned in Davao<sup>49</sup>.

Unexpectedly on February 6, the tercios revolucionarios armed with rifles went on a rampage killing their senior officer, his wife and a young relative. Others joined them and they proclaimed themselves masters of the town. Somehow the Jesuits managed to convince the tercios to return. However, one of the principales, a friend of the lieutenant killed by the tercios fired a bullet killing the latter's murderer and so fighting ensued. However they were later pacified and peace finally settled down<sup>50</sup>.

These accounts clearly show that in all regions of Mindanao there were revolutionary activities waged by the community first against the Spaniards then later against the Americans.

---

<sup>48</sup> ARCILLA, *The Revolution in Davao*, p. 2.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

### C. The Role of the Muslims in Mindanao in the Philippine Revolution

Although there was not much direct participation of the Muslims in Mindanao in the Philippine Revolution from 1896 to 1901, first against the Spaniards and later against the Americans, focus should be made on the Muslims indispensable role in helping the Philippine Revolution through their continuous resistance against Spanish rule specially during the years immediately preceding the 1896 revolution.

#### 1. *The Hostilities between the Maguindanaos and the Spaniards*

In 1880, Datu Uto became the most powerful datu in the Pulangi area. The Spaniards decided to conquer the Datu to demonstrate that the Maguindanaos have no chance against the might of the Spaniards.

In 1884, a fierce battle between the Spaniards and the forces of Datu Uto in Tumbao took place but the Datu's man there was defeated. But Datu Uto remained unconquered such that in 1886 Governor General Terrero had to personally lead the punitive campaign against the Datu. After more than a year of fighting, Datu Uto was forced to sue for peace through a letter. The Spaniards content by the letter abandoned their expedition. This expedition was criticized in Manila for its very large expenses<sup>51</sup>.

Gen. Valeriano Weyler succeeded Governor Terrero as Governor General in 1888. He strengthened the Spanish forces in Cotabato but decided to conquer first the unconquered Maranaos<sup>52</sup>.

#### 2. *Two Attacks Undertaken by the Spaniards against the Maranaos*

On August 21, 1891, the Spaniards under Governor General Valeriano Weyler attacked the Maranaos at Fort Marawi under Datu Amai Pakpak. Unaware of concealed pits or ditches planted with sharpened bamboo sticks, and covered with plants and vines, many Spaniards fell and got killed. However, they succeeded in scaling the fort's wall and defeat the defenders. Amai Pakpak escaped death<sup>53</sup>.

But Weyler three days later abandoned the fort in fear of Maranaos who were already massing for an assault on the Spaniards. They returned to Iligan<sup>54</sup>.

In March 10, 1895, Gov. General Ramon Blanco with a force of about 3,000 Spanish troops aided by countless volunteers marched to Marawi<sup>55</sup>.

---

<sup>51</sup> Alfaro ALILAYA, *The Role of the Maguindanao's and Maranaos in the Philippine Revolution*, p. 6.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 6-7.

<sup>53</sup> Manuel R. TAWAGON, *Amai Pakpak, 1843-1895*, p. 13.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Alilaya ALFARO, *The Role of the Maguindanaos and the Meranaos in the Philippine Revolution*, p. 8.

After severe fighting including hand to hand encounters and with heavy losses on both sides, Blanco's superior power succeeded in planting the Spanish flag upon the fort for the second time. But it was at the cost of 18 Spaniards dead and 197 wounded<sup>56</sup>.

### 3. *Effect of the wars waged by Spain against the Maguindanaos and Maranaos*

The conquistadores of Spain have met their match in the Islam's warriors of Mindanao and Sulu because after 300 years of fighting the Moros preserved their independence, religion and culture<sup>57</sup>. The Muslims had staged a bitter and uninterrupted warfare against the might of Spain for a period of 337 years<sup>58</sup>.

The Moro Wars became a factor in the development of the Philippine Revolution. The Wars sapped the energies of Spanish officials and gave them little opportunity to strengthen the Spanish hold on Luzon, thereby creating a situation favorable to a revolutionary movement. While the Christian natives were taxed and recruited into forced labor in support of the campaign against the Muslims, the Spanish authorities failed to protect Christian settlements from Muslims ravages. Thus, the Moro wars too, helped create sources of discontent which combined with other dynamics responsible for the Philippine Revolution<sup>59</sup>.

Statistical data show that the Politico-Military Government of Mindanao begun incurring a deficit spending of 439,920.03 pesos in 1884; at Insular level a comparison shows that the staggering deficit accounted for 1,846,718.01 pesos and the budget for the succeeding years before the 1896 Revolution reflected the same trend. The budget immediately preceding the Revolution, that of 1895-1896, reflected the war department getting the lion's share of 4,045,061.34 pesos. A good percentage went to salaries of the clergy and support of the church amounting to 1,045,540 pesos. At the outbreak of the 1896 Revolution, the Insular Government had at its disposal a limited force consisting of two squadrons of cavalry, one battalion of engineers, one artillery regiment, and seven regiments of infantry. Six of these infantry regiments were then in Mindanao for the Lake Lanao campaign, but some of these were immediately recalled<sup>60</sup>.

Because substantial Spanish forces were concentrated on these places of Mindanao including the forces along the trocha of the isthmus, Spanish forces in Manila were too weak to suppress the revolution. Therefore, in its

---

<sup>56</sup> Mamitua SABER, *Battle of Marawi*, 1895, p. 7.

<sup>57</sup> Antonio ISIDRO, *Muslim Philippines*, p. 41.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* p. 12.

<sup>59</sup> F de los ANGELES, *Mindanao: Story of an Island*, p. 61.

<sup>60</sup> Michael MASTURA, *The 1896 Revolution in Search of Historical Argument*, p. 8.

contextual aspects, the activities of the Moros along the isthmus, the relationship of the Moros and the Subanen and the concentration of the Spanish forces in Mindanao contributed to the success of the Philippine revolution of 1896<sup>61</sup>.

Burdened with financial constraints, the Spaniards could not fight two fronts at the same time, so, they fixed their attention to Mindanao. Because of this, their control in Luzon was eased as the big bulk of their forces was sent to the south. It was during this period that the Katipunan spread all over Luzon. Therefore, there is enough reason to believe that the Moro resistance had contributed in the strengthening of the Katipunan because without the military campaigns in Mindanao, there would have been enough Spanish forces in Manila to check their activities<sup>62</sup>.

The Moros may not have taken part in the actual combat during the revolution, but their unwavering resistance to Spanish domination is enough contribution to the cause of freedom. Their resistance and offensive operations undermined the Spanish plan to subjugate totally the archipelago. Enormous amount of money for the improvement of the army and the navy were spent, leaving behind other services for the colony, which resulted in dissatisfaction among Spanish subjects. This dissatisfaction, among others was one of the reasons of the revolution. Revolution is change and change is a process, in short, a revolution does not happen at a flick of fingers, but develop until it matured. The Philippine Revolution, therefore, was the climax of the process, the maturity of the determination of the Filipinos to be free<sup>63</sup>.

The Moro resistance, raids and piracies therefore, were the Moro contributions in the fights against the colonizers that reached the climax in the Philippine Revolution of 1896<sup>64</sup>.

## **Conclusion**

From the discussions above, it is clear that the people of Mindanao, the Christians, Muslims and lumads had participated in the Philippine Revolution that culminated in Philippine independence that we are now celebrating.

It is unfortunate that for a hundred years our historians have disregarded the heroic deeds of the people of Mindanao by merely mentioning them in passing, if at all.

---

<sup>61</sup> Eduardo CASAS, *The Trocha Along the Mindanao Isthmus*, p. 14.

<sup>62</sup> GANANCIAL, p. 7.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* p. 12.

But a hundred years is not too late to correct our history books. A hundred years could not suppress the recognition that is due to our heroes in Mindanao. It is about time to declare as national heroes Nicolas Capistrano, Apolinar Velez, Vicente Roa, and Apolinario Pabayo from Misamis Oriental, Rufino Deloso, Simeon Ledesma and Capitan Daligdig from Misamis Occidental; Simon and Wenceslao Gonzalez of Surigao; Datu Uto and Datu Ali of Cotabato; Amai Pakpak of Marawi and Vicente Alvarez of Zamboanga.

Only by recognizing the heroic struggle of the people of Mindanao against colonial rule and by declaring as national heroes the Mindanaoans who fought so that this nation may be free and independent can we achieve a truthful and truly national celebration of the Philippine Centennial and the unity of the entire Filipino people.

Rufus B. RODRÍGUEZ

# DOCE PLÁTICAS INÉDITAS DE SAN ALONSO DE OROZCO

Jesús DIEZ, OAR

## INTRODUCCIÓN

Las bibliografías más completas de san Alonso de Orozco suelen citar entre sus escritos las «Doce pláticas» que a continuación se publican por primera vez. Así lo hace Gregorio de Santiago Vela en su *Ensayo de una biblioteca ibero-americana de la orden de san Agustín*, citándolas entre las obras del santo con el número 49<sup>1</sup>, y lo repite más recientemente el padre Luciano Rubio en *El beato Alonso de Orozco, hombre de letras*<sup>2</sup>. Los dos indican que esta obrita pertenece hoy a los fondos de la Biblioteca Nacional, catalogada con la signatura: Mss 7722<sup>3</sup>.

La curiosidad por las cosas del nuevo santo me llevó a consultarla, y el posterior aprecio por su contenido a publicarla, confiando que este hecho pueda interpretarse como un regalo del mismo Orozco a sus devotos de hoy.

### 1. Observaciones generales

Ofrezco, en primer lugar, unas notas obligadas sobre el manuscrito y sobre las pláticas en él contenidas.

#### *El manuscrito*

La ficha que de este escrito ofrece Vela es muy completa y exacta, por lo que hay poco que añadirle. Se trata, como allí se dice, de un pequeño tomo cuyas hojas miden 16 x 10 cm (él dice 16 x 10 mm por evidente error), con una encuadernación en pergamino algo mayor (17 x 11 cm) y el texto escrito de aproximadamente 14 x 8 cm. Tiene una primera página de portada sin

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ensayo...* VI, Madrid 1922, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Madrid 1992, c. 3, 2, p. 61-62.

<sup>3</sup> Así consta en el *Inventario general de manuscritos de la Biblioteca Nacional*, v. 12, Madrid 1988, p. 155: «7722. Alonso de Orozco (O.S.A.): *Pláticas (12) inéditas [espirituales]*.- S. XVI-XVII, papel, 160 x 94 mm. 92 ff. / Al principio una nota sobre este ms. del P. Francisco Méndez. / SANTIAGO VELA, *Ensayo*, p. 166, n. 49».

foliar, 91 de texto foliadas y otra de índice que Vela afirma estar «sin paginar», pero que alguien numeró posteriormente como folio 92; siguen cuatro más en blanco. Cada página tiene de ordinario entre 18 y 20 líneas. El tomo está bien conservado, con leves manchas en algunos sitios. En los folios 19v y 20r las esquinas inferiores son casi ilegibles —tres palabras en cada una— por haber estado pegadas entre sí.

La portada contiene dos notas. Una del padre Francisco Méndez, que después de un título en mayúsculas —*V. OROZCO*—, otro en letra normal —*Pláticas inéditas*— y una cruz gruesa de brazos iguales, añade dos recomendaciones: «Guárdese este manuscrito con gran cuidado, y fuera bueno sacar una copia bien hecha e imprimirle. / Ítem, buscar un sermón de honras que el venerable predicó de la cristianísima reina doña Isabel y le cita don Nicolás Antonio, que dice se imprimió en Burgos por Felipe Giunta, año de 1583, [en] 8º». La segunda advertencia, escrita a lápiz, explica la autoría de la anterior: «N[ota] B[ene]. Esta portada es de letra del agustino Méndez. G».

Ambas observaciones muestran dos tipos de letra distintos del de las doce pláticas en el resto del manuscrito. De éste dice Vela: «Es una copia antigua de buena letra, muy clara y limpia, pero con muchas abreviaturas; pudiera pertenecer al siglo XVI, aunque la encuadernación denuncie fecha más reciente. El padre Méndez la cotejó con otros originales e introdujo algunas correcciones, ingiriendo también varios papelitos con frases o partes del texto omitidas por el amanuense, acaso por descuido». Tales inserciones son dos, en los folios 36r y 51r, con dos y dieciséis líneas respectivamente; los mencionados papelitos están pegados por su lado izquierdo en el centro del libro, entre esos folios y sus anteriores.

Como ya se indica, se trata de una copia. No hay duda razonable de que el escrito que contiene sea de Orozco. Lo atestigua la referencia de Méndez, hombre habituado al «continuo manejo de papeles y libros viejos»<sup>4</sup>, que conocería su letra y que debió de tener delante el original para hacer las correcciones y añadidos comentados; pero también lo certifica el estilo mismo de las pláticas, su lenguaje, la forma de sus continuas referencias bíblicas, su modo de hablar dulce y fuerte, cariñoso y exigente, piadoso, ameno y certero, con otros muchos detalles que al lector medianamente avisado le aseguran su autoría. Como no se conocen otras referencias a esta obra, sólo cabe sospechar que se perdió el original o que, en el mejor de los casos, está en paradero desconocido.

Se supone fácilmente que la fidelidad general es absoluta, garantizada, entre otras razones, por el aludido cotejo para su corrección. Otra cosa es el grado de libertad que pudo tomarse el copista respecto a cosas secundarias, como la modernización ortográfica del texto, la transcripción de las muy

<sup>4</sup> Biografía de Francisco Méndez en SANTIAGO VELA, Gregorio, *o. c.* V, Madrid 1920, p. 380b.

numerosas abreviaturas o el tratamiento de las citas dentro del escrito. En cuanto a la ortografía, parece muy probable que fuera parcialmente actualizada, como se ve por la aceptable puntuación (aunque sin separación de párrafos), el uso normal de mayúsculas, eñes y otras cosas, no asemejándose ya a la común del siglo XVI; en los demás detalles es difícil que pueda precisarse cuánta es su correspondencia con el original, aunque esto sea en realidad menos importante. Las mismas correcciones atribuidas a Méndez parece unas veces que quieren devolver a alguna palabra su fidelidad original enmendando errores involuntarios, y otras, al revés, que se pretende introducir con ellas algún leve cambio en el texto para «arreglarlo» y facilitar su comprensión al lector. En ocasiones se advierte algún titubeo, añadiendo alguna palabra sobre otra tachada o sin tachar. Las citas al margen no es creíble que sean de Orozco cuando incluyen o añaden la referencia al versillo, porque él no citaba así.

El padre Méndez, que revisó el traslado, vivió de 1725 a 1803; cabe pensar que pudo hacerlo y escribir sus notas de la portada hacia el último tercio del siglo XVIII. La copia propiamente tal, la que él tuvo en sus manos y revisó, es difícil saber cuándo se hizo, porque su «buena letra, muy clara y limpia» es un poco intemporal, no dando tantos indicios para su datación como lo haría otra más ordinaria e informal. La relativa modernización de su ortografía podría acercarla seguramente a los tiempos del mismo Méndez.

### ***Las Pláticas***

Pero es más interesante estudiar lo que se refiere a las pláticas mismas, y en primer lugar a la ocasión en que se suponen pronunciadas. Salvo una que lleva el elocuente título «de cárcel» y otra el genérico de «en cualquier elección», que sin duda se refiere sobre todo a la vida religiosa pero que también es aplicable a otro tipo de elecciones, las demás se dedican a diversos acontecimientos de la vida conventual, tanto de religiosos como de monjas. Por su orden, las encabezan los títulos siguientes: «plática de capítulo», «de visita», «en cualquier elección», «en velo de monja», «para cuando uno toma el hábito», «de profesión», «en velo de monja», «de cárcel», «de monjas», «de capítulo», otra «de capítulo» y, finalmente, otra «de capítulo» con el subtítulo *De observantia legum*. Su extensión media es de unos siete folios y medio (15 caras); la más breve es la quinta (cinco caras y media), y la más larga la séptima, que pasa de 22 caras.

Como se ve, el asunto más recurrente es el «de capítulo», con cuatro pláticas dedicadas a él. El padre Vela cree que «debieron de ser pronunciadas en otros tantos capítulos provinciales, pues es de presumir que no las compusiera sólo el Beato para ejercicio de su inteligencia», y añade que no carecería de importancia averiguar cuáles habrían sido. Pero en realidad no hay en ellas ninguna indicación que haga pensar en capítulos provinciales, y sí muchas a otros tantos «capítulos de culpas», como muestran los