

## **Tandang Sora**

Like many Filipinos at the time, Melchora found livelihood in farming. When she was older, she married Fulgencio Ramos. Together, they had six children. Fulgencio died shortly after their sixth was born, leaving Melchora to raise them all on her own. The hardships she endured as a single mother only bolstered her resolve to support the Katipunan, to which she sacrificed almost everything in her possession. Her home became one of the headquarters of the Katipunan, where revolutionaries would frequently hold secret meetings. Bonifacio, who affectionately called her **Tandang Sora**, also frequented her home and sought her advice and wisdom. In 1896, the Katipunan was discovered by the Spanish colonial government, thanks to the confessions of one of its members to a Spanish priest. The Spaniards immediately targeted Melchora. On August 29, 1896 the Spaniards collected her without regard for her age or frailty. She was shaken, but not afraid. She was transferred to Bilibid Prison in Manila. There, she was interrogated, under threat of imprisonment and death, but she refused to give up the Katipunan. They deported her to Guam where she was forced to work as a household helper. After seven years of exile, on February 26, 1903, the Great Old Woman of the Revolution was allowed to return home to the Philippines where she received a grand welcome by her children, her neighbors, and the former Katipuneros she sheltered. She lived out her life until her death on February 19, 1919 at the impressive age of 107, outlasting the Spanish Colonial rule in the Philippines.

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## **Teresa Magbanua**

(October 13, 1868 - August 1947)

When the revolt against Spanish colonizers broke out at her province in Iloilo, Magbanua joined the rebel troops with her uncle and two brothers. Magbanua was instrumental in major engagements around Iloilo, most notably in the Battle of Barrio Yoting in Pilar, Capiz. Magbanua led 700 men on horseback and defeated approximately 400 rifle-wielding cazadores. Barrio Yoting was immediately followed by a victory in Sap-ong Sara, where around 1,000 bolo men fought and decisively won against 450 Spanish regular troops. In both instances, Magbanua led her men on horseback. Her skill in battle and charisma led her to command a large regiment. Her soldiers affectionately called her Nay Isa and were almost fanatical in following her orders. When the Spanish were driven out and replaced by a far more sinister foreign invader, the United States of America, Magbanua and her brothers, General Pascual Magbuana and Major Elias Magbanua, were ready. The Americans proved to be more than a match and when the regional headquarters in Santa Barbara, Iloilo fell, Magbanua started using guerrilla tactics. Eventually, however, a string of losses took its toll on and she was forced to surrender in 1900. Magbanua went back to her life before the war and took to farming with her husband. They

continued to tend to their land in Pototan for decades until another war broke out. This time, the Japanese came. When her husband died shortly after the Japanese invasion, she sold all her land and used the money to provide food and supplies to guerrillas fighting the Japanese. She provided constant financial support, and in that small way, was instrumental in helping her fellow Filipinos resist a third foreign invader.

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### **Magat Salamat** (1550 - 1588)

Datu Magat Salamat was one of the chiefs of the flourishing village of Tondo. Many legends are told of Magat Salamat, the man. It has been told that one day, while Magat was walking along the banks of the Pasig River, near the mouth of the bay, he heard frantic cries and saw a little boy struggling in the water and about to drown. Without taking off his clothes, he plunged in, and battling the treacherous currents, succeeded in saving the boy. Another evening, so runs a tale, Magat was on his way homeward. It was nearly dark when he overtook an old woman struggling under a big load of firewood. The young man offered his help and shouldered the firewood without any fuss. Salamat was best known for co-organizing the Tondo Conspiracy of 1587. The conspirators met secretly and, swearing by their dead ancestors to shed their last drop of blood for the liberation of the land, formed an organization or katipunan. There is a beautiful parallelism between this katipunan and the Katipunan founded by Bonifacio almost three centuries later. The "first Katipunan," like the Katipunan of Bonifacio, aimed at the recovery of the independence of the archipelago by a revolution to be pushed to success through the concerted action of the different tribes. The plans were secretly laid in Tondo. Before Magat Salamat and his men could launch an offensive against the Spaniards, a traitor disclosed their plot to the authorities and leading to the arrest of Magat. With the death of Magat Salamat and his companions, the first attempt at winning the independence of the Islands by revolution came to an end. Magat Salamat paid dearly for the "*lost cause*". But his spirit lived beyond the grave. It survived the centuries, and was reincarnated in Andres Bonifacio who raised the red standard of revolution in 1896.

*Magat Salamat, chief of Tondo, a forgotten hero of the first Katipunan over 300 years ago*. The Kahimyang Project. (2014, June 8). Retrieved December 1, 2022, from <https://kahimyang.com/kauswagan/articles/1670/magat-salamat-chief-of-tondo-a-forgotten-hero-of-the-first-katipunan-over-300-years-ago>

## **General Luna**

(October 29, 1866–June 5, 1899)

Antonio Luna was a soldier, chemist, musician, war strategist, journalist, pharmacist, and hot-headed general, a complex man who was, unfortunately, perceived as a threat by the Philippines' ruthless first president Emilio Aguinaldo. As a result, Luna died not on the battlefields of the Philippine-American War, but he was assassinated on the streets of Cabanatuan.

For the Americans, this internecine fighting was a gift. General James F. Bell noted that Luna "was the only general the Filipino army had" and Aguinaldo's forces suffered disastrous defeat after disastrous defeat in the wake of Antonio Luna's murder. Aguinaldo spent most of the next 18 months in retreat, before being captured by the Americans on March 23, 1901.

Szczepanski, K. (2019, August 19). *Biography of Antonio Luna, hero of the Philippine-American War*. ThoughtCo. Retrieved November 25, 2022, from <https://www.thoughtco.com/antonio-luna-philippine-american-war-hero-195644>

## **Dawn Mabalon**

(August 17, 1972 - August 10, 2018)

A scholar, writer, historian, friend, foodie, pop culture junkie, and wife, Dawn was born and raised in Stockton, California and dedicated her life to social justice.

Dawn Mabalon documented the rich Filipino-American history in California through her work as a professor and the many articles and books she published, especially *Little Manila Is in the Heart: The Making of the Filipina/o American Community in Stockton, California* (Duke University Press, 2013), *Filipinos in Stockton* (Arcadia Publishing, 2008), and *Filipinos in San Francisco* (Arcadia Publishing, 2011). Dr. Mabalon's work is rooted in a decolonial perspective of the relationship between the U.S. empire and the Philippines as colonial subject, and in Filipino-American and Asian-American history, with a special interest in diasporic foodways. Her writing and works have strongly shaped and influenced Asian-American studies and activism in the United States. Her many awards include the President's Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation (with the Little Manila Foundation), California Preservation Foundation, San Francisco State University Presidential Professional Development Award, and the Ford Foundation Post-Doctoral Fellowship for Excellence in College and University Teaching, among others.

By always thinking of others and pushing forward the significant stories of her ancestors, she helped pave the way to an enlightened future for the multi-racial reality that honors the toil of immigrants in the United States, and the fight for social and historical equity.

Somcan. (2020, October 19). *A tribute to Dawn Bohulano Mabalon*. SOMCAN. Retrieved November 25, 2022, from <https://www.somcan.org/newsletter/2020/9/23/a-tribute-to-dawn-bohulano-mabalon>

**Lapu Lapu**  
(1491 - 1542)

Lapu-Lapu is widely known as a hero who opposed subjugation by the European colonizer Ferdinand Magellan in the Battle of Mactan on April 27, 1521. Magellan stumbled onto Cebu in 1521. He convinced the ruler, Rajah Humabon, to be baptized into Catholicism. After his baptism, Humabon complained to Magellan about Lapu Lapu who ruled Mactan Island. Mactan's location allowed its ruler to control trade coming in and out of Cebu. This, along with Lapu-Lapu's reputation as a fearless fighter allowed him to assert dominance over Humabon. Humabon was looking for a way to cut Lapu-Lapu's power and convinced Magellan to fight Lapu-Lapu. Magellan attacked Mactan on April 27, 1521. The brute and his men waded to shore to engage Lapu-Lapu's warriors. Magellan's forces were overrun and Magellan himself was put down. After Magellan died, the remaining soldiers rushed back to the ship and fled.

The outcome of the battle led to the departure of the Spaniards from the archipelago and delayed the colonization of the Philippines by 44 years until the conquest of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi in 1565.

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Mayol, A. V. (2021, April 25). *Lapulapu: Hero behind the myth*. INQUIRER.net. Retrieved November 25, 2022, from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1423340/lapulapu-hero-behind-the-myth>

**Rajah Sulayman**  
(1558 - 1575)

Rajah Sulayman led the last resisting force opposing the Spanish invasion of Manila in 1571. Rajah Sulayman, Rajah Matanda, and Lakan Dula were powerful allies who co-ruled Manila in the 16th century. The three rulers of Manila had territories that were strategically placed in different areas along the Pasig River Delta opening up to Manila Bay. In June 1570, after Spaniards subjugated some Datus from the Visayas, Miguel de Legazpi ordered the establishment of an outpost in the north. He sent emissaries to Manila to extend a "message of friendship". It was the same tactic used to capture Visayan territories: offer friendship and protection for pledging allegiance to the Spanish Crown.

Rajah Matanda was receptive to the advances of the Spaniards but Rajah Sulayman refused to cede power. Sulayman declared war on the colonizers, who promptly attacked Manila, burning the city to the ground. After the fierce battle, the three rulers retreated uphill. The Spanish feared the monsoon season and soon also left. However, they returned a year later on June 3, 1571. De Legazpi arrived with a larger invading force. Rajah Sulayman and his ally Tarik Sulayman resisted the Spanish force but ultimately lost the naval battle known as the Battle of Bangkusay Channel. With the two Sulaymans defeated, Manila was easily taken by Legazpi. The remaining rulers of Manila, Lakan Dula and Rajah Matanda, welcomed the Spanish conquistador and made a deal with him. This marked the fall of Manila to the Spanish Crown. Manila would become the seat of the Spanish empire in Asia.

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## **Carlos Bulosan**

(November 24, 1913 - September 11, 1956)

Carlos Bulosan was born in the rural farming village of Mangusmana in Luzon. Like many families in the Philippines, Carlos's family struggled to survive because of the conditions in the Philippines created by US colonization. To help support his family and further his education, Carlos decided to come to America and arrived in Seattle when he was 17.

Though Bulosan was only 42-45 years old when he died of tuberculosis-complicated pneumonia in Seattle in 1956, he left behind a large body of poems, novels, short stories, plays, and correspondence on a range of related topics. Best known for, "America is in the Heart" Bulosan's works captures the "push" factors that drove his generation to the United States. Like Bulosan, they hoped to find a better future and forged resilient and adaptive communities in the face of an often-hostile and exploitative European American culture in the United States. First migrating to the United States via Seattle in 1930, he spent several years working migratory labor jobs and labor organizing with his fellow Filipino immigrants. In doing so, Bulosan shared common experiences with many other first-generation Filipino migrant workers, most of whom worked in domestic jobs or in agricultural or cannery labor on a migratory labor circuit that spanned the West Coast—from California to Oregon, Washington, and Alaska. His labor organizing writing also got the attention of the FBI, who labeled him a communist, had constant surveillance on him for at least six years, and blacklisted him from getting any job.

*Carlos Bulosan Exhibit*. Carlos Bulosan. (n.d.). Retrieved November 25, 2022, from <https://bulosan.org/>

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**Larry Itliong (need to print this out)**  
(October 25, 1913 - February 8, 1977)

Larry Itliong belonged to the “Manong” (Ilocano for “elder brother”) generation or the first major wave of Filipino immigrants in the United States between the 1900s to the 1930s. Itliong immigrated to the United States in 1929 when he was 15 years old and immediately began working as a farm laborer and in the salmon canneries of Alaska. His heart was set on becoming an attorney and seeking justice for the poor. But the poverty he lived through and violent racism he and Filipinos encountered barred him from getting the education he initially sought. He never became an attorney, but he became a Filipino-American labor leader and organizer in Alaska and throughout the West Coast.

His most lasting legacy was his role in the Delano Grape Strikes. On September 7, 1965 in Delano, a small town four hours outside of Stockton, he convinced the grape workers at Filipino Hall to vote to go on strike. The next day, the Delano Grape Strike began, and more than 2,000 Filipino farm workers marched off the vineyards, demanding \$1.40 an hour, 25 cents a box, and the right to form a union. Since farm owners often pitted Mexican picking crews against Filipino crews, Itliong also contacted Cesar Chavez and asked Mexican farmworkers to join the strike. He understood that all workers had to stand together in their fight for justice. In a unanimous vote, the Mexicans joined the Filipinos. A year later, AWOC and NFWA merged to become the United Farm Workers (UFW). The Delano grape strike lasted for five years and became one of the most pivotal labor movements in the history of the United States.

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**Jose Rizal**  
(June 19, 1861 – December 30, 1896)

José Rizal was a Filipino nationalist, writer and polymath active at the end of the Spanish colonial period of the Philippines. An ophthalmologist by profession, Rizal became a writer and a key member of the Filipino Propaganda Movement.

As an *illustardo*, Rizal traveled to Spain to complete his medical studies in 1882. The admiration and trust Rizal gained from his colleagues led to his being named the honorary president of *La Solidaridad*, which launched the propaganda movement in Spain. Rizal continued his studies

abroad, traveling around Europe, Japan, and the United States. When Rizal returned to the Philippines in 1892, he founded *La Liga Filipina*. The organization was meant to organize mutual aid, dispense scholarship funds, legal aid, loaning capital and setting up cooperatives. The society was short-lived as it became a threat to Spanish authorities who arrested Rizal on July 6, 1892, and sent him to Dapitan. Despite its short existence, the impact of La Liga Filipina was large. One of the members who was attending the induction of the society was Andres Bonifacio.

Rizal was executed by the Spanish colonial government for the crime of rebellion after the Philippine Revolution broke out. Rizal is widely considered one of the greatest heroes of the Philippines. He wrote the novels *Noli Me Tángere* (1887) and *El filibusterismo* (1891), which together are taken as a national epic, in addition to numerous poems and essays.

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### **Gabriela Silang**

(March 19, 1731 - September 20, 1763)

A daughter of a peasant in Ilocos, Gabriela Silang was forced to wed a wealthy businessman, who died of old age three years into their marriage. Silang's second husband was rebel leader Diego Silang, who saw her not only as a wife but his "equal and closest advisor."

Diego Silang was imprisoned by the Spanish authorities and eventually assassinated by a traitor paid by the Catholic church. Following his death, Gabriela took on full leadership of the resistance. She moved into the Abra mountains to establish a new base, reassemble her troops and recruit from the local Tingguian community to fight the Spanish. The revolt became one of the longest sustained battles against the Spanish colonizers, with Silang launching guerrilla attacks one after the other, causing the enemies to fear her name. Silang and her forces were eventually captured. She and around 100 resistance fighters were executed by the colonizers on Sept. 20, 1763.

The people of the Philippines eventually defeated Spanish colonialism in 1898, only to begin a new anti-colonial struggle against the United States. Despite harsh, racist repression and vicious massacres, the U.S. imperialists faced the same problems as the Spanish had. They too were unable to subdue the Filipino people.

The courageous fighting spirit and leadership of people like Gabriela still marks the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist struggle being waged in the Philippines.

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### **Nieves Fernandez**

(1906 - 1996)

Nieves Fernandez was a school teacher in Tacloban. Her life was upturned when the Japanese invaded the Philippines in 1941. Her students call her “Miss Fernandez,” and she was very protective of them. Her fierce motherly instincts reared to the fore when the Japanese threatened to kill her students. She turned from motherly school teacher to stealthy lone assassin, credited for downing more than 200 Japanese soldiers in World War II. Alone and dressed in all-black attire, she would set up ambushes in the jungle armed only with a makeshift shotgun, which she made out of a gas pipe, and her *bolo*. For two and a half years, Fernandez carried out ambushes on her own. She would head into the jungle barefoot, taking out dozens of enemy troops alone.

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### **Andres Bonifacio**

(November 30, 1863 – May 10, 1897)

Andres Bonifacio was born in Tondo, Manila on November 30, 1863. The oldest of 6 children he had to stop school to support his siblings when his parents died. He worked as a messenger and warehouse keeper before becoming involved in revolutionary activity. In addition to his revolutionary activities, Bonifacio was well read, a poet, and polyglot.

Bonifacio was the Supreme of the Katipunan, also known as Kataas-taasan, Kagalang-galang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan (Highest and Most Venerated Association of the Sons and Daughters of the Land). Founded in 1892 the Katipunan’s goal was to win Philippine independence from Spain by means of a revolution. The Katipunan at first grew slowly, but by 1896 it had an estimated 100,000 members and branches not only in Manila but also in central Luzon and on the islands of Panay, Mindoro, and Mindanao. Its members were mostly workers and peasants. The revolution Bonifacio started paved the way for Philippine Independence in June 1898.

Bonifacio would not survive to see a Philippines free from Spanish rule. He was betrayed by competing factions within the Katipunan who supported eventual president Emilio Aguinaldo. In 1897, Aguinaldo’s men arrested Bonifacio and raped his wife, Gregoria de Jesus. A trial was held and Bonifacio was found guilty on charges of treason. He and his brother were executed by cowards, hacked to death by bolos in the mountains of Maragondon on May 10, 1897.



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### **Gregoria de Jesus (May 9, 1875 – March 15, 1943)**

Gregoria de Jesús y Álvarez was among the first women inducted into the Katipunan. She married Andrés Bonifacio, the Supremo of the Katipunan and President of the Katagalugan Revolutionary Government. The Katipununan insisted they be married under its rites as they viewed the Roman Catholic Church as an illegitimate colonial institution and it didn't accept its authority. De Jesus took on the name *Lakambini*. As Lakambini she took on the duty of keeping the Katipunan's documents and seal safe. She also took charge of the very delicate task of gathering intelligence and helping to keep the society a secret. Together with other women of the Katipunan, De Jesus intercepted valuable information from the Spanish, and hosted fake banquets with accompanying live band to mask their meetings. As a soldier, she didn't shy away from any task. She "learned how to ride, to shoot a rifle, and to manipulate other weapons which [she] actually used on many occasions." She was present in many of the battles as a fellow soldier and revolutionary.

Within the Katipunan, tensions at the top of the leadership created a split between Bonifacio's faction and Aguinaldo's faction. In 1897, Aguinaldo's men arrested Bonifacio and raped De Jesus. A trial was held and Bonifacio was found guilty on charges of treason. He and his brother were executed by cowards, hacked to death by bolos in the mountains of Maragondon on May 10, 1897. De Jesus was inconsolable but found solace in her grief through Julio Nakpil, Katipunan commander and a man personally loyal to Bonifacio. They fell in love and were married a year later. Oriang would then settle in Quiapo, in what is now known as Bahay Nakpil-Bautista. Not much is known of Oriang's life after the Revolution, except that she died in 1943, when the Philippines was occupied by Japanese forces.

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**Carmen Rosales**  
**(March 3, 1917 - December 11, 1991)**

Januarina Constantino Keller better known by her stage name *Carmen Rosales*, made her film debut in the 1938 movie *Mahiwagang Binibini*, which would become one of her classics in later years. Life was peaceful for Rosales, her husband radio personality Ramon Novales, and son Rene. But then the war arrived at their doorstep in the worst way possible when Novales was killed by Japanese forces when the empire arrived in Manila at the dawn of World War II. Rosales shed her career as an actress, donning a new title: guerrilla fighter and sharpshooter for the freedom fighters of the Philippines. The cause to free the Filipino people from Japanese oppression took Rosales to the countryside of CALABARZON, particularly Santa Rosa, Laguna. Her time as a wartime fighter was immortalized in the film *Guerilyera* (1946). It cast aside the stereotype of the Filipino damsel in distress, with Rosales starring as herself, one of the many heroines of the Philippines. A woman of duality capable of courage on the battlefield and vulnerability on the big screen, Rosales exemplified the fierce, heroic spirit of all Filipino women. Carmen Rosales died on December 11, 1991 in Mandaluyong at the age of 74.

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