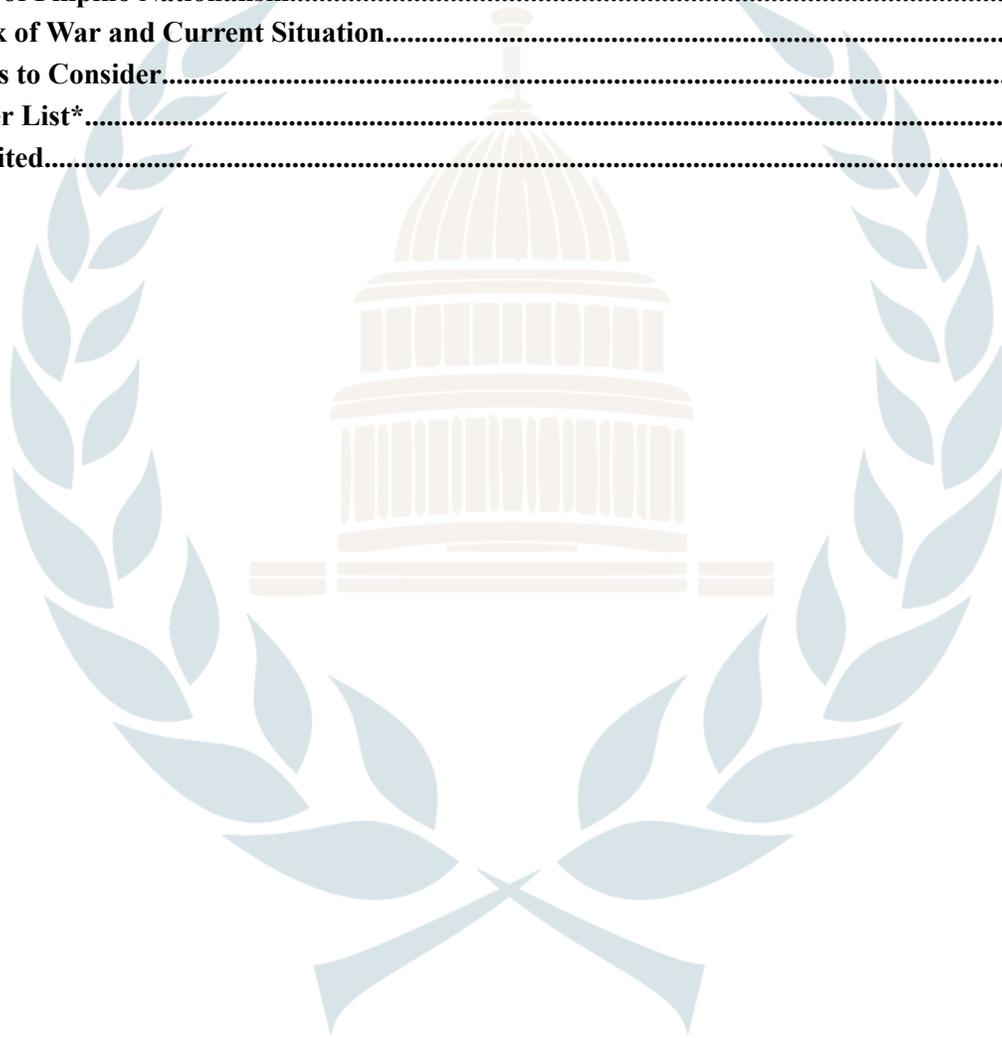


Supreme Council of the Katipunan, 1896

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Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to WAMUNC XXVIII! My name is Daniel Catapang, and it is my pleasure to serve as the Chair of the *Supreme Council of the Katipunan*, 1896. As a Filipino-American, this committee holds a special place in my heart. In fact, this revolution broke out only a few miles away from my family home in Manila.

I'm currently a Junior at the George Washington University, double-majoring in International Affairs and Asian Studies with a minor in History. I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area but have lived in Arlington, VA, since coming to the DMV. Alongside staffing WAMUNC, I also compete on the collegiate circuit on the GW Model UN Travel Team and was USG of Crisis at our sister Conference, GWCIA XXX. Outside of school and MUN, I am the Editor-in-Chief of *The Globe*, the Undergraduate Journal of the Elliott School of International Affairs, but you can also talk to me about emo music and football (**Go Niners! Go Buckeyes!**)

This committee is set at a turning point in Filipino history, when an Asian people oppressed by centuries of colonialism revolted to establish their own free nation. Inspired by the ideals of Dr. Jose Rizal and led by the Katipunan Revolutionaries, thousands of Filipinos rose up against Spanish rule. Delegates should consider the different visions the revolutionaries had for the nation and the many disadvantages the Katipunan had against the Spanish.

I am thrilled to see what every delegate brings to the table in this committee, and I hope that you will learn new things and have fun this weekend.

Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!

Daniel Catapang

daniel.catapang@gwu.edu

Letter from the Crisis Director

Dear Delegates,

Hello and Welcome to WAMUNC XXVII!!!! I am Ethan Albert, and I will be your Crisis Director for the *Supreme Council of the Katipunan*, 1896, alongside my good friend (your chair), Daniel.

So, a bit about me, I am a current senior here at GW, majoring in Asian Studies with minors in Japanese and Religion. My focus areas are on the Himalayan states of Bhutan, Tibet, and Nepal, and how religion affects policy objectives on the ground in South and Central Asia! I was born and raised in Camden, New Jersey, just over the bridge from Philly where I would go to high school, and currently live in DC (but not for too much longer though). Outside of WAMUNC, I compete on the Model UN team here, alongside assisting with our GWCIA conference as well. Outside of school, I run a Dungeons & Dragons campaign and have taken many odd jobs all around DC. From working in a kimono shop and the Japanese fashion industry, to working for the Sri Lankan and Indonesian embassies, I have seen and met a lot of very interesting people! **(I am no longer allowed near the former President of Liberia, as per the US State Department.)**

Besides that, I am extremely excited to see what stories and arcs you will all create with your characters in this committee! This was a pivotal moment in Filipino history with many twists and turns leading to where we are now in committee, and I hope you channel this energy in committee to make for a fun and exciting time for everyone!

Nawa'y maging matagumpay kayong lahat!

Ethan Albert

A Note about the Flow of Committee

This committee will be a crisis committee utilizing the one pad system. You will be allowed to write to one person each cycle to impact the committee in the “backroom.” The notes you write in these pads will be implemented into the committee by the Crisis Director and his supporting staff and will likely create situations the committee will have to resolve. A comprehensive explanation of backroom and crisis committees will be provided to you prior to starting committee.

Content Disclaimer

Delegates are encouraged to be creative and unique in their approach to the crisis; however, they should also consider the sensitivities of the time period, including the religious and ethno-linguistic issues of the Philippines. Delegates will not be permitted to directly collaborate with or support the Spanish or any other colonial empire in committee directives, backroom arcs, or any other means of influencing the committee. Cooperation with the United States may be permitted, but delegates must ensure that their actions do not lead to the colonization of the Philippines. This may be enforced by the will of the Crisis Director and Head Chair.

Furthermore, racism, sexism, homophobia, and all other forms of identity-based prejudice are strictly not permitted, and delegates found engaging with this will be subject to disqualification by the dais.

Spanish Colonization of the Philippines

Conquest and Expansion of the Philippines

In 1521, Spanish explorer Ferdinand Magellan “discovered” the Philippines after his famed circumnavigation of the globe. Magellan would seek to establish trade relations and proselytize the native population to Roman Catholicism, leading to a conflict with the local chieftain, Lapu Lapu, who would kill Magellan in battle. Despite this defeat, the Spanish would return under López de Legazpi in 1565, establishing a presence in the island of Cebu and later Luzon. Following a campaign against the locals of Luzon, Legazpi would seize control of *Maynila* in 1570 and establish the Spanish walled city of *Intramuros* that would expand into the modern-day capital city of Manila in the following centuries. From Manila and its other holdings across the archipelago, the Spanish would expand by incorporating nearby *barangays* (villages¹) into larger towns, especially with the aid of Spanish missionaries. Missionaries found great success in spreading Christianity to the populace, and would establish churches, Catholic schools, and hospitals to aid in their proselytizing mission. The Spanish crown implemented the *encomienda* system that rewarded Spanish colonists with perpetual rights to the labor of specific areas. This led to the Spanish *encomenderos* (Spanish colonial elites) demanding tribute and often engaging in forced labor for the indigenous people. This also came with forced proselytization by Spanish authorities, with attempts to escape the *encomienda* being punished with death and torture. These missions would be most successful in the low-lying areas of the Philippines; the highland peoples would be significantly more difficult to proselytize for the Spanish and maintained a great level of independence from Spanish rule throughout the colonial period. The Spanish would establish *Presidos* (fortresses) across the archipelago to maintain their military presence in the region, the most important of which was Fort Santiago in *Intramuros*. Spanish control of the region would expand from its foundation in Manila and Cebu to officially

¹*Barangay* may refer to villages, towns, neighborhoods, districts and other small administrative zones. In the context of rural areas, *Barangay* may be used to refer to an area within an incorporated city/town, while in urban areas it can refer to smaller neighborhoods within an urban center.

encompass the entirety of the modern Philippines by the outbreak of the revolution; the extent to which Spain exerted real control varied. The lowlands of Luzon and the Visayan islands (including Cebu) were the only regions where Spain had significant influence. The highlands of the Cordillera mountains in Northern Luzon, as well as much of Mindanao (outside of the urban forts of Davao and Zamboanga), maintained high levels of autonomy. The Muslim Moro people of Mindanao came into conflict with the Spanish throughout the colonial period, with the Spanish viewing the conversion or elimination of the Muslims as a sacred duty. Today, Spain maintains control of Luzon and the Visayas; time will tell if the Muslim Sultanates will decide to join the upcoming Filipino revolution.

The Colonial Economy

In the 1600s, the economy of the islands (or rather the revenue of the colonial administration) was focused on the Spanish galleon trade. Manila was a strategically crucial stop-off point for Spanish galleons carrying silver from New Spain to trade with Chinese merchants, who only accepted silver as a form of payment at the time. Spain would benefit from their Filipino holdings through their access to Chinese silk, Indian cotton, and Indonesian spices, among other luxury goods from Asia. The decline of the Spanish Empire in the late 1700s led to a decline in the galleon trade as the Napoleonic Wars caused a wave of revolutions in America that stripped most of Spain of its American colonies. The loss of these colonies largely ended the galleon trade. In 1815, the Spanish East Indies was established as the Philippines began to shift towards a cash-crop-based economy, with coffee, Manila hemp, tobacco, and sugar making up a portion of the agrarian economy. With the industrialization of Europe occurring in the 1800s, the Philippines became increasingly important for its raw materials, with the Spanish opening up ports to free trade in 1834 and 1873, ending centuries of mercantilist protectionism in the

Philippines. Currently, the economy is still heavily reliant on cash crop agriculture, and there exists nearly no industrialization across the archipelago.

The Rise of Filipino Nationalism

Resistance to Spanish rule was not a new concept on the archipelago; the Rajas, Datus, and Sultans of the pre-colonial era would stage numerous revolts against Spanish rule and Spanish invasion into their territories. While some of these succeeded, these groups were never unified under one Filipino identity, nor did they seek to expel the Spanish entirely. By the late 1800s, many indigenous Filipinos were exposed to and received a Western education, spreading Western ideas of nationalism, natural rights, and similar enlightenment ideals. In 1880, the Propaganda Movement was formed of *Indios* (indigenous people), *Mestizos* (mixed race), and *Insulares* (Filipino-born Spaniards). This group of intellectuals included the famed Dr. *Jose Rizal*, who pushed *Noli me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, which is widely credited with exposing much of the abuses of Spanish colonial rule to the indigenous elites and the Spanish public. However, this group was not a pro-independence group; they instead called for Filipino representation in the Spanish parliament, providing equality between all Filipinos and the Spanish, with the appropriate rights granted, and for the Philippines to become a province of Spain, rather than a colony. Rizal became more secretive in the following years after the failures of the movement to make any traction, leading to the founding of *La Liga Filipina* as a secret society to advance the movement. Rizal would be arrested and exiled by Spanish authorities for possessing seditious material; however would be allowed to return to the Philippines a few months before the revolution.

By contrast, the *Kataastaasan Kagalanggalang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* (Katipunan) was established in 1892 following the arrest of Rizal, with the goal of armed revolution to achieve Filipino independence. The organization, nominally led by *Andres Bonifacio*, was a secret society that engaged in covert means to expand its strength and overthrow Spanish rule. They had made attempts to obtain the political support of intellectuals such as Rizal, with minimal success. The organization's base of power was in Cavite; they were split between the *Magdalo* and *Magdiwang*. Both factions sought the independence of the Philippines; however, they disagreed on who should lead the Republic, with the *Magdiwang* seeking the existing power structure under Bonifacio and the *Magdalo* seeking a new revolutionary government aligned with Emilio Aguinaldo. These factions are governing separately, but are both committed to the same goals. However, without the unifying threat of foreign invasion, it remains to be seen if the Katipunan can maintain its unity.

Outbreak of War and Current Situation

At the start of the committee, the Spanish had just discovered the existence of the Katipunan and had thus prematurely started the revolution against the Spanish. The Spanish only maintain a few hundred Spanish troops in their forts, supplemented by thousands of native militiamen. They are generally better trained and organized than the ~30,000 men of the Katipunan. The majority of their forces are concentrated in Manila; their fortified position makes an attempt at the capital difficult. The Katipunan themselves are organized into very small guerrilla units with little to no training and are largely reliant on bamboo spears and makeshift firearms. Spanish naval power is absolute; the Katipunan only maintains a small fleet of *Bangka* fishing boats unsuitable for naval combat at present. Jose Rizal, a hero of the movement, has

been arrested by Spanish authorities and is being held in Manila. The Spanish likely will plan to execute him, an outcome that would bring a massive moral loss for the movement, despite Rizal's more moderate stance. The Katipunan's base of power remains in Cavite, where they enjoy popular support. Filipinos in other provinces have yet to declare their rebellion. The Moro Sultanates have not taken any action against the Spanish, and have their own misgivings about cooperating with the Katipunan.

The Spanish are currently already fighting a rebellion in Cuba, which the United States has closely watched. America's Monroe Doctrine has motivated some warhawks in Washington to intervene in Cuba against Spain, an intervention that may also lead the Americans to intervene in the Philippines. The Spanish have significantly declined since the days of Magellan, and they will struggle to send additional forces to the Philippines; however, if successful, this would doom any chance of a military victory without foreign support. At the same time, more and more Filipinos are joining in the revolution, and additional victories could turn the tide of the war.

Questions to Consider

- 1) What are the causes of Filipino discontent with Spanish rule?
- 2) How can the divisions within the revolutionary movement be resolved to present a united front against the Spanish?
- 3) How should the makeup of the new independent Filipino government be?
- 4) Should the Philippines engage with the United States? To what extent should the Philippines engage with the West more broadly?
- 5) Should the Philippines pursue full independence or autonomy under the Spanish Crown?

Character List*

*In an effort to make this committee as fun, engaging and educational as possible, the characters described here may have had their background information edited, altered or entirely made-up. Delegates are advised to use the information on their character provided in the background as the ultimate sources of information on their character, but are advised to research further into the situation itself. If you have questions regarding this, please contact daniel.catapang@gwu.edu

1. Deodato Arrellano

First Supreme President of the Katipunan

Born in Maysantol, Bulacan, Deodato was a learned bookkeeper who worked as an assistant in the Spanish military within the artillery corps. A member of the short-lived yet crucial *La Propaganda* movement founded by his brother-in-law, Deodato would also soon join the Freemasons and be an active member of the order from his lodge in Lusong. In 1892, alongside his freemason brothers, Deodato would join *La Liga Filipina* and later the *Katipunan* following the arrest and deportation of José Rizal. Later that same year he would become the first Supreme President, only to be replaced in 1893 by Roman Basa after being deemed ineffective by the organization. Despite this setback, he would continue to be an active and vocal supporter of the movement, even restarting *La Liga* as a semi-independent force for the Katipunan. He would be arrested in 1896, before the revolution by Spanish colonial authorities and would return to Bulacan and join with the revolutionaries once the war began.

2. Teodoro Plata

Secretary of War

Inspired by the Propaganda Movement in Europe, Teodoro would join *La Liga Filipina* and become a founding member of the Katipunan, being an original believer in the radical goal of armed revolution instead of reform back in 1892. Circling through positions under the different administrations, Teodoro would become the Secretary of War in 1896. But before this as Councilor in 1893, Teodoro would take it upon himself to form the Women's Auxiliary Branch of the Katipunan. Despite his prior radical support of armed revolt, Teodoro would be the only one to oppose the uprising in 1896 due to lack of material and sufficient arms, but would nevertheless support the uprising when called upon.

3. Aguedo del Rosario

Secretary of the Interior

The strange and enigmatic Aguedo del Rosario was a relative newcomer to the Katipunan, joining the organization in 1894. He would quickly rise through the ranks to become a Councilor following the election of Andrés Bonifacio as president in 1895. A close and trusted confidant to Bonifacio, Aguedo would be one of his strongest supporters and, in 1896 be elevated to the position of Secretary of the Interior. Supportive of Bonifacio's efforts to solicit international support from Japan and the United States, Aguedo is nevertheless suspicious of the goals and aims of these outside powers and their threat to the new Filipino state.

4. Briccio Pantas

Secretary of Justice

Part of the wealthy landowning class, Briccio Pantas formed the backbone of the intellectual elite and middle class that often clashed with the more peasant and artisan-based foundation of the Katipunan. A more cautious pragmatist, Pantas, throughout his career in the Katipunan, would support gradual reform in the Philippines as opposed to the militant insurrection of his comrades, but would remain a keystone for the movement with his background. An adaptable and savvy politician, Pantas would gain few enemies and many allies, securing him one of the most important positions as the Secretary of Justice. Following his tacit support of armed revolution, he would oversee the administration of revolutionary law, handling judicial matters within Katipunan-controlled territories, and ensuring the maintenance of order and discipline among revolutionary forces.

5. Enrique Pacheco

Secretary of the Treasury

Enrique Pacheco serves as the meticulous and pragmatic Secretary of Finance of the Supreme Council of the Katipunan in 1896, tasked with sustaining the revolutionary movement through careful stewardship of its scarce resources. Born to a modest family in Manila, Pacheco developed a sharp aptitude for numbers and administration, which he applied to organizing member contributions, procuring supplies, and discreetly funding the Katipunan's operations under the watchful eye of Spanish colonial authorities. Not as publicly fiery as some of his comrades, he is deeply committed to the cause of Philippine independence, believing that disciplined planning and financial stability are as vital to revolution as courage on the battlefield. Known for his calm demeanor and strategic foresight, Pacheco advocates for unity, accountability, and long-term preparation to ensure the Katipunan can endure the trials ahead.

6. Emilio Jacinto

Secretary of State

Dropping out of college at the age of 19, Emilio would be one of the youngest members of the Katipunan in 1894. Often called the "Brains of the Katipunan," Emilio would author much of the moral and guiding principles of the Katipunan and how the revolutionary group should act, emphasizing love of country, patriotism, equality, and honor. He would rise to become Secretary of State following his massive influence as a prolific writer, even before ingraining himself in the organization. As Secretary of State, he would guide the young nation through the concert of nations, fulfilling his work's decree to give one's entire soul, heart, and body to the nation

7. Gregoria de Jesús

Lakambini of the Katipunan

Wife of Andrés Bonifacio and cousin to Teodoro Plata, Gregoria was born to a middle-class and devout Roman Catholic family with connections that they would use to rise to become a gobernadorcillo. Her piousness would earn her few friends with the order due to its belief that Roman Catholicism was an oppressive tool of the Spanish, but she would still devote herself to the cause all the while keeping a strong faith and her identity that came with it. Following the establishment of the Women's Auxiliary Branch,

Gregoria would take full responsibility and lead it, becoming a strong figure for women's rights within the Katipunan.

8. Vicente Catalan

Captain of Compañía de Filipinas

A Cuban-Filipino sailor, Catalan staged a mutiny against the Spanish crew of a 800-ton steamship from Cuba. Catalan has declared himself an ally of the revolution and has received the title Admiral of the Philippine Navy. His vessel represents the pinnacle of revolutionary naval firepower and the vessel holds significant potential to turn the tide of the war. A committed revolutionary, he is unconcerned with the power struggle between the Katipunan, however champions the rights of all Filipinos to have equal rights no matter their ethnic background.

9. Emilio Aguinaldo

President of the Magdalo Katipunan

A rising star in the Katipunan movement, he de-facto leads to the Magdalo movement, seeking to establish a new revolutionary government for the Philippines rather than the existing Katipunan structure. A more radical part of the movement, he will reject anything else than complete independence of the Philippines, including all lands officially controlled by the Spanish Crown. His uncompromising nature has left him with some authoritarian tendencies and he is willing to do whatever it takes to ensure that the Philippines is led by a guiding hand, his.

10. Teresa Magbanua

Visayan Revolutionary

Declared the "Filipino *Jeanne d'Arc*," She is a representative of the Visayan branch of the Katipunan based in Panay. While her influence and base of support is outside of the main field of battle, she is the lone voice of the *Visayans* within the *Tagalog* dominated Katipunan. She also remains a committed feminist, seeking to overturn the traditional gender roles of the Catholic Church and provide further opportunities for women in the new Filipino government.

11. Mariano Álvarez

President of the Magdiwang Katipunan

A committed revolutionary and ally of Andres Bonifacio, Álvarez retains much of the influence Bonifacio had among the *Magdiwang Katipunan* after his self appointment as Supreme Commander. He is committed to maintaining the Katipunan power structure in the new government of the Philippines and remains at odds with Emilio Aguinaldo over the issue. He commands the largest, but more fractured part of the Katipunan. He maintains the second largest influence over the movement besides Bonifacio

12. Mariano Ponce

Co-Founder of La Solidaridad

A Member of the Propaganda movement, Ponce still holds out for the possibility of peaceful independence. His role in *La Solidaridad* has made him a known name among European and American intellectuals. He holds the greatest amounts of influence in Europe and would be the best shot for the committee to come to a peaceful agreement with the Spanish. However, at home he remains influential in the political scene, with his works being only slightly less popular than those of Jose Rizal, making him an influential voice among the local elites.

13. José Ramos Ishikawa

Japanese-Filipino Patriot

The son of a Filipino mother and Japanese merchant father, Ishikawa continues his father's legacy as a merchant with strong ties to Japan. He is committed to the revolutionary cause and has made previous failed deals to smuggle Japanese arms to the Philippines. However, his ties with the modernizing Japanese could prove crucial, however he must be wary to not overplay his hand with them.

14. Fr. Gregorio Aglipay

Revolutionary Roman Catholic Priest

Ordained as a Catholic Priest, Aglipay is one of the most educated members of the council. His revolutionary tendencies have gotten him in trouble with the Archdiocese of Manila before, having previously called for reform within the church and great autonomy for the Filipinos. With the revolution now in full swing, Aglipay has fully committed himself to the cause but remains influential among his parish. His liberal-nationalist beliefs combined with his Catholic upbringing may provide essential to mobilizing the Catholics against the Spanish

15. Macario Sakay

Guerilla Commander

One of the youngest members of the council, Sakay is a committed revolutionary. So far he has chosen not to pledge loyalty to either faction of the Katipunan, rather running his own guerilla campaign against the Spanish. An expert in guerilla warfare with a loyal following, his men may provide the tipping point between the power struggle between the Katipunan factions, however he may also be the one to truly defeat the Spanish in this war.

16. Aurelio Tolentino

Nationalist Playwright

Rather than a soldier, Tolentino serves in the council as an artist. Famed for his poetry, plays and books, Tolentino holds wide sway over the common people through his accessible materials. His plays and spoken poetry contained anti-imperialist and pro-Filipino sentiment that had gotten him imprisoned in the past. However, now that he is free, Tolentino may prove to be the link between the nationalist elites and average citizens.

17. Miguel Malavar

Commander of the Batangas Katipunan

A leading figure in the local *Batangas* chapter of the Katipunan, he commands the only cavalry force at the Katipunan's disposal. His monopoly on this crucial aspect of warfare makes him a crucial part of the Katipunan plan to defeat the Spanish. While his cavalry is unable to scale the walls of Fort Santiago, he is able to harass Spanish columns and pursue retreating enemies. He holds no allegiance to either faction of the Katipunan.

18. Jamalul Kiram II

Sultan of Sulu

A muslim Sultan whose base of power remains in the northern part of Sabah outside of official Spanish control, he is watching the situation unfold. Having fought the Spaniards

for decades, he is aware of the benefits that supporting the revolution could have, however he is wary that supporting this revolution will lead to the annexation of his Sultanate by the revolutionaries. His hold in Sabah is untouchable by the Spanish, allowing him to focus on his resources in Zamboanga.

19. Trinidad Rizal

Feminist Revolutionary

The sister of the famed Jose Rizal, Trinidad is an uncompromising feminist voice on the council. She founded the Asociación Feminista Filipina, the first feminist organization in the Philippines. She advocates for increased prominence of women in political affairs and the equality of men and women in marital affairs. She holds significant sway among the Filipino feminist movement and can mobilize them to her benefit.

20. Datu Uto

Sultan of Buayan

A muslim Sultan in Mindanao, Uto is determined to finally rid himself of the Spanish menace in his lands. He had significant success in keeping the Spanish outside of his mountainous territories, however he lacks the means to singlehandedly defeat the Spanish, even with the support of his allies in the Sultanate of Maguinaldo. He remains wary of the Katipunan due to their Catholic Tagalog basis and hopes to ensure that the rights of Muslim Moro people are sustained in a new Filipino state, as well as his own power.

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