

BONIFACIO F. AREVALO
(1850-1920)

Dentist, Artist and Propagandist

Born on May 14, 1850 to Esperanza Flores and Justo Arevalo, Bonifacio Arevalo was a sculptor, an ardent patron of music and theater, and a propagandist. At the age seven, he lost his father, who was also a sculptor, and was consequently placed under the care of his uncle Jose Arevalo, himself a sculptor and a dentist. His aunt, Eulalia Asuncion, taught him the art of woodcarving.

He acquired an education through his uncle's beneficence and, upon finishing, worked as an aide at the San Juan de Dios Hospital. While undergoing apprentices at the hospital, he learned the basics of dentistry under his uncle's tutelage. In 1876, he obtained the title of cirujano *ministrante*, and soon after put up a clinic along Elizondo Street in Quiapo. In 1888, he took - and passed - an examination given to dentists in the country.

A profitable practice allowed Arevalo to pursue his other interests: sculptor and music. His sculptures may be classified according to three categories: religious pieces, exemplified by "La Purisima Concepcion," "Calvario," and "San Rafael," sculptured vignettes that portray native practices and events, such as his "Zapatero," "Magmamais," and "Bayad"; and sculptured busts of famous personages. Wood particularly lanite and santol, was his favorite material for sculpture.

At the Exposicion Regional de Filipinas held in 1895 in Manila, Arevalo won a gold medal for sculpture. He presented his sculptured portraits of the emperor and empress of Japan at the Hanoi Exposition held in 1902, during which he received several awards. He also produced busts of Gov. Gen. Ramon Blanco and Cayetano Arellano, the first Filipino chief justice.

A man who loved music, Arevalo took it upon himself to revive the moribund Pasig Band, and became its manager. He employed more musicians, thereby increasing the band's members from 30 to 80. He also engaged the services of a new conductor, Marcelino Asuncion, who had previously been with a Spanish military band.

The Pasig Band, whose career spanned an incredible 20 years, eventually came to be known as the Banda Arevalo and served as the official band of the Revolutionary Government in 1898. Later, conductor Ladislao Bonus in a performance at the 1902 Hanoi Exposition led the band. Arevalo also managed an Italian Opera Company during its tour in the country.

As he was also inclined towards the theater, he organized an actor's company and regularly staged productions of the then very popular moro-moro plays, like "Ibong Adarna," "Jason at Medea," and "Juan Tiñoso." Some of the actors he trained, and who were truly in need of a benefactor such as himself, were Julio Mariano, Idefonsa Alianza, Felisa Cleofas, and Pantaleon Aldana.

Despite being occupied with his dental clinic or with his ventures into the art world (sculpture, music, theater), Arevalo found time to be involved in the political and social movements then engulfing the nation. In July 1892 he joined and was elected the treasurer at La Liga Filipina, an organization Dr. Jose Rizal founded, which endeavored to continue supporting *La Solidaridad*, the Propaganda Movement's publication. The group also intended

to pursue the struggle for reforms begun by La Propaganda and organized popular councils in the country's major towns or cities. Other officers elected along with Arevalo were Ambrosio Salvador, president, and Deodato Arellano, secretary.

After the Liga finally disbanded due to the absence of its leader, Rizal – who was deported to Dapitan – Arevalo joined the Cuerpo de Compromisarios, a group formed in August 1894 and composed of erstwhile and conservative members of the Liga, led by Numeriano Adriano. This new association chose to carry on the peaceful struggle for reforms rather than support a revolution that would effect the country's separation from Spain, which was the goal of Andres Bonifacio, a former Liga member, and of his radical organization, the Katipunan.

In 1896, several Katipunan members were arrested and made to confess under torture the names of people involved with the revolutionary organization. Consequently, more arrests were made of alleged katipunan members or supporters, among whom was Bonifacio Arevalo. He was imprisoned for nine months.

In 1898, a year after his release, he was appointed to the Asamblea Consultiva together with C. Arellano, Pedro Paterno, and Isaac de Rios. Created by then Governor General Agustin, the advisory board was dissolved after a month without serving its purpose or achieving its aim, which was mainly to convince the revolutionaries to join Spain in its war against the Americans. Within the same year, he was designated colonel of the militia of the revolutionary army and detailed in Sampaloc, Manila, by Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo. Subsequently, he served as a councilor in the revolutionary administration based in Manila.

During the early part of the Philippine-American War, he was captured and jailed by the American forces. Until his arrest, he had been serving as the *intendente* of the second zone of operations of the revolutionary army. He was soon released, however, and, having decided to lead a quiet life from then on, he dedicated himself to his dental practice and other concerns.

He headed the Sociedad Dental de Filipinas. He tried to engage in business by establishing a number of small *sari-sari* or retail stores that would try to compete with the more established stores of Chinese businessmen. Unfortunately, this venture failed within a short time. Later, Arevalo intended to erect a textile factory patterned after the factories he saw in Japan, during his visit there, but in this attempt, he failed, too. A lesser man would have been disheartened by these failures, but not Arevalo. In 1909, he formed an Organization of hat-makers and local weavers.

Arevalo had three sons, only one of whom survived, by his first wife Trinidad Arevalo. By his second wife Benita Ocampo, he had one daughter.

He died on December 13, 1920.

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TOMAS F. ARGUELLES
(1860-1950)

Eminent Architect and Surveyor

Born on March 7, 1860, Tomas Arguelles was an eminent architect and surveyor during the later part of the Spanish regime and the early days of American rule. The son of Norberto Arguelles and Petronilla Fernandez, he studied at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila and later, enrolled at the Colegio de San Juan de Letran, where he obtained the title of *perito agrimensor*. He pursued his studies at the Escuela de Artes y Oficios and subsequently became an architect.

Arguelles served as supervisor of the Cuerpo de Obras Publicas (Public Works) and, later, as inspector of the Manila-Dagupan Railroad under the Spanish administration. In 1903, during the American colonial regime, he was appointed member of the Junta de Revision de Impuestos (Council on Tax Revision) of the City of Manila. In 1904, he joined the commission which represented the country at the International Exposition held in St. Louis, Missouri, where he was designated member of the jury of architects. For his services as juror, he was given a gold medal. Licensed to practice architecture under the Engineering and Architecture Law of 192, he became a senior partner in the firm Arguelles and Magsaysay. He later founded a partnership with Fernando Ocampo. He was elected fellow of the Philippine Institute of Architecture in 1950 and was a member of the Board of Directors of the *Academia de Arquitectura y Agrimensura de Filipinas* founded in 1902; the first such organization in the Philippines.

He served in the Junta Consultiva de Municipio de Manila (Consultative Council of Manila) from 1903 until 1907, when he was assigned to the Junta de Igualizacion. The following year, he became a member of the Comite del Capitolio Filipino.

A milestone in Arguelles' career and the world of Philippine business in general occurred in July 1903, when Arguelles, a nationalist, joined 21 other Filipino businessmen at the house of Juan Rodriguez in San Nicolas, Manila to form the Camara de Comercio Filipina, or the Philippine Chamber of Commerce. Together with Teodoro Yangco, Luis Hidalgo, Miguel Velasco, Francisco Reyes, Francisco Aguado, Pedro Roxas, Mariano Limjap, Tomas Sunico, and others, Arguelles took the oath of loyalty to the chamber, as the first step in Filipinizing Philippine commerce and industry whose management had been, from the very beginning, under the dominance of foreigners. Despite the odds, Arguelles and his fellow pioneering nationalists remained unflinching in their conviction that Philippine business was mainly for the Filipinos.

Arguelles also became a member of the Nacionalista Party, in whose executive committee he served. He was the architect of the pre-WWII Heacock's building on the Escolta. He died on December 7, 1950.

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