

**POLITICAL HISTORY OF BOGO**

**by Professor Regino Dodds, MNSA**

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The historical stretch from the founding of Cebu by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi in 1565 to the start of the 19th century was a period of mass movement of people in the islands that even affected also the movement of peninsulares and non-peninsulares.

The two types of lands in the Philippines, upon the establishment of the colonial administration were the royal encomiendas and the private encomiendas. Those retained by the crown were called royal encomiendas and those granted to private persons either royal favorites or distinguished men of war were called private encomiendas. The first of these land grants were assigned to Legazpi in Cebu in 1571.

To the Filipinos nothing could have been more outwardly impressive of peaceful intentions than the presence of the religieux and the avowed pronouncements. It was a fact that the period of "conquests" though protracted mainly because of rugged terrain, was relatively peaceful. This was primarily due to the missionary labors.

A parish was created in Bantayan Island where the Agustinians spread Christianity from Cebu. From this parish in Bantayan, the mission spread too far and wide. Settlers came to settle in Bogo, peninsulares and non-peninsulares and natives came to Bogo to live.

As the Ecclesiastical administration of the colony progressed, visitas (chapels) were established in the different coastal settlements under the padre cura of Daan Bantayan, and civilization followed where visitas were established. When the parish priest of Daan Bantayan received a petition for the construction of a visita in the bay settlement of Bogo, the Daan Bantayan padre cura, presumably with the consent of the bishop of Cebu, assented to the wishes and desires of the early Bogohanons. It has been said that when peninsulares were encouraged to go south from Manila as a government policy, many peninsulares went down to Cebu and one who settled in the northern coastal plains of Cebu was Jose Rodriguez. It has been said that he was one of those who worked for the establishment of the visita of capilla in Bogo.

**TRADITIONAL BACKGROUND**

The origin of the town of Bogo has been the subject of continued speculations, imbibed in the heart and soul of every blue-blooded Bogohanon, pointing to the bogo trees that thrived in the place where the people came to trade, pass the night, and settled, as the reason for its name. The beautiful flowers of bogo tree bloom in the short summer of October, and its fallen petals of prominent light purple are blown by the gently breeze of the trade winds.

It has been said that in the beginning of the 18th century the little settlement where the town is now located was the center of trade and commerce. The settlers in other settlements converged here because of its geographical location. A universal study of growth and developments of town and cities throughout the ages points out that progress centers at the mouths of the rivers, in deltas, and inside gulfs and bays and coves. This is true in Europe, in America and in mainland Asia. Not far away from the settlement's landing place which was a slope or tugbongan was a big spreading bogo tree.

The scientific name of this tree is garuga floribunda, which early botanists found abundant in Iloilo, northern Mindanao and the Central Visayas. In most parts of Leyte and Cebu, the garuga floribunda reached the height of 50 feet rising high and spreading at the top. "The flowers are fairly small and are borne in large clusters when the leaves start to fall. The fruits are fairly long and pinnate. The leaflets are elongated, pointed at the tip, with the two sides unequal particularly at the base and the margins are often conspicuously wavy."

**THE FIRST LOCAL EXECUTIVES**

For purpose of setting up an insular and local administration, the archipelago was divided into provinces and districts according to ethnological grouping, and the dialects of the inhabitants. The provinces known as alcadias, were found in the regions already in pacified Luzon and the Visayas. In some advanced organized provinces, the provincial executives were called alcalde-mayor. In subsequent period more and more province were organized out of the encomiendas, which were abolished.

The provinces were subdivided into pueblos (towns) and each governed by gobernadorcillo who was popularly addressed as Capitan del Pueblo. Other town officials such as the chief of police, fields, and cattle, the tinientes (deputies) and the alguacilles (subordinate functionaries), assisted the capitan.

The pueblo was subdivided into barangay, each under a cabeza de barangay.

Prior to 1847, municipal officials were elected according to the Ordinances of Good Government issued by the various governor-generals. But the Municipal Election Law of 1847 introduced new methods of electing own officials. This was under the royal Decree of October 5, 1847. According to this Decree, the gobernadorcillo would be elected annually by an electoral consisting of the outgoing gobernadorcillo, and twelve residents chosen by lot-six of whom from the ex-gobernadocillos, and the other six from the incumbent Cabeza de barangays. The election would have to be held at the schoolhouse or any government building, and done in the presence of the padre cura and the alcalde mayor or his deputy. The alcalde mayor was the governor of the province.

But it was not until 1847 that this procedure was applied in Bogo. Why? Because while the town was founded many years earlier, it was only on January 1, 850 that the visita or capilla was built in Bogo, and it was only on April 5, 1850 that the parochia de San Vicente Ferrer was formally established with the Reverenced Father Miclalet as the first padre cura, independent from that of Daan Bantayan.

It was only in 1864 when Bogo was governed by a gobernadorcillo, but he was addressed as the Capitan.

The first gobernadorcillo was Capitan Pedro Aballe and his term was from 1864 up to 1869.

It could be gleaned from this information that it was only in 1864 that the municipal government law under the Royal Decree of October 5, 1847 was applied to Bogo, although there was already a pueblo even before April 5, 1850.

Who was Capitan Aballe? It was said that he was half-Spanish and half-native and he came from Bantayan, perhaps migrating to Bantayan from Cebu. He came to settle in Bogo engaged in trade and commerce. It was not known however whether he was a native of Bantayan because there are no traces of his roots there.

According to old-timers, it was Capitan Pedro Aballe who laid down the foundation of the poblacion. A street is named after him, and during the first term of Teodorico Rodriguez, Aballe was the only local patriot honored with the name of the street. Until WWII, all the streets named after the country's national heroes.

In 1870, another mestizo was elected gobernadorcillo in Bogo. His name was Matias Mansueto, a native of Bantayan. Among the members of his council was Marcos Rubio also from Bantayan, but originally from Capiz. Mansueto introduced the planting of pineapple from Bantayan and the manufacture of hablon pineapple fiber. Mansueto progressed much in agriculture.

In 1873, Donato Alarde, the next gobernadorcillo introduced agricultural techniques and took to the farm. He was engaged in the manufacture of farm implements and household instruments. It was said that while Mansueto pioneered in farming, Alarde introduced farm tools.

In 1876, one source said that Maximo Fernan was the gobernadorcillo. It was said that he came down with other migrants from Mandaue. Many of them settled in Guadalupe. Before the war, there were Amits in Guadalupe, and were believed to be the descendants of the Muslim traders who joined Fernan to Bogo.

Other source said that the gobernadorcillo was Marco Rubio. This time Bogo became a trading center and commerce thrived. It was, according to this source, Don Marcos who founded the small barred place behind the Sanchez house, by the bay, where fishermen from Polambato and Kanhabagat brought their catch to barter with root crops such as apali, ube and camote. This became a market place. But according to some documents filed at the National Archives, Don Marcos Rubio, and a scion of a landed family from Bantayan prospered in Bogo where he owned a vast tract of sugarland.

It has to be noted that in the document where the list of town executives was scribed in the possession of Segundo Orat, the years from 1876 to 1879 were vacant. No name was listed. However, Toribio P. Fernan swore that his father was the gobernadorcillo.

Anselmo Pedroza, an Hilonggo, was the gobernadorcillo in 1880. He was a relative of the wife of Maximo Fernan, and he introduced the sarzuela and the string bands. It was during this term of Anselmo that the moro-moro and the community singing became popular, and the "daigon" during Christmas.

Another Hilonggo who made good in Bogo was Buenaventura Ganzon, fondly adderssed as 'Tan Tura'. A source say that he was a lawyer, and in 1887, was the gobernadorcillo. Ganzon encouraged trading and fishing. There was a regular trip between Iloilo and Bogo via Bantayan through the batel of paraw.

Angel Ylanan in 1886 was the gobernadorcillo. His important accomplishment was the planting of fruit trees in the agricultural land, and the cultivation of farms for sugarcane. This year, Muscavado sugar was in demand.

In 1888 during the term of Capitan Luis Ortiz, the town introduced military defenses against continuing moro raids, and the activities of ladrones. When the church fronting the residence of Fancisca "Kikay" Balbin Orbezo was burned down, it was 'Tan Luis' who worked hard for the construction of a stone church which was the church where the Americans rested, led by Rowan. A high tower wa built as a campanario. It was Padre Talino Mendoza, a native of Bogo who was the padre cura, and it was he who laid the formation of a stone church for Bogo. It was not really known when the church was built, but when 'Tan Torin' took over as gobernadorcillo, the church was already completed.

'Tan Luis' was very particular in the church tower, but although the tower was there, the bells, big bells came only after the American occupation.

In 1891 up to 1893, Bogo had a new gobernadorcillo, another half-bred, Victorino dela Viña. He was the town's executive when the Maura Law took effect that revolutionized municipal administration in the last decade of the Spanish regime.

It was during this time that the different balangays or barrios were named according to legends. Odlot for instance was called balahason (balajason in the old Velarde chart). It was due to its distance from the Bogo settlement, comparing it to the highest point of a tree it was called Odlot.

For years that place where a black coral reef discovered was called itum bato. In the last years of the Spanish regime, it was renamed Maitum, in the same manner that the place where the red coral reefs were located was called Polambato. Those victimized by moro pirates, the bihags, were brought to this barrio where they were tied to tree trunks; gaid. So the barrio became Gairan, the place where the bihags are tied.

Anonang because of the abundance of the anonang trees, and Binabag because the northern Cebu mountain range crossed it path blocking the far northern coastal plain, nagbabag. Cogon, where the bloody encounter took place against the Spanish forces was so called because of was a thick cogonal area.

The origin name of Daijagon was dalaigon, corrupted to Daijagon. The beauty and the scenery of the countryside was well-appreciated especially in Malingin where the rolling hills are rounded, planted with sugarcane. Guadalupe of course, after the Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe, and Dakit because fo the haunted dakit tree. The bogo for the town of Bogo has been misspelled due to perhaps to mechanical errors in printing which was not uncommon during those days.

As to name Bogo, it was never changed from time immemorial. While in some old document, the name of the town was spelled Bago, or Doyo, it does not mean that the community was called by that name by the people. A consultation with historiographers and archivists has been made. Bogo had always been called by that name. It was purely a mechanical problem, causing the spelling to be such.. So, according to these sources, Bog was never called Bago nor Doyo; it was purely a typographical error.

The Guia de Forasteros, an official Spanish government directory came out with a listing of all provincial and municipal government officials. According to the Guia Forasteros, in 1892 the parish priest was Rev. Fr. Catalino Mendoza and the gobernadorcillo was Capitan Buenaventura Ganzon. History noted the importance of the role played by the padre cura, for in Bogo, the real authority was Padre Talino.

In 1893 Bogo's status was changed to that of a municipal corporation, from tribunal del pueblo to tribunal municipal. The gobernadorcillo became capitan municipal. The tribunal municipal of Bogo was constituted by the capitan, and his four tenientes, the teniente mayors, teniente de policia, the teniente de sementeras, and the teniente de granados. These officials were elected by twelve electors - six cabeza de balangays, three former capitans, and three prominent big taxpayers. The municipal officials were elected by means of secret balloting.

The Maura Law which was the municipal reforms law, was issued by Royal Decree on May 19, 1893. Under this law which was likewise implmented in Bogo when Tan Torin was the municipal executive, there were five officers in the municipal tribunal. One was called the capitan, and the other four were the chief lieutenant, lieutenant for police, lieutenant for the fields (sementeras), and one lieutenant for cattle. The chief lieutenant acted as (Regidor sindico) and would be equivalent to the vice-mayor. At one time or another, Victorino de la Viña, Luis Ortiz, Buenaventura Ganzon, Maximo Fernan, Roberto Ancajas, and Matias Rubio became chief lieutenants. The five members were elected by plurality votes.

There is so much confusion on the tenure of office of Nyor Indong as municipal executive. As gleaned from Insurgent records, Señor Pantaleon E. Del Rosario was appointed Commissioner by Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo to serve under the revolutionary government of Don Luis Flores. Commissioner del Rosario arrived in Cebu on June 8, 1899 to implement the provisions of the decree of June 18 promulgated by Apolinario Mabini and signed by Aguinaldo. Del Rosario's miision was to conduct local elections under the decree of June 18.

He traveled on February 11, 1899 to Talamban where he first conducted the municipal elections. he proceeded to Bogo on the 13th, and conducted the election for Bogo's municipal officials. According to old timers, the local principalia made arrangements with the insurectos for the election of Nyor Indong which was endorsed by 'Tan Torin de la Viña. It was said that Leoncio Mansueto was one of those elected as a member of the municipal council.

Don Pedro Rodriguez served as municipal president until Capt. Rowan appointed 'Tan Torin' as municipal president under the Americal military government. After Rowan's occupation of Bogo, Don Pedro disappeared together with Dading Lasala established himself in the hills under the Malolos Republic.

On April 18, 1901, a provincial convention of municipal presidents was held in Cebu City under the auspices of Governor Julio Llorente of Cebu. Bogo's presidente municipal, Victorino dela Viña was present together with Julian Castro, municipal president of Medellin and Vicente Palacio, municipal president of Daan Bantayan.

After the Cebu Convention, the municipal presidents went home to their respective towns having been duly informed of the provisions of the municpal code. As soon as 'Tan Torin reached home, he made preparation for his special Toma de posicion. The church plaza was elaborately decorated, and a pompous celebration was held on May 27, in the church plaza, 'Tan Torin' took his oath formally before 'Tan Luis Ortiz' with Padre Aniano attending who earlier officiated the Te Deum. The miraculous image of Sr. San Vicente Ferrer was displayed in the main altar.

Many headmen from different barrios of Bogo went to the Poblacion to attend the oath taking and although it was not part o the program, Padre Aniano caused the procession of San Vicente around the plaza. This was followed in the following year, 1902. It was celebrated to mark the first year of his Toma de posicion, and more people came. However, Padre Aniano maintained the holding of the Cinco de Abril, the patron saint's day.

In the election of the first Tuesday of December, 1904, 'Tan Torin' again was elected presidente municipal. But since the election law mandated that all those who were to assume office of the first Monday of January the following year (1905), 'Tan Torin' assumed office according to the Law.

But on May 27 that year, although he did not raise his right for hand for oath, he was on the stage for the "Pahalipay", and the whole town joined him. In the afternoon, the procession for San Vicente was held, but by the time, devotees from neighboring towns joined, not to mark the anniversary of 'Tan Torins oath taking but to pay homage to Sr. San Vicente. According to Isidro Ybañez, even the bibinkeras from Mandaue came over the sell their bibingka, and after the May 27 affair, they opted to stay with their relatives in Dakit and Guadalupe

And so, from that time on, even when Tan Torin was no longer presidente municipal, according to Severo Verallo, the people still marked May 27. He knew because he was the church organist and was asked by Padre Aniano to play the old Spanish organ during the Te Deum. Antonia Uling, an old timer who served the Ybañez clan narrated how the town celebrated the Toma de posicion of Tan Torin, but she failed to reconcile the holding o the town fiesta on May 27 to that of the oath taking. Gregorio Flores was one of those who witnessed the first May 27 affair, although Nyor Indong, who was not really very happy with Tan Torin, joined the festive mood of the Bogohanons on May 27. Gregorio Flores, an intimate supported of Don Pedro, likewise explained that Nyor Indong, despite differences with Tan Torin, endorsed the practice of the fiesta.

During the term of Tan Torin udner the American regime, the poblacion and the barrios had the following population, and footnoted as civilized:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Poblacion - 2,271 | Gairan - 886 | Maitom - 1,225 | Anonang - 625 |
| Guadalupe - 1,409 | Malingin - 1,309 | Banban - 1,020 | Kayang - 1,302 |
| La Paz - 903 | Binabag - 1,424 | Nailong - 692 | Odlot - 1,035 | Pulang Bato - 753 |
| Total : - 14,915 |  |  |  |  |

The territorial boundaries of the town and the barrios were defined under Act 952 dated October 22, 1903.

This researcher is at a loss as to the term " civilized", but under the old Spanish Census, all those listed in the baptismal records of the church, were classed as civilized.

Tan Torin again was reelected 1903, and in that municipal election, a candidate for municipal councilor was elected but later was unseated because he was below 23 years old. The name of the councilor is not known due to death of reacords.

Tan Torin again was reelected in 1905. But in 1907 election, Teodorico Rodriguez ( Nyor Ecoy) was elected. He held one of the longest terms as town executive of Bogo.

**THE MUNICIPAL EXECUTIVES DURING THE SPANISH REGIME**

Source: Retrieved documents of Padre Roman Ortiz in th epossession of Mr. Segundo Orat given to the author with his annotations. - Capt. Pedro T. Aballe

|  |
| --- |
| 1864 - 1869 |
| 1870 - 1872 | - Capt. Mansueto |
| 1873 - 1875 | - Capt. Donato Alarde |
| 1875 - 1880 | - (?) This was left vacant in the Orat document. Maximo Fernan must been the captain |
| 1880 - 1882 | - Capt. Anselmo Pedroza |
| 1882 - 1885 | - Capt. Buenaventura Ganzon |
| 1886 - 1887 | - Capt. Angel Ylanan |
| 1888 - 1890 | - Capt. Luis Ortiz |
| 1891 - 1892 | - Capt. Victorino de la Viña |
| 1892 - 1893 | - Capt. Buenaventura Ganzon |
| 1894 - 1895 | - Capt. Jose Briz |
| 1896 - 1897 | - Capt. Roberto Ancajas |
| 1897 - 1892 | - Capt. Victorino de la Viña |

In an interview, Mr. Segundo Orat showed a small handwritten script, a linen paper, an old yellowed document which he claimed to have been paseed to him by Padre Roman Ortiz which came presumable from the file of Capt. Luis Ortiz. I was asking for that paper for my collection. Mano Gundo demurred. But he allowed me to copy the document.

**OFFICIALS OF BOGO DURING THE LAST YEARS UNDER SPANISH REGIME**

Source : Guia de Forasteros

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1892: Buenaventura Ganzon - Juez de Paz Enrique Briz - Asst. Juez de Paz Teodorico Espino - Maestro de Niños Ramona de la Viña - Maestra de Niñas | 1896: Tribunal Municipal D. Ignacio de Espina - Padre Cura Buenaventura Ganzon - Capitan Miguel Sanchez - Juez de Paz Evaristo Ortiz - Maestro de Niños Ramona de la Viña - Maestra de Niñas |
| 1893: D. Catalino Mendoza - Padre Cura Buenaventura Ganzon - Gobernadorcillo Enrique Briz - Juez de Paz Evaristo Ortiz - Maestro de Niños Ramona de la Viña - Maestra de Niñas | 1897: Tribunal Municipal D. Ignacio de Espina - Padre Cura Buenaventura Ganzon - Capitan Don Luis Ortiz - Juez de Paz Evaristo Ortiz - Maestro de Niños Ramona de la Viña - Maestra de Niñas |
| 1894: (Tribunal Municipal implemented in Bogo) D. Catalino Mendoza - Padre Cura Buenaventura Ganzon - Capitan Enrique Briz - Juez de Paz Evaristo Ortiz - Maestro de Niños Ramona de la Viña - Maestra de Niñas | 1898: Tribunal Municipal D. Ignacio de Espina - Padre Cura Victorino de la Viña - Capitan Don Luis Ortiz - Juez de Paz Evaristo Ortiz - Maestro de Niños Ramona de la Viña - Maestra de Niñas |
| 1895: Tribunal Municipal D. Ignacio de Espina - Padre Cura Buenaventura Ganzon - Capitan Miguel Sanchez - Juez de Paz Evaristo Ortiz - Maestro de Niños Ramona de la Viña - Maestra de Niñas | Arrival of Captain Rowan |

**BOGO UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH**

Anastacio Pedroza was warned by the guerillas to stay away from the Japanese, but the mayor could not abandon his constituents. After the Americans in Manantiar were taken to Cebu, he received a message that the Japanese army was going to peacefully occupy Bogo. Immediately, he mobilized the police force, the municipal employees and some members of the council. He asked Padre Anoy Baluyot for the brass band.

The Japanese high military officials were entertained by the mayor at the municipal building and truck loads of Japanese soldiers occupying the whole length of Bonifacio St. from Talisay near the public market to the residence of Mano Baloy Abao. This was the commencement of the establishment of the Japanese Military administration in Bogo. When the main troops that occupied for about two months at the Bogo Central School, left for Cebu, a detachment was left behind that occupied the Moras building near the municipal hall.

Remnants of the USAFFE continued to roam around the coutnryside. Mayor Pedroza was asked by the guerillas for support, food, and office supplies which Pedroza readily gave. he was still the mayor when he joined the Knights of Blessed Sacrament, a church lay organization composed of prominent men of the town.

The Japanese entirely abandoned Bogo, since the Japanese learned that the town was saturated by guerillas. On December 12, 1942 Bogo was bombed.

The Poblacion was evacuated, and when the Japanese cmae backt to operate the sugar central, the Japanese again reorganized the municipal government. But Mano Taciong disappeared. When for the second time Bogo was occupied by the Japanese, the municipal government was again reorganized under the Laurel Government.

Moises Lepatan was tapped to head the municipal government. He was an elected councilor before the war. Claudio Pedroza was to be Lepatan's Vice-Mayor. But in an interview with Mano Moises, he said that he accepted the offer only after consultations with the guerillas, among them, Florencio Manubag, Peping Carrasco, Mente Lequin, Maning Link, and even Saling Jurado and Berting Ybañez. These guerillas urged him to accept the post and a working arrangement was sealed. Elpidio Velez was appointed Chief of Police, but only after he was prodded upon by Claudio Pedroza to accept the job.

Moises Lepatan was the town's executive until the end of the war. And when the PCAU was organized in Bogo, there was a definite instruction that the Mayor at the outbreak of the war would head the PCAU. Mano Taciong was back in his old post, and it was said, it was an order by President Osmeña.

On May 28, 1946 when Manuel Roxas was sworn in as the last President of the Commonwealth, Pedroza was replaced by Perfecto Andrino. Councilor Eugenio Y. Yap was appointed municipal Vice-Mayor.

Andrino and Yap presided over the Philippine Independence inaugural ceremonies on the Fourth of July. The Philippine Flag was raised in front of the old municipal building by Andrino and Yap. They were assisted by Severo Verallo and Atoy Rodriguez.

The first post-war election in Bogo was held in 1947. The Honorable Severo Verallo was elected Mayor, the first Bogo mayor under the Independent Republic. He finished his term in 1951.

**MUNICIPAL EXECUTIVES FROM REVOLUTION TO WWII**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Capt. Victorino de la Viña | Tribunal Municipal | 1899 |
| Don Pedro Rodriguez | Malolos Republic | Feb. 13-Oct 1899 - officially the mayor of Bogo up to May 1901. |
| Victorino dela Viña | US Military Gov't. | Oct. 19, 1899 - Dec. 1901 |
| Victorino dela Viña | US Civil Government | 1st Monday Jan. 1904 |
| Victorino dela Viña | US Civil Government | Dec. 1905 - Dec 1907 |
| Teodorico Rodriguez | US Civil Government | Jan. 1908 - Dec. 1910 |
| Teodorico Rodriguez | Hold over | Jan 1 1910 - Dec 1911 |
| Roman Fernan | New Law, 4 yr term | Jan 1912 - Dec 1916 |
| Victorino Goopio |  | Jan 1917 - Dec 1921 |
| Teodorico Rodriguez | Amended law, 3 yrs | Jan 1920 - Dec 1922 |
| Paulino Tenchavez |  | Jan 1923 - Dec 1925 |
| Teodorico Rodriguez |  | Jan 1926 - Dec 1928 |
| Antonio Mansueto |  | June 1929 - May 1931 |
| Antonio Mansueto |  | June 1931 - May 1934 |
| Antonio Mansueto | Elected del to CC | June 1934 - July 30, 1934 |
| Anastacio Pedroza | Take-over | July 1934 - Nov 1937 |
| Sergio Rodriguez |  | 1937 -1939 |
| Severo Verallo | Take-over | 1939-1940 |
| Anastacio Pedroza |  | 1941-1943 |
| Moises Lepatan | Laurel Government | 1943 - 1945 |
| Anastacio Pedroza | PCAU | 1945 - May 28, 1946 |