

Was The Cavite Mutiny A Grand Conspiracy Or A Labor Issue?

Numerous significant events comprise history, and each story has multiple perspectives depending on how the writer views and understands the event and how they want the readers to arrive at their message. The Cavite Mutiny demonstrates that every story will always have different sides, as evidenced by two versions from Filipino historian Dr. Trinidad Hermenegildo Pardo de Tavera and Jose Montero y Vidal, a Spanish historian, both of which sparked controversy. However, this does not change the fact that the Cavite Mutiny was primarily a labor dispute.

The Cavite Mutiny began with the laborers' dissatisfaction with Governor General Rafael Izquierdo's decision to abolish tax exemption and forced labor. This is the only plausible explanation for why the mutiny occurred in the first place. It is only natural for them to strike following the abolition of their privileges because previously, the workers in the arsenal at Cavite in the artillery and engineer corps barracks were exempt from paying tribute tax and from the obligation to work for specific days. For the long time that the Spaniards have been in the country, starting from 1521, how come the laborers would only do it by 1872? It shows that the laborers don't like how the Governor General abolished their privileges, which is why they acted like that.

Moreover, Izquierdo claimed that GOMBURZA was behind the mutiny which they were not. The National Commission of the Philippines also supports and declares that the priests were behind the revolt. Furthermore, secret groups were formed only after the execution of GOMBURZA, which also awakened the sense of nationalism of Filipinos. With the help of the works of Dr. Jose Rizal, who witnessed the tragic deaths of the three priests at a young age, the nationalism of Filipinos was awakened, leading to the formation of secret organizations and movements to overthrow Spanish rule in the Philippines. The Cavite Mutiny of 1872 paved the way for the historic year of 1898. This proves that 1898 was only the start, and 1872 was only a mere labor issue and the inspiration to begin a revolution.

Indeed, what happened in Cavite became the beginning of a revolution, and the Cavite immunity is not the revolution or a conspiracy in and of itself. It merely served as a catalyst for the awakening of the Filipinos' nationalistic side, as they began to realize that the Spaniards were gradually eroding their rights and determining that they needed to rededicate the lives of their youth to the ideals of freedom and nationalism.