

## Manila (“Maynila”)

### HISTORY

It may not be apparent to the visitor, but Manila is actually one of East Asia's oldest cities. Predating even Tokyo, Manila traces its written history to 1571 when Spanish conquistadors, led by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, wrested control of the city from its last pre-Hispanic ruler, Rajah Sulayman. In the ensuing centuries Manila grew into a thriving city, enriched by wealth generated by the worlds first global economy--the Manila-Acapulco Galleon Trade. The artistic treasures at [San Agustin Museum](#) offer an intimation of this fabulous wealth.



[San Agustin Museum in Intramuros](#)

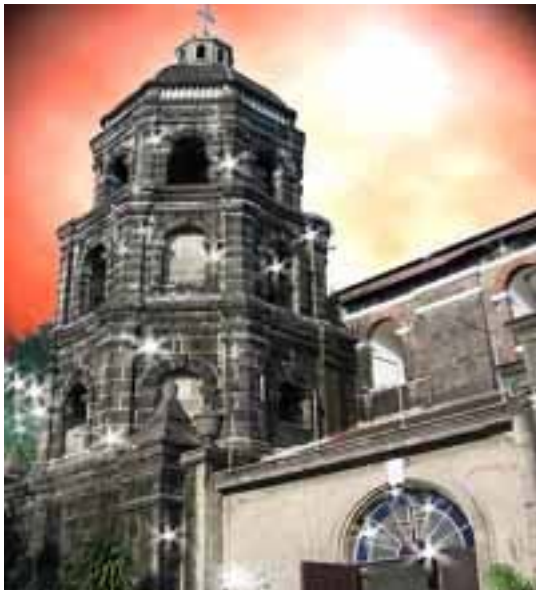
Manila derived its name from two Tagalog words; "may," meaning "there is," and "nilad," the name of a shrub that originally grew abundantly along the shores of the Pasig River and Manila Bay. Long before the Spanish conquest, Manila was settled by Mohammedans, who carried on a thriving trade with Chinese and other Southeast Asian merchants. "Maynilad" was the principal bay settlement of these Tagalogs south of the

Pasig River, although it was probably less important commercially than Tondo, the town on the north bank.

Though the Philippine islands were first inhabited tens of millennia before the Christian era, archeologists estimate the foundation of Filipino culture at around the year 500. As can be gleaned from displays at the National Museum and the Ayala Museum, People of Manila enjoyed their own system of government and writing long before the advent of the Spaniards, but everything was lost in the destruction wrought by the invaders. Literature and other manuscripts inscribed on bamboo were burned or left to decay, while the native civil code was replaced with Spanish colonial rule.

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The Kingdom of Namayan can be considered as the precursor of modern Metro Manila. With its capital in Sapa, known today as Santa Ana, Namayan encompassed present-day City of Manila, Mandaluyong City, San Juan City, Makati City, Pasay City, Pateros, Taguig and Parañaque City, now all parts of Metro Manila. It is said that in the 13th century a Namayan princess was given away in marriage to the heir of the Javanese Majapahit Empire (1292-1478) and subsequently reigned as Empress Sasaban.



Archeological diggings around Santa Ana Church have helped reveal the social fabric of pre-Hispanic Manila. Communal agriculture formed the basis of the agrarian society that had evolved from earlier hunting and food-gathering communities. With the passage of time, periodic barter between barangays (the basic units of government) developed into

regular trade with China and other parts of mainland Asia. The Chinese legacy in Philippine life can be observed today in Chinatown in Binondo and Bahay Tsinoy in Intramuros.

Filipinos jokingly refer to themselves as products of 300 years in a Spanish convent and 40 years in Hollywood. Though made in jest, it is an astute observation. Following the founding of Intramuros in 1571, the country took on the trappings of Hispanic society, with the population converting en masse to Christianity, adopting the new rulers' language and mode of writing, altering their style of dress to European fashions and so forth. Churches such as Malate Church and Guadalupe Church sprouted all over the country, serving not just as places of worship but as centers of social and cultural life as well. This began molding the unique character of Manila as a meeting point of East and West, and of Filipinos as an Asian nation with a Latin temperament.

Beneath the surface, however, Filipinos retain to this very day certain social values from their ancient past, such as the concept of bayanihan and the pivotal position of women in society. Bayanihan signifies the spirit of community whereby individuals and families within a neighborhood or a village are expected to contribute toward the common good.

Unique among Asian cultures, Filipino women have played a traditionally strong role in Philippine society, even before their liberated counterparts in the West gained equal rights.

#### DE LA PLAZA DE MANILA CAPITAL DE LAS YSLAS PHILIPPINAS EL MAR DE LA BAHIA ANO



Spanish rule came to an end in 1898, following a revolution fostered by the lofty ideals of Dr. Jose Rizal and fueled by the fiery tactics of Andres Bonifacio. Rizal was sentenced to death by a Spanish military tribunal on the grounds that his demands for reform were fomenting discord and discontent. Rizal faced the firing squad in Rizal Park, where the Rizal Monument and the Site of Rizal's Execution are dedicated to his memory. The Rizal Shrine in Fort Santiago displays memorabilia of the great man in the building where he spent his last hours. Bonifacio is honored with the Monumento in Kalookan City.

Instead of quelling the rising mood of rebellion, Rizal's execution only further incited Bonifacio and the revolutionary katipunan movement to open combat with the Spanish authorities. Bahay Nakpil-Bautista reverberates with echoes of those courageous times. Two years later, on 12 June 1898, Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed the independence of the Philippines from the window of his home in Kawit, Cavite (now the Emilio Aguinaldo Shrine), giving birth to Asia's first republic. The nation's first democratic constitution was drafted at Barasoain Church in Malolos, Bulacan.

But no sooner had Manila lifted the Spanish yoke than America took over the budding nation. Following its declaration of war on Spain over events in Cuba, the U.S. made friendly overtures toward Aguinaldo. But after the final victory of the Filipino revolutionaries, the U.S. signed a treaty with Spain whereby it acquired the Philippines for US\$2 million. Betrayed, the Filipino forces took up hostilities against the new colonizers, bravely carrying on the war until mid-1902.

What followed was Manila's 40 years in Hollywood. In retrospect, it was a happy period in the city's history. It saw the introduction of the English language, the institution of mass education, the construction of new infrastructure and so on.

Turning their back on 19th century mores represented in Casa Manila Museum, Manilans embraced the move toward greater Westernization with gusto--the populace donned silk stockings and sharkskin suits, flocked to cabarets and movie-houses, danced the conga and boogie-woogie, and moved into Art Deco homes. Landmarks like the Old Congress Building, Metropolitan Theater, Manila City Hall and Central Post Office rose in the heart of the city.

That bright interlude, however, was interrupted by the city's darkest period--World War II. Under the Japanese Occupation, Manila underwent the horrors of modern warfare and by the time it was over the entire city lay in ruins, suffering the worst devastation after Warsaw, Poland. All of Intramuros was reduced to a heap of rubble; the only building left intact was San Agustin Church.

Manila rapidly recovered in the postwar years, with the country gaining independence on 4 July 1946. The presidents of the republic were sworn into office at the Quirino Grandstand and took up residence at Malacanang Palace to preside over the showcase of democracy in Asia. The economy flourished, making the Philippines the second richest nation in Asia.

In the 1960s, while its regional neighbors were still mired in underdevelopment, Manila launched into another building boom with the erection of new landmarks such as Araneta Coliseum and Ayala Avenue. The University of Philippines and other institutions of learning were attended to full capacity, creating one of the world's highest literacy rates.

But then came another long dark period in the city's history. In 1972 Ferdinand Marcos imposed martial law and for more than 20 years Manila languished under an authoritarian rule marked by curtailed civil liberties and a widening gap between rich and poor. Once

again, Manilans rose to liberate themselves. In near-perfect symmetry with the Philippine Revolution of 1896, the People Power Revolution exploded on the streets of Manila in 1986. While the whole world watched, Manilans defied the might of the Marcos dictatorship and staged an unprecedented event in history--a revolution without bloodshed. That momentous point in the life of the nation is commemorated by the EDSA Shrine.

Today, with the institutions of freedom securely in place, the economy growing apace and yet another building boom that is dramatically changing the face of the city, Manila is poised to once again resume its position as one of the preeminent cities of East Asia.

Manila began as a small tribal settlement on the banks of the Pasig River near the mouth of Manila Bay. It took its name from a white-flowered mangrove plant - the Nilad - that grew in abundance in the area. Maynilad, or "where the nilad" grows, was a fairly prosperous Islamic community ruled by Rajah Sulayman, descendant of a royal Malay family. On May 24, 1570, almost 50 years after Ferdinand Magellan - a Portuguese explorer under the service of the King of Spain - first set foot on these islands, a Spanish expedition under Marshal Martin de Goiti reached Sulayman's settlement. Encountering resistance from the Muslim king, de Goiti retaliated by burning down villages and capturing the artillery.

The following year, Spanish conquistador Miguel Lopez de Legazpi arrived at the mouth of the Pasig River and claimed the islands in the name of the King of Spain. He established the "distinguished and ever loyal city" of Manila, proclaiming it as the capital.

Today, Metro Manila is also known as the National Capital Region - a thriving, ever enlarging urban sprawl covering about 630 square kilometers and harboring a population of about ten million.

## **ORIGIN**

Almost 333 years of the Spanish colonization of the Philippines. The new city was encircled by double walls, the Intramuros and guarded by Fort Santiago. The Spanish kept to their enclave and sent out their missionaries and armies to conquer the countryside. In the suburbs or arabales like Tondo, Santa Cruz, Quiapo, Sampaloc and Malate, the indios-as the natives were called, lived and worked together with the mestizos (of mixed Filipino and foreign descent). The sangleyes or Chinese merchants lived in the parian, a district which became part of the present Binondo.

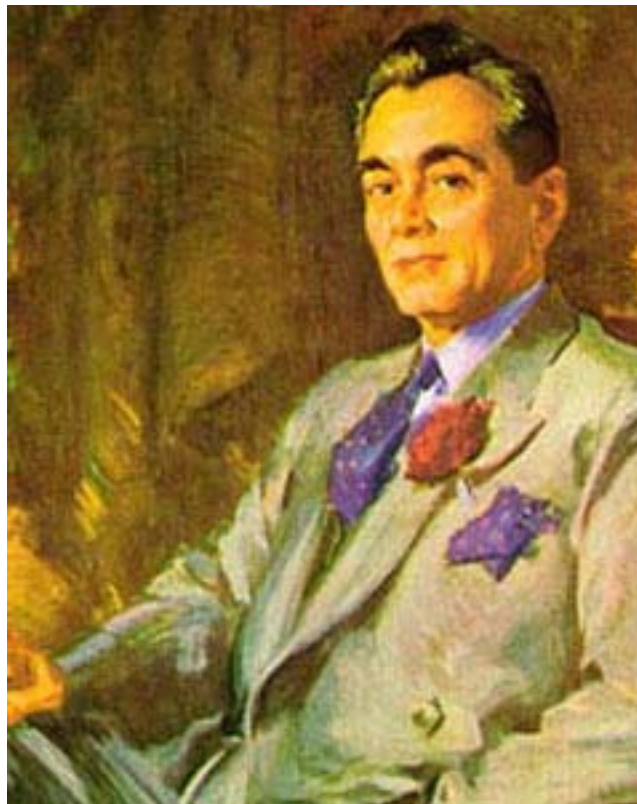
In the 19th century, Spain's colonies were racked by corrupt administration and internal disorder. Liberal ideologies fired the spirits of enlightened Manilans like Philippine national hero Jose Rizal who studied abroad and Filipino rebel leader Andres Bonifacio who read books on revolutionaries and philosophers. The seeds of revolution were thus sown in Philippine soil, and insurrection sprouted all over the countryside. By the late



1800s, Spain had lost control over the Philippines, and with her major defeat by the American fleet in the Battle of Manila Bay, totally relinquished her hold on the colony.

But freedom would not come so easily, for the Filipinos eventually found themselves under their erstwhile ally, the Americans. Under the new conquerors, Manila spread outwards, roads and bridges were built, and school taught the Filipinos Western culture and proficiency in a new language - English. Democratic processes were introduced; and neo-classical government edifices rose around the old city. But the outbreak of World War II soon halted all that.

For three years, the country chafed under the Japanese occupation. The end of the Pacific War left Manila in ruins but it also brought liberation and independence. In July of 1946, the Commonwealth government under Manuel L. Quezon declared independence.



The post-war years saw the reconstruction of Manila and its growth in area and population. Land was developed in areas now covered by the city municipality of San Juan. Subdivisions and residential villages flourished in Quezon City, Pasig, Pasay and Parañaque. Factories and industrial areas burgeoned in Caloocan, Malabon and Valenzuela. Adjoining municipalities of Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Taguig, Pateros and Marikina were developed and annexed. In 1976, a conglomeration of four cities - Manila, Pasay, Caloocan and Quezon City - and 13 municipalities was officially designated as "Metro Manila".

## **PRE-SPANISH ERA**

The City of Manila started as a Malay settlement at the mouth of the Pasig River. Its ancient name Maynilad was after the nilad plant whose star-shaped flowers clustered in abundance along the low-lying riverbanks.

By the middle of the 16th century, the City was already a thriving community under the leadership of a rajah called Matanda, a word of high consideration meaning "old one". The co-ruler was a young man named Raja Sulayman (Solomon, the Quaran of the natives) who was the nephew of Matanda. Rajah Sulayman controlled the traffic of Chinese trading crafts plying the Pasig River into the settlements of the Laguna de Bae.

Available historical records reveal that Manila was already an established entreport and a political and military center of the region around the Manila Bay even before the coming of the Spaniards.

## **SPANISH COLONIAL PERIOD**

In 1565, Spanish chroniclers found Muslim settlements in Manila which they referred to as a large prosperous community to the North in the island of Luzon. As soon as the news reached Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, he set out to conquer it. Two battles were fought over Maynilad, the second of which ending in a decisive victory for the Spaniards.



Miguel Lopez de Legazpi

Legazpi had a peace agreement with the rajahs within three days of his arrival with the accustomed ceremonies and Spanish legal protocol. Rajah Matanda gave Manila to Legazpi and the latter eventually took possession of Luzon that he called the "New Kingdom of Castile".

Recognizing the strategic position of the City as a trading center and military outpost, Legazpi who headed the Spanish expedition, promptly declared Manila as the capital of the new colonies. On June 24, 1571, the City was declared the capital of the archipelago.

Meanwhile, the King of Spain who was delighted by this conquest awarded the City a coat of arms and the grandiose title "the noble and ever loyal city". Planning in the City of Manila was first manifested in the Spanish period plan for Intramuros, which was based on King Philip II's Royal Ordinance issued on July 3, 1573 in San Lorenzo, Spain.

Manila then was divided into two - Intramuros and Extramuros. Intramuros, which referred to the area within the fortress-complex, became a replica of a European medieval city while Extramuros, which pertained to villages outside the walls later, became pueblos - Pueblo de Tondo, Pueblo de Binondo, Isla de Binondo, Pueblo de Quiapo and Pueblo de Malate. Ermita, Sta. Cruz, Dilao, among others are the suburban nodes which were founded later.

Muslim leaders who fully recognized the strategic importance of their growing settlements as center of commerce enclosed Tondo with palisades (upright posts). The maharlika families who were displaced from Sulayman's palisade port that was later turned over to Legazpi and his troops established a settlement in Malate (from the native term maalat due to its proximity to the water of Manila bay).

This was placed under the Augustinian Recollects. Ermita, located immediately beyond Bagumbayan was founded in 1591 by a Spanish secular priest as a small religious hermitage, which eventually transformed into a locus of residential district abutting the shore.

The Japanese who forged strong commercial linkages with a number of coastal settlements long before the Spaniards arrived were placed in an area called Dilao (in Paco) where they can be easily observed and controlled. The Japanese settlers in Manila were then placed under the spiritual care of the Franciscans.

In the late 16th century, the Spaniards permitted some Chinese, including many Christians who married native women, to permanently settle in Binondo under the Dominicans. The parish of San Miguel, under the Jesuits, was created to accommodate a small community of Filipino fishermen who previously dwelt in the village of Lagyo between Ermita and Malate until their homes were destroyed by Chinese marauders in the 1603 uprising.

Several kilometers from the core urban area of Intramuros and its immediate arabales (suburbs) were Sta. Ana de Sapa, San Pedro Makati, and Parañaque, San Francisco del Monte, Guadalupe and San Juan del Monte.

Only the British succeeded in occupying Manila for a short time in the 18th century and the United States in 1898.

For more than three centuries, what started as a settlement of Malay datus became the center of Spanish influence in the Far East. Manila was developed as a major port paving the way for the lucrative Manila-Acapulco Trade (Galleon Trade) which transformed Manila into a center for trade and commerce. Malacañang (from the native words (May



Lakan Diyan which houses the Spanish governor-general), was then constructed and it became the seat of government and the nerve center of the country's cultural, social and economic life.



Malacañang Palace in 1926

### **AMERICAN COLONIAL PERIOD**

The latter part of the 19th century saw the Filipinos took up arms and declared its independence from Spain on June 12, 1898. The Spaniards, not wanting to surrender to the Filipinos had an agreement (the so-called Treaty of Paris) with the Americans. The Spanish fleet retreated in a mock battle at the Manila Bay with Commodore Dewey heading the American fleet. Thus, from one conqueror to another, the Philippines became a colony. Manila, however, remained its capital.

With the retention of Manila as the seat of political power, industry and commerce, education, health services and the development of science and the arts, Manila's pre-eminence was further reinforced under the Americans.

On July 31, 1901, Manila became the first chartered city under the American regime by virtue of the charter enacted by the Philippine Commission. The Philippine Commission Act 183 constituted the inhabitants of Manila into a municipality "which shall be known as the City of Manila" to succeed and to possess all the rights of property "herein granted or heretofore enjoyed and possessed by it as organized under the Spanish sovereignty". (Subido, 1951). The form of government of the City of Manila under the Americans was patterned after Washington D.C.'s commission government. This made Manila as the first city in the Republic to gain local autonomy while the City's formerly appointive officials became the first elective city officials in the country (Subido, 1951).

In October 1903, the Municipal Board of Manila requested the Philippine commission to secure the services of an expert architect and landscape engineer to prepare a plan for the general improvement of the city. In December 1904, Daniel H. Burnham and his assistant, Pierce Anderson arrived in Manila to conduct the study of existing conditions and soon returned to the United States to complete the report together with detailed plans

and descriptions which were submitted in January 1906 and adopted by the Board in June 1906.



Daniel H. Burnham

An integrated spatial pattern was prescribed by Burnham for the city. On top of a basic grid, which is a circulation system radiating from a government building site near Intramuros, circumferential and diagonal arteries as well as parkways will be built that would link this to the northeast and to the different sections of the city. The Intramuros moats would be converted into greenyards and the Bay areas will be reclaimed for the extension of the Luneta Park. A boulevard along the south shore and a new port referred to as the South Harbor was built.

Heralding Manila as the premier capital of the country led to an intensified business and commercial activities resulting to a massive industrialization and development of Binondo, Port Area, Southern Manila Bay and other districts. Socio-cultural institutions simultaneously prospered considering that the City already have the historic religious and academic institutions such as the San Agustin Church, Manila Cathedral, Malate Church or the Remedios Church, Ermita Church, Tondo Church, Sampaloc Church, University of Santo Tomas and the Ateneo de Manila, among others.

### **LIBERATION PERIOD**

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1941 and the subsequent liberation of the country from Japanese occupation in 1945 left Manila as the most devastated battlefield of the war in the Pacific region. Thousands died and historical landmarks were left in ruins.

The rehabilitation of the city was accelerated with the founding of the New Philippine Republic. The rapid rural-urban migration following the post-war period saw the

transformation of the city into a bustling metropolis. Like most cities visited by war, Manila emerged as a mixture of the old and the contemporary spiced by the many temperaments that has molded its history.

Being the center of socio-cultural activities in the country, Manila significantly boasts of the most highly literate and most well informed electorate in the land reputed to be highly oppositionist. On record, Manila was anti-Quezon and pro-Osmeña in 1933 on the Hare-Hawes Cutting Law. In 1946, it was anti-Osmeña but pro-Roxas-Quezon. However, it voted against Roxas in the Bell Act plebiscite in 1947 and repudiated Quirino in the presidential election in 1949.

Under Republic Act 131 enacted in 1948, an appointive Vice Mayor was added to help in the city governance. After the Second World War, there was consistent political agitation for a more autonomous city government. This resulted in the passage of Republic Act 409 (otherwise known as the Revised Charter of the City of Manila) on June 18, 1949. The first election held in 1951 heralded Arsenio H. Lacson and Bartolome Gatmaitan as the first elective Mayor and Vice Mayor, respectively.

The revised charter likewise provided for a bigger board membership, from 10 councilors elected at large, to 12 councilors elected by district (three per district). For this purpose as well as for national representation, the City was divided into four districts. For administrative and other municipal purposes, the City was further divided into 14 districts, namely: Tondo, Binondo, Quiapo, San Nicolas, Santa Cruz, Sampaloc, San Miguel, Ermita, Intramuros, Malate, Paco, Pandacan, Port Area and Santa Ana.

The 1987 Constitution restored the presidential form of government and radically altered the political spectrum. Manila was further divided into six congressional districts.

Along with these historic developments is the rapid population growth accentuated by the continuing influx of migrants from the countryside. The ports of Manila, both the North Harbor and South Harbor, the manufacturing industries along the Pasig River, as well as the commercial establishments in Binondo and Escolta offered enormous opportunities and acted as a magnet for people in the provinces to come to the city.

This rapid development has spawned the concomitant rise in social related problems like unemployment and the proliferation of urban dysfunction (i.e. traffic congestion, slums, flood, deteriorated urban facilities and utilities, etc.)

No one can argue that Manila has retained its status as the political hub of the country considering that the major political institutions - Malacañang, the Senate and the Supreme Court are all located in Manila. It has also endured through time its reputation as the trading center of the country due to its strategic location and natural harbor. Manila has also remained as the melting pot of socio-cultural activities owing to its diversified and discriminating constituents, not to mention a well-informed electorate.

Indeed, Manila's position as business center and its rich cultural heritage has made it a prime eco-tourism development area in the whole of Metropolitan Manila. As a result of a recent evaluation conducted by a multi-sectoral group, Tondo, Binondo, San Nicolas, Santa Cruz, Quiapo, Intramuros, Malate and Ermita have been identified as major commercial and tourist development areas.

Scarcity of land for urban housing appears to be the major problem in Manila together with other local government units in the metropolis. Residential use is estimated at 52% of the total land area and that low and middle income families are still in a quandary on how to provide for their housing needs.

Settlements have grown and proliferated along the railroad tracks, under the bridges, in government or private lots and properties and other danger zones such as esteros or creek, river or the bay area.

As in any other local government units in the National Capital Region, Manila is confronted with the ever growing problem of blighted areas due to the influx of migrants from the provinces and the unregulated growth of squatter population.

## **DIALECTS**

It is probable that nearly every dialect spoken in the Philippines is spoken in Manila, for this cosmopolitan city receives its population from the entire country. Many foreign languages are also spoken, mainly by foreign nationals engaged in the diplomatic corps or business enterprises. But Tagalog is the predominant dialect, spoken by 76.4% of Manila's population, followed by Iloco (4.9%), Samar-Leyte (3.3%), Pampango (3.0%), Bicol (2.8%), Chinese (2.6%), Cebuano (1.9%), Hiligaynon (1.9%), Pangasinan (1.7%), and the remaining 1.5% speak any of the other dialects used in the country. Pilipino can be spoken by 98.0% of the population, English by 66.1%, and Spanish by 8.4%.

## **RELIGIONS**

Roman Catholics predominate, comprising 93.5%, followed by Iglesia ni Cristo (1.9%), Protestants (1.8%), Buddhists (1.1%), Moslems and others comprising the remaining 1.4% of Manila's population.