Kasarinlan: Philippine Journal of Third World Studies 2018 33 (2): 125–147

REVIEWS

Abinales, Patricio N., and Donna J. Amoroso. 2017. *State and Society in the Philippines,* 2nd ed. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press. xlix, 413 pp.

As I was doing research for an article on President Rodrigo Duterte's ties to the Marcoses, I came across a 2017 online article by Patricio Abinales, "Digong is Boss, Not the Bayan's Champion," published by *Rappler* (Abinales 2017). By then I had gathered numerous details about Duterte's political heritage from various other sources, many of which were freely available online even before Duterte was elected president. Thus, I was struck by the number of errors in this brief commentary by a well-known Mindanawon scholar. The article states that Duterte became Davao City's officer-in-charge, and served in that position from May 2, 1986 to November 27, 1987. Duterte was actually officer-in-charge *vice-mayor* from 1986 up to 1988 when he won his first term as mayor of Davao City. The error is stated twice; it also appears in a table embedded in the article titled "The Dutertes Rule Davao." The article also contains statements such as:

- "The Dutertes were migrants from Danao, Cebu, where Digong's father had his first taste of politics when President Manuel Roxas appointed him mayor of the city" (Vicente was appointed mayor of Danao by Sergio Osmeña, still immediate postwar president by virtue of succeeding Manuel Quezon);
- "[Ramon] Durano—a former WWII guerilla-like Marcos—had claimed the town as the clan's base of power, and Vicente had no choice but to look elsewhere to further his

political ambitions" (After winning the presidency in the 1947 election, Roxas, a member of the Liberal Party, replaced Vicente, a Nacionalista stalwart, with Pedro Sepulveda as Danao's mayor);

- "[Alejandro] Almendras's close patronage ties with [President Elpidio] Quirino led to the appointment of Vicente as provincial secretary, and then, in 1958, when Almendras was elected to the Senate, Vicente took over as governor" (Vicente did not replace Almendras because Almendras was elected senator; Almendras needed a replacement because he was appointed as President Carlos P. Garcia's Secretary of General Services);
- "Vicente would hold that position until President Ferdinand Marcos appointed him Secretary of General Services in 1964 (again replacing Almendras who was elected to the Senate)" (Vicente did not replace Almendras as Secretary of General Services, since Almendras only held that position until 1959);
- "Vicente remained loyal to Marcos, but his wife, Soledad, turned oppositionist (and one of the first Davao Dilawan!) after Ninoy Aquino's assassination in 1983" (this statement suggests that Vicente lived to see Marcos become a dictator when, as was quite well-known even in 2017, Vicente died in 1968).

I was certain that the Abinales who authored the pioneering dissertation-turned-book, *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation State*, would not be as sloppy. Indeed, in the sections of that book focusing on "Landring" Almendras, Abinales, drawing from archival sources such as letters and articles from Mindanawon newspapers from the 1950s up to the 1970s, knew precise details about the political careers of Almendras and his political subordinate, Vicente Duterte (see Abinales 2000, 145–52, 171–76).

Seeing this odd discrepancy, I decided to examine the second edition of Abinales and Donna Amoroso's *State and Society in the Philippines*—which updates the book from the conclusion of the Arroyo administration all the way to the first few months of the Duterte regime—to check if any of the abovementioned errors also found their way into that book. At least one did; on page 338, the *Rappler* table

stating that Duterte became Davao City's officer-in-charge after the EDSA Revolution also makes an appearance.

I do not mean to imply that the first edition of *State and Society*, published in 2005, was immaculate; even that edition was hardly error-free. A review of the book's first Philippine edition in this journal is at times laudatory in tone, but the bulk of it highlights a number of the book's typographical and factual errors (Ariate 2006). The reviewer concludes that "[e]ven if in no certain way will the length of this list [of errors] affect the conclusions drawn by Amoroso and Abinales, it will be helpful for the readers of the book's future edition—which undoubtedly there will be—if these seeming weaknesses in details sustained by the book will be addressed" (Ariate 2006, 218).

Later printings of *State and Society*'s first edition did correct one egregious error pointed out by Ariate (2006, 214), likely not the authors'—"Philippines" was previously spelled "Phillippines" on the book's spine—but all other errors were apparently noted, perhaps with thanks, but little else. Raul Roco is still "Paul Roco," and readers are still told to pronounce Luzon as "loo-ZONE." In the second edition, other errors not highlighted by Ariate also still stand, e.g.,

- On page 244, Fidel Ramos is described as winning "by only a slim majority," when it was actually by a small (and highly contested) plurality. This error stands out particularly when one reaches page 304, when Abinales (in one of the new chapters, written after his wife and co-author passed away) shows that he of course knows the difference between a majority and a plurality;
- On page 260, readers are instructed to say "pare" aloud as "PA-ray"; it seems that fidelity to local pronunciation (by any ethnolinguistic group) was not a particular concern of the authors (or were they trying to normalize a particular, perhaps, translocal way of pronouncing Filipino words?);
- On page 265, the authors mix up Jose Singson and Luis "Chavit" Singson; the latter was the Ilocos Sur governor and "longtime Estrada crony" who turned against his presidential friend in 2000, not, as stated in the book, the former, who may either be Chavit's father or his brother, Jose Jr.;

- Saying that Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, while campaigning in 2004, spoke "the local language in her native Visayas" (page 273) is a bit of a stretch, since, although she does speak Visayan/Cebuano, and she reportedly spent some of her formative years in the house of her maternal grandmother in Iligan—which is in Mindanao, not the Visayas—both her mother and father were born in Luzon.

Besides errors, the book has, across editions, notable instances of excluded information that would have helped in better understanding the relationship of political factions and the electorate in the Philippines. For instance, there is absolutely no mention of the 1987 Mendiola Massacre and its ramifications, especially as regards Corazon "Cory" Aquino's relationship with the Philippine Left and the possible solidification of groupings that made known their opposition to Aquino by voting against the ratification of the 1987 Constitution. Joseph Estrada is profiled as being an action star prior to his election to the Senate in 1987, leaving out the fact that that was not his political entrypoint, as he had previously served as mayor of what was then the Municipality of San Juan a few years shy of twenty. On page 262 of *State and Society*'s second edition, a table of celebrity candidates during the 1998 and 2000 elections, derived from articles by journalists Luz Rimban and David Celdran, lists Estrada as a candidate for president whose previous occupation was "action star"—as if he had not risen through the political ranks since 1969. In the same table, Alfredo Lim is reduced to "TV host," when, by 1998, he was best known for being the "Dirty Harry" two-termer mayor of Manila and, before that, the no-nonsense chief of the National Bureau of Investigation under Cory Aquino. These reductions become particularly eye-catching when one reaches page 268, where Arroyo is described as having attained "veteran politician" status before her ascent to the presidency, even though her career as an elected official started much later than Estrada's and in the same year as Lim's. (Also, if a point was being made about the confluence of politics and showbusiness, then why is there no mention of the well-documented use of Arroyo's passing resemblance to immensely popular actress Nora Aunor in her campaigns?)

All these aside, I have repeatedly consulted the first edition of *State and Society* whenever I had to write about the Philippines; the book was prescribed to me and my fellow students in a college sociology course at the University of the Philippines Diliman twelve or so years ago. It

serves as an excellent introduction to the politico-socioeconomic history of the Philippines up to about 2004, or of the interplay between what the state orders and what social forces demand (and, at times, the reverse) in our archipelagic country. Most readily accessible reviews of the first edition, including that of Ariate, agree. Morada (2005, 535) noted that the book presented "outstanding scholarship and admirable depth and breadth of discussion and analyses about state formation and the dynamics of state-society relations in the Philippines." Ševiæ (2007, 512–13) noted that the book "is a very good read for both novice researchers in the area and those who need a well-written reference-type book that provides information in an authoritative manner," and decreed that the book is "suitable for classroom use." Reyes, though somewhat disparagingly stating that the "readily apparent" target audience of the book is solely "the undergraduate American readership" (2007, 198), hailed the book as a "refreshingly useful volume" for the aforementioned target audience and the "generalist/comparativist" (2007, 199).

Quality-wise, does the second edition of *State and Society* skew more toward the praiseworthy first and the excellent *Making Mindanao*, or his sloppily produced *Rappler* article? Lisandro Claudio, in his superlative-laced foreword to the second edition, states that "*State and Society in the Philippines* (now revised [how?] and updated) should be *the* history textbook of the current generation of Filipino students" (xviii; Claudio's italics). It should be noted, however, that the new chapters of the book ("The Rise and Fall of the 'Strong Republic,'" "Cacique Democracy Personalized," and "Neo-Authoritarianism?") written solely by Abinales, seem to be at least as error-and-exclusion-riddled as the preexisting ones.

- On page 291, Republic Act 7941, or the Party-List System Act, is described as exclusively alloting seats in Congress to "parties representing the poor and the marginalized," when a plain reading of the law shows that it does not; this fact was reinforced by *Atong Paglaum, Inc. v. the Commission on Elections*, decided by the Supreme Court on April 2, 2013.
- On page 292, Abinales implies that the Family Code is a product of debates in Congress, when, as the numerical designation of the law—Executive Order 209—suggests, it

was the result of the dictatorial power wielded by Cory Aquino before the convening of elected members of Congress following the ratification of the 1987 Constitution (also, the reference he cites, an article he wrote [Abinales 2009], does not say anything about the Family Code on the stated page, nor in the preceding or subsequent pages, nor anywhere else in that article).

- Indeed, Abinales seems reluctant to discuss the extent of Cory Aquino's immediate post-revolution powers. On pages 311–12, he notes that the first President Aquino was able to establish the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) "to recover billions plundered by the Marcos family," but the second President Aquino's similar Truth Commission was struck down as unconstitutional. Abinales chose not to elaborate; Cory Aquino, as a one-person legislature of a revolutionary government, could create a prosecutorial body such as the PCGG, while her son, whose powers were limited by the 1987 Constitution, could not.

- To say that the "[Communist Party of the Philippines'] legal organizations . . . . did badly in the [2010] elections" just because their senatorial candidates lost, as Abinales does on page 294, is to downplay the fact that the so-called Makabayan Bloc in the House of Representatives still won seven seats through five parties, and as a whole received over three million votes. It would have been fairer to say that they did as well, perhaps even slightly better, than in previous elections.

- On page 301, Abinales seemingly accepts the pro-Duterte propaganda of Davao City being "one of the safest cities in the country."

- Page 314 contains the following curious dyad: "Despite Aquino's reformist campaigns, the darker features of the political process prevailed. The Senate remained under the control of the opposition after Ferdinand Marcos Jr.; the dictator's former defense secretary, Juan Ponce Enrile; and coup plotter Gregorio Honasan were reelected in the

2009 midterm elections." Working backward: 2009 was not an election year, 2007 and 2010 were; Honasan won his third non-consecutive term as senator in 2007, while Enrile was reelected in 2010, which was also the year that Marcos was elected to his first, and thus far only senate term; and by 2013, after the midterm election, the Senate was dominated by Aquino's allies (though by 2016, many of them eventually did oppose Aquino and his anointed candidate, Mar Roxas).

- Any discussion of Benigno Aquino III's rise to power that does not reference the August 2009 death of Corazon Aquino and the nationwide lamentation that followed (even the Marcoses went to her wake) will either tend to oversell Aquino's (at the time, virtually non-existent) political clout independent of his parentage or make it seem that he won his big plurality in 2010 largely because he had a (back then, virtually non-existent) reformist reputation; Abinales leans more toward the latter.

- A statement on page 342, "Criticism of Duterte's harsh methods is now universal, with even international pop singers becoming visibly upset by the rise in the numbers of dead people," did not age well, nor was it accurate when the book came out; the inconclusive conclusion, "Ominous Future," ends with the results of a December 2016 Social Weather Stations survey, showing but without commenting on the seeming contradiction that the overwhelming majority of Filipinos (or at least those surveyed) claim that they are satisfied with the Duterte administration's anti-drug campaign and believe that it is effective, but worry that "'they, or anyone they know, will be a victim of extra-judicial killing'" (344).

Perhaps some of these errors and omissions can be chalked up to the difficulty of writing contemporary history, or of writing about groups and individuals who at times have a wanton disregard for objective (as opposed to "alternative") facts. But the uneven and error-filled additions to the second edition highlight the fact that in writing the book, it was not only depth of discussion of certain issues that the authors "[traded off] in [their] decision to attempt a sustained analysis

of state formation over the course of a millennium" (xxiii). In trying to craft an accessible history book that nevertheless revels in Philippine complexity, the authors at times seem to blur the (admittedly tenuous) line between political punditry/polemics and well-researched scholarship.

Thus, on page 221, we find the following: "It was Marcos himself who radically changed the political landscape on August 21, 1983. On that day, ex-senator Benigno Aquino Jr., who had been in the United States since 1980, returned to the Philippines. As he deplaned, he was surrounded by a military escort and shot dead." The obvious insinuation here is that it was "Marcos himself" who ordered the assassination of Benigno Aquino Jr., lack of irrefutable evidence notwithstanding. Moving to the new chapters, Abinales states that Duterte's family "was one of three that ruled Davao for most of the second half of the twentieth century, adjusting seamlessly to the change in politics during the Marcos dictatorship and when constitutional democracy was restored in 1986, shifting political fidelities with very little effort and ingratiating itself to the new regime" (338). Besides the inaccuracy—*constitutional* democracy was not restored in 1986, again because Cory Aquino had sole lawmaking and appointive powers for more than a year after the EDSA Revolution—this sentence suggests that the Dutertes only turned their backs on the Marcoses after the dictator was deposed, when, as Abinales notes in his 2017 *Rappler* article, Soledad Duterte ended up a leader of the anti-Marcos forces in Davao City years before the EDSA Revolution.

Going back to that *Rappler* piece: despite the deeply flawed historical pathway that he took in that article, there remains therein some factual statements and conclusions regarding Duterte that make sense, given other data; the same can be said for even the most contentious sections of *State and Society*. I am reminded of a defense for Michel Foucault's "archealogies/genealogies," i.e., that they "do not aim at a full and balanced reconstruction of past phenomena in their own [terms, instead] focus selectively on just those aspects of the past that are important for understanding our present intolerable circumstances" (Gutting 2005, 15). Such a defense, however, can be vulgarized then weaponized as a justification for historical denialism in favor precisely of those who are the cause of the majority's "present intolerable circumstances." Moreover, if some pro-Duterte/Marcos pseudo-intellectuals highlight Abinales and Amoroso's errors and slippages, or note that while the book certainly does not portray either

President Aquino as a saint, it does downplay a lot of the facts that have been deployed by their opponents to politically delegitimize them, then it becomes easy to (dishonestly) reduce the latest edition of *State and Society* as biased toward the pro-Aquino "yellows." Worse, a more objective reviewer might say, "how can we trust the theses about Philippine state-society relations in this book when the authors seem to misunderstand or misinterpret a lot about the leaders of the state?"

To sum up this review, I will continue to recommend and consult from time to time the first edition of *State and Society*; I pray that someday we will consider the second edition as a somewhat misguided interlude between the first and the third. Not addressing the combined issues of the first and second editions is a disservice to the book's wide and still-increasing influence (well over 460 citations, according to Google Scholar, as of this writing). If the devil is in the details, then there is a little bit of the infernal in this book, which otherwise adequately sums up the Philippines' purgatorial "weak state."—**Miguel Paolo P. Reyes**, *University Research Associate, Third World Studie Center, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines Diliman.*

References

Abinales, Patricio N. 2000. *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

——. 2009. "The Philippines in 2009: The Blustery Days of August." *Asian Survey* 50 (1): 218–27.

——. 2017. "Digong is Boss, Not the Bayan's Champion." *Rappler*, June17, 2017. https://www.rappler.com/thought-leaders/173144-duterte-local-boss-not-champion.

Ariate, Joel Jr., F. 2006. Review of *State and Society in the Philippines*, by Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso. *Kasarinlan: Philippine Journal of Third World Studies* 21 (1): 214–18.

Gutting, Gary. 2005. "Introduction: A User's Manual." In *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, 2nd ed., edited by Gary Gutting, 1–28. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Morada, Noel M. 2005. Review of *State and Society in the Philippines*, by Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso. *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27 (3): 532–35.

Reyes, Portia L. 2007. Review of *State and Society in the Philippines*, by Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 163 (1): 197–99.

Ševiæ, Seljko. 2007. Review of *State and Society in the Philippines*, by Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso. *Comparative Sociology* 6 (4): 511–13.

*****

Ileto, Reynaldo Clemeña. 2017. *Knowledge and Pacification: On the U.S. Conquest and the Writing of Philippine History.* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press. xii, 362 pp.

Immediate reviews in the press of Ileto's book were mixed. One reviewer hailed the book as "one of the best books ever written about the Philippines" (Cruz 2017). Another cursory review highlighted one thing: how President Rodrigo Duterte inspired historian Rey Ileto to bring the book to fruition. "In fact, Ileto says this book, in the works for more than 10 years, is finally out in large part after Rodrigo Duterte brought up the Philippine-American War—even displayed pictures of American atrocities—to brush aside questions about his war on drugs" (Alcuaz 2017). For the historian Ambeth Ocampo, "a glaring omission emerges from the collection: There is no essay on how he developed from criticism, how he was actually honored by his detractors. Friendly praise is never the same or as formative as unfair criticism from an enemy" (Ocampo 2017).

These mentions in the press are quite instructive if one were to read Ileto's book. The one extolling the book's excellence easily induces skepticism. The one that mentions Ileto's affinity for Duterte alerts us to the possible controversial, if not disagreeable, politics that the author subscribes to. And that last one on how Ileto handles criticisms is an insinuation that Ileto would rather not have them, though one would hope that intramurals in the academe are more than issues of ego and turf.

The book's twelve chapters are grouped into three sections: the Filipino-American war; memory, history, and politics; and knowledge and pacification. Ileto presents how the Americans, and the Filipinos complicit in their conquest and rule, controlled the writing of the history of the Philippine-American War, even as that war of colonial conquest was still being fought over. The independent Philippine republic must be denied out of existence. The resistance forces must be denigrated as cutthroats and bandits, local despots that swindled and herded and flogged to the point of death the poor, ignorant masses into waging a losing war. The colonial rule must be rewritten as the onward march of the modernizing, civilizing, great American empire. Ileto even summoned personal details of his biography and that of his father, former defense secretary, Gen. Rafael Ileto, hoping that "[t]hrough this account of father and son," he will be able "to draw out the

interplay of personal experience and regimes of knowledge that constitutes one's belonging and response to empire" (132). His history of how these "regimes of knowledge" came to be and the consequences of these distortions, propaganda, and systematized forgetting to nationalism and nationhood is Ileto's important contribution both to Philippine history and historiography.

As much as Ileto draws our attention to the silences and deliberate misapplication (or invention as in the case of cacique democracy) of concepts in the writing of history that justifies American colonial conquest and rule, Ileto can also be queried and faulted as to what his arguments dismiss, mute, or are totally silent on. But before dealing with these more substantive issues, it is also instructive to point out some minor ones that readers may encounter (nitpicking, no doubt, this is). These are passages in the book that seem to lack clarity or uncalled for asides. Take for example these sentences:

- "Relatives, neighbors, and children visited the sick or the dead without constraints. Some came to pay their respects, to join in the feast called *katapusan*; others just wanted to see what the dying and the dead looked like—and cholera victims were a horrible sight" (121). The way the sentences are strung together lends to a reading in which katapusan is made to appear as a feast with the dead still present. This was never the case. Katapusan, in both Southern Luzon and Bicol, is the last day of the pasiyam, the novena for the dead that starts after burial.

- Of the May 21, 1967 massacre in Pasay of Lapiang Malaya members led by Valentin de los Santos, Ileto wrote: "The demonstration never had a chance of success and Ka Valentin's followers were gunned down by the hundreds" (200). Gunned down means shot at. How many died? How many were injured? In current journalistic use, almost always, gunned down is taken as being shot dead. According to contemporary news accounts, thirty-three died among the Lapiang Malaya, forty-five were injured; one policeman was hacked to death (Associated Press 1967). When he wrote about this event in the opening paragraph of his book Pasyon and Revolution, at least he managed to come up with a near-precise number: "scores

of their comrades lay dead on the street" (Ileto [1979] 1997, 1). He made no mention of the policeman's death.

- "As we can see, the Congressional Records in 1956 were fully bilingual. If a member of the Senate or House spoke in Spanish, no translation was provided, for knowledge of Spanish was assumed among the politicians. And in this particular debate over Rizal's novels, a number of the privileged speeches were totally in Spanish, and all the Senators in attendance (including the Muslim senator Domocao Alonto) were expected to follow such presentations, even though they might ask questions in English" (227). Why did Ileto have to single out Senator Alonto with the qualifier "Muslim" and write it in such a way as to give the impression that he may not be as comprehending of Spanish as his other colleagues? Senator Alonto studied law at the University of the Philippines. At that time, students in law colleges studied decisions of the Philippine Supreme Court in Spanish and English. Alonto passed the bar in 1938 (Tribune 1938). The topnotcher of that bar exam, and a classmate of Alonto and a fellow Mindanaoan, was Emmanuel Pelaez. Alonto and Pelaez were senators in the Third Congress (1954-57). Ileto made no qualification of Pelaez's proficiency in Spanish and English. Why did he have to make one for Alonto?

- Ileto confused Partha Chaterjee with Prasenjit (he also misspelled his name in his bibliography as "Pasenjit") Duara. In the bibliography, the book *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* was attributed to both. It was Chaterjee's work.

Quibbling about details and interpretation will not suffice for the two key issues in Ileto's book that invite examination. The first one is on the supposed consequence of the Japanese conquest in occasioning a break from the controlling American discourse on the history of the Philippine revolution, in particular on how it marginalized and almost erased Andres Bonifacio from history. The second one is on Ileto's contentious accounting of the supposed ahistoric and colonial logic behind caciquism, cacique democracy and bossism, and his quest for the rural ilustrados that Duterte is now supposed to personify.

On the first issue, this he wrote:

> The collaboration issue has always been a vexing one in Philippine historiography. I would argue, however, that collaboration with Japan did not mean submission to a new "Mother Japan." The Japanese occupation had a positive effect, enabling those individuals who straddled empires such as Laurel, Recto, and Filipino-American war veterans Artemio Ricarte, Emilio Aguinaldo, and Servillano Aquino to make a conceptual break with Mother America and to reconnect the Philippines of 1943 with the time of Rizal—that is, with the time of the break from Mother Spain, or the Revolution of 1896. The experience of a third Empire, Japan, enabled these leaders to resurrect the Philippines of Rizal's time as the source of inspiration for the Republic of 1943 and, hopefully, for the independent republic of 1946 onwards. (212)

Ileto speaks of a "cultural renaissance under Japan," a key element of which "was the resurrection of the Filipino-American war as a key event in the national narrative" (233). He claimed to have ". . . shown how Japan, a third though short-lived empire, functioned to enable a creative tension to be established between the two major empires that figure in the Filipino historical narrative" (241). In effect, Ileto is drawing up a debt of gratitude for the Japanese imperial army that the Filipinos must repay with due recognition.

Yet how lasting is this "creative tension," this "positive effect"? Is it of consequence? Ileto argues for the affirmative. "Historical discourse was an autonomous domain that enabled Filipinos to pursue their own agenda of nation-building within the constraints of foreign occupation. Filipino historians and writers were, in fact, encouraged by their new rulers to explore the pre-Hispanic and late 19th-century nationalist roots of their identity" (172). Were it not for the Japanese imperial army, historians and scholars would not have been goaded to research the period that led to the 1896 revolution. Were it not for the Japanese imperial army, Jose P. Laurel and Claro M. Recto would not have sharpened and refined their arguments for a history that exposes the cunning and control of America, for a history that brings Bonifacio back in and valorizes the discourse of an "unfinished revolution." A discourse that both the Philippine Left and the dictator Ferdinand Marcos latched on given its potency in mobilizing people and fostering the idea of a nation.

One can reexamine Ileto's view on three grounds. First, the world of 1896 and the revolution, of Bonifacio and the Katipunan, their

history and memory were sustained, publicly memorialized, and written about all throughout the American colonial regime. It was marginalized but not in need of resurrection as Ileto implied. Second, summoning the ghosts of 1896 was not just the preserve of the Japanese imperial army during the Second World War. The American propaganda effort did as much as it could to resurrect Bonifacio for the war effort. And lastly, scholars and studies on the supposed cultural impact of the Japanese conquest on Filipino society disagree and do not sustain Ileto's argument. Ileto made no mention of them.

Actually, Ileto (2017) seems to disagree with Ileto (1998):

> "Unfinished revolution" was not a new discourse. It had flourished in the rhetoric of the labor movement from the first decade of this century, finding its way into various peasant movements in central Luzon in the 1920s and 1930s. The idea of "unfinished revolution" carries with it an interpretation of the revolution as a mass movement initiated by Andres Bonifacio. A history that gives primacy to Bonifacio invariably includes themes that go beyond mere freedom from Spanish rule; it points to the confiscation of church lands, the punishments and even execution of errant friar curates, and it carries a critique of the ilustrado betrayal of the cause.
>
> Politicians from the beginning of this century were aware of the potency of the Bonifacio/Katipunan sign. It was something to be exploited in political rallies. However, the meanings generated by the sign had to be kept under control . . . . The colonial state's sponsorship of a Bonifacio monument, and speeches like Quezon's in 1929, should thus be seen as attempts to coopt, to control, a potentially subversive historical consciousness, one that had always been there since Bonifacio's death in 1897, but which now threatened to break its boundaries. (Ileto 1998, 182-84)

What Ileto did not pursue in his 1998 book nor in the present one, was to answer and give details of what were inside the labor movement that connected it to the peasant movements during the American colonial rule for it to have preserved and empowered the discourse on Bonifacio and the 1896 revolution. The partial, though more important answer, of course, would be the socialist and communist movements (see Guillermo 2009). At the outbreak of the Second World War, these bearers of Bonifacio's legacy, the Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon (Anti-Japanese People's Army), waged an effective guerilla war.

In the chapter "The Return of Bonifacio" in the current book, Ileto left out the three decades of articulations on Bonifacio and the 1896 revolution prior to the Japanese invasion. With the contribution of the socialist and communist movements muted, he can now sell his abovementioned argument. That is why when he started discussing the volatile agrarian situation in the immediate postwar period, the journalists, unionists, intellectuals, and revolutionaries that he started citing, seem to have come out of nowhere.

This is not to deny the effort by the American colonial educational system to marginalize the narratives of the 1896 revolution, but the efforts of scholars, historians, and journalists, not to mention participants to the revolution themselves, to write about Bonifacio and his generation and the revolt that they led have been going on since the 1900s, long before they were supposedly prodded or inspired into work by the Japanese imperial army. A look at the bibliography of Agoncillo's *The Revolt of the Masses* (1996) supports this point: Manuel Sastron published *La Insurreccion en Filipinas* in 1897, Emilio Aguinaldo wrote about the revolution in 1899, Isabelo de los Reyes wrote two monographs in 1899 and 1900, Manuel Artigas y Cuerva wrote on the same topic a decade later, Artemio Ricarte in 1927, Teodoro M. Kalaw have been publishing on Bonifacio and the Katipunan since the mid-1920s, Apolinario Mabini's *La Revolucion Filipina* written prior to his death in 1903 was published in 1931 by the Bureau of Printing, the father-son tandem of Epifanio de los Santos and Jose P. Santos were also writing on the same subject in the same period until the outbreak of the war. The play *Andres Bonifacio*, a Tagalog adaptation of Clifford Odet's *Waiting for Lefty*, was staged at the Manila Grand Opera House during the Commonwealth (Agoncillo [1965] 2001, 2: 557). Bonifacio's birthday, then known to be November 29, was a legal holiday "celebrated elaborately throughout the Philippines . . . Parades were held in Manila and in the provinces. Speeches extolling Bonifacio were delivered" (United Press Despatch 1933). Still, for Ileto, Agoncillo, and by extension, *The Revolt of the Masses*, "was probably influenced by the Japanese model of (and support for, during the occupation) an autonomous history of 'Oriental' civilization" (204).

Then there were the likes of Nick Joaquin, who in his writings (both in fiction and history), was protesting "against the effects of sajonismo, the 'Anglo-Saxonization' of the Filipino, a complaint raised by other Filipino intellectuals in the early twentieth century and one that gained ground during the Japanese occupation when

'Orientalization," the return to the Filipino's 'Malayan roots,' was the cultural mantra of the occupation government. It was not, however, a return to a mythicized 'ancient heritage' that Nick [Joaquin] preached but a recovery of the Spanish past that both the Americans and the Japanese had turned into a past to be excised . . . . [Joaquin] extolled a Western colonial past that in effect debunked the orientalismo that was the official policy under the Japanese occupation" (Mojares 2017, 4-5, 7).

The works of said revolutionaries, historians, and journalists as well as the discourse sustained in the socialist and communist movements are important contexts for the second point querying Ileto's favored view. The United States itself during the war resurrected Bonifacio and enlisted his iconic, revolutionary status in a propaganda fight against the Japanese. A step that the United States and her wartime propagandists could not have undertaken if Bonifacio's memory or that of the Revolution of 1896 needed reviving and was only revived by the Japanese imperial army during the war. In the war film *Back to Bataan*, John Wayne's character was featured with a character named Andres Bonifacio Jr. played by Anthony Quinn. The film was released in May 1945 before the United States forces reconquered the Philippines.

Here's Sharon Delmendo's insightful take on the topic:

> The ideological core of the film is its manipulation of the identity axis of nationalism. The film eases anxieties over the forthcoming moment of rupture between America and the Philippines by constituting Americans as ideal Filipinos. One of the film's culminating moments comes when Andres Bonifacio, the film's Filipino nationalist symbol, tells John Wayne, that quintessential American, "you're a better Filipino than I am." The film rewrites the history of the Philippines as the history of America in the Philippines—written by Americans who are better Filipinos than the Filipinos themselves . . . . the film's manipulation of Philippine revolutionary history to reinstate American political domination on the eve of official Philippine independence demonstrates . . . that U.S. and Philippine nationalisms overtly seek to create and maintain their respective political sovereignties through a covert dependence on the other. (Delmendo 2004, 87)

And while the Americans were capitalizing on Bonifacio's appeal, what was the Japanese imperial army doing? Censoring Bonifacio.

> In order to control Filipino thought, censorship became mandatory in all forms of media: newspapers and magazines, theaters, movie houses and radio. Licenses and permits were required for any publication, which was subject to prior censorship. To check the spread of information, typewriters and mimeographing machines were required to be registered, together with samples of their type styles. Mail was opened and checked. Numerous regulations governed publication of any kind of information: bookstores had to have their stocks censored before they could reopen; schools had to have their courses and syllabi approved. In order to check unbridled nationalism (which could and did work against the Japanese), the Philippine flag (which had flown under the American flag during the Commonwealth years) was banned entirely and replaced by the Japanese flag and the Philippine national anthem was likewise prohibited (it would be replaced by the "Awit sa Paglikha ng Bagong Pilipinas" in late 1942). By order of the Hodobu even Bonifacio was excised from school texts. (Jose 1992, 13)

Ileto, in his book, deplores the "[s]tudies that are geared toward proving a theory or demonstrating some novel characteristic [sic] of a social formation tend to fish out of complex documentary collections only what is needed to make their point" (300). Is he not guilty of the same?

This fact also leads us to the third and last point contending Ileto's attempt to indebt the writing of Filipino revolutionary history and its legacy to Japanese conquest. If the Japanese conquest provided the opportunity and the inspiration for the writing of a history that broke free of the controlling American discourse, save for Agoncillo's The Revolt of the Masses, what other works of history came out of this period? Ileto discusses in his book two: Laurel's *Forces that Make a Nation Great* (1944), a compilation of newspaper articles on Filipino heroes, and a book-length poem of Philippine history, *Sa Lupa ng mga Lakan* (1948) by Ignacio Facundo. For Ileto, Laurel's work "is arguably the best statement of the ideology of the 1943 Republic" (172). Facundo's work, on the other hand, "captures a minority discourse in which the Japanese occupation period is a repetition, with variation, of previous experiences of invasion and conquest," it "highlights independence under Japanese auspices in 1943 as a landmark event in an ongoing process of national liberation" (178).

Both works are propaganda masquerading as history that today time has forgotten. But for Ileto they are important articulations of a suppressed nationalist sentiment. Who the author was is of less

importance than the treasured text. Hence, Ileto can simply hedge who Facundo was: "The author . . . has no other publication in his name that I know of." Then Ileto went on to imagine what Facundo may have been like, one of the " 'rural ilustrados,' were it not for the fact that his world is Manila and not the provinces" (178). Then Facundo would simply be a Manileño ilustrado. Though Facundo, Ileto again surmised, is not "in any account or anthology of Tagalog literature" (178). Had Ileto read Faustino Aguilar's report on the Commonwealth Literary Award for 1940, then he would have known that Facundo submitted an entry in Tagalog poetry entitled "Ang Laguna't Bulakan." He lost to Amado V. Hernandez (Quezon et al. [1940] 1973, 66-72). Facundo may have been laudatory of the independence that the Japanese promised, but as the war progressed, he remembered the world of 1896 less for its heroics and more for its brutality:

> Sa "Fuerza Santiago" piniit ng mga Hapones ang mga Pilipinos pinaghinalaan nilang mga gerilya at makagerilya, at pinahirapan hanggang ang marami ay namatay, na paris din ng ginawa ng mga kastila. (Facundo 1948, 214n1)

The impact of the Japanese occupation "in terms of cultural penetration has been found to be quite transitory . . . . The Japanese thrust to re-orient Filipino culture to its pre-Western Oriental tradition, in line with the objectives of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, did not effectively transform the identity and lifeways of the Filipinos, which at the time of Japanese conquest had already been heavily influenced by almost 450 years of intense acculturative processes under the Spanish and afterwards, American domination" (Tiongson and Roxas 1992, 5). Resil Mojares noted that "[w]riters who had begun to switch to local languages under the Japanese promptly returned to English after the war" (2017, 7; a more detailed observation is in Agoncillo [1965] 2001, 2: 593-96). Hence Ikehata Setsuho's trenchant assessment of the war years and its consequences:

> The ultimate paradox of the Japanese occupation of the Philippines is how its initial intent, real or imagined, to liberate the country from U.S. colonialism was turned completely upside down, resulting in the actual strengthening of Philippine dependency on the United States. The Filipinos' hope in, and loyalty to, the United States was heightened during the Japanese occupation. For the Filipino people, it was only the U.S. reoccupation of their country that could free them from the cruelty and indignity they were suffering under the Japanese army. . . . the historical view which claims that the occupation of Southeast Asia by Japanese

> forces during the Pacific War ultimately furthered national independence in the region is untenable in the case of the Philippines. (Setsuho 1999, 20)

Ileto's insistence that the "alternative to the official narrative of Philippine history . . . was shaped and implanted during the formative years of 1943-1948" (224) amounts, charitably, to a suspect sentimentality that hides a logic justifying violence: were it not for our experience of brutal subjugation we would not have known to learn more about our past. The corollary to this sentiment is the more cynical and insidious ethos of legitimating brutal authority provided that authority enables one to pursue greater knowledge. What is also overlooked in Ileto's argument was the actual devastation that both the Japanese and the Americans have wrought in the country that led to incalculable loss of the remnants of the world of 1896, the sources and writings of the incipient, revolutionary nation that so fascinates Ileto.

The third section of Ileto's book is an expanded (more re-arranged than expanded) version of his 2001 article in the Philippine Political Science Journal (Ileto 2001) and his response to John Sidel, after the latter wrote a reaction to his article. Carl Lande (2002) and Arnold Molina Azurin (2002) also responded to Ileto's piece. Given that sixteen years have passed since Ileto's PPSJ article and the publication of the present work, one expects that Ileto by now has engaged the comments of Lande and Azurin. He chose not to. Hence the book merely repeated the key issue in the debate that Ileto started, that is, whether the scholarly work done on the Philippines by the likes of Carl Lande, Glenn May, Norman Owen, Alfred McCoy, Benedict Anderson and John Sidel, among others, is of the same Orientalist strain as Stanley Karnow's *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (1989). For Ileto,

> Karnow, in effect, constructs Filipinos in terms of a variant of America's classic image of their Pacific wards. Images of the Filipino elite (oppressive caciques, bosses, patrons) and masses (blindly loyal and manipulated táo, clients of the bosses) constructed by James Le Roy, Fred Atkinson, David Barrows, and many other American writers a century or so ago reappear in modern journalistic garb. But just as these older images are complicit with the colonial project to pacify and tutor the Filipinos, Karnow's portrayal of a starkly different Filipino tradition has its political implications . . . . The American national imaginary is established and continually reinforced in writings about its cultural "others," and the

> Filipinos have occupied this position since the so-called imperial "blunder" of 1899. (270)

Two sub-issues inhere in this debate. The first one is the supposed essentializing tendency of the works of the mentioned scholars, that they have reduced Philippine culture and society into set characteristics from which the Americans can measure their progress and justify their tutelage. Totally obscuring the fact that these characteristics are in part a consequence of the colonial conquest and the neocolonial relationship that the United States fostered after the Philippines gained its independence in 1946. The second one is the issue of perspective and the kind of politics espoused by the scholars.

Some of the responses to the debate bear repeating here. Azurin charged Ileto of wielding an "Orientalism shotgun blast," arguing that "the outsider's viewpoint and efforts toward earnest scholarship are, more often than not, an addition to Filipino self-knowledge, as well as a stimulus for local scholars to compete in the challenging arena of research," that "[t]he outsider's privileged vista does not negate that of the insider's . . . Far better I think to regard these contraposing privileged vistas as a dialogue in reflexivity" (Azurin 2002, 150). Caroline Hau differs with Azurin on the ease and possibility of this dialogue:

> Ileto's salvo against "Orientalism" . . . had the salutary effect of raising the thorny but relatively unexamined issue of intellectuals—whether foreign or Filipino or Filforeign or overseas Filipino—and their relationship to each other and to the Philippines in ways that go beyond the terms by which Said originally framed his main arguments. Questions of exteriority and distance can no longer be so easily mapped onto an inside-versus-outside, metropole-versus-periphery, West-versus-the-Rest, or departure-versus-return dichotomy. (Hau 2014, 52)

In this vista opened by Hau's critique, can charges of essentializing cultures and political realities against other scholars even stick as they are always traversing localities and identities, the émigré refusing to settle and the native always deferring the act of return?

Lande countered Ileto's charge of essentializing Philippine political culture in his patron-client studies by arguing that "clientelism is a function of the economic dependency of the poor, and will become less widespread as an economy becomes more productive and the poor become less dependent on personal or governmental patrons" (Lande 2002, 124). Ileto takes exception to such developmentalist view. Hence Lande's query: "What does he think, or hope, will be the future

path for his country? To true national independence, of course! . . . . But what beyond that? Government by patriotic ilustrados? The growth of a more egalitarian liberal democracy? A Marxist transformation? Both of the latter represent development, though in quite different directions." (Lande 2002, 123). Ileto is silent in this regard, except for his search for the rural ilustrado, which for him ends with the current president, Rodrigo Duterte.

Ileto speaks of rural ilustrados as the supposed foil to the rise of the caciques in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Philippines. For example, the rural ilustrados drafted complaints against the excesses of the caciques. He documented the presence of rural ilustrados and their advocacies in his research of towns in Quezon during the revolutionary period and the Philippine-American War. The point Ileto is making is related to his critique of Anderson's cacique democracy and Sidel's bossism. That the towns, the municipios, the provinces, were not solely metastasizing locales of anti-democratic forces ruled by caudillos, "municipal elites as a whole [that] came to embody an evil called caciquism, which must be stamped out by force, education, or co-optation" (310). They could also be places where the ilustrados can assert their idea for a just society. And in an odd twist of fate, Ileto heralds the election of Duterte, "a mayor-president . . . able to lecture his audiences on the forgotten war against the United States" as proof of this (310).

Marcos had scholars and intellectuals rationalizing his brutal, kleptocratic, authoritarian rule. The murderous Duterte has rabid propagandists. The question now is whether Ileto, beyond his terse endorsement of being inspired by Duterte, will be counted with the likes of Adrian Cristobal, Onofre Corpuz, Remigio Agpalo, and others—brain trust of a dictator—or will he be lined up with Dante Ang, Martin Andanar, and Mocha Uson. One may object that this is an unfair association. Perhaps. But this very method of stringing along disparate authors and texts was what made possible Ileto's critique of the supposed patina of Orientalism that slimes studies on Philippine politics and history, mostly at the hands of American scholars. If Orientalism essentializes and disfigures the "Other," then awe of brutal and oppressive power that facilitates scholarly pursuits has the same consequence, it's violence is not just epistemic, it has real body counts.—**Joel F. Ariate Jr.**, *University Researcher, Third World Studie Center, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines Diliman.*

References

Agoncillo, Teodoro A. (1956) 1996. *The Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan.* Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.

——. (1965) 2001. *The Fateful Years: Japan's Adventure in the Philippines, 1941–45,* 2 vols. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.

Alcuaz, Coco. 2017. "How Duterte Inspired Historian Rey Ileto to Finish U.S. Conquest Book." What's the Big Idea with Coco Alcuaz, *Rappler,* July 22, 2017. https://www.rappler.com/nation/features/176260-duterte-historian-rey-ileto-us-conquest-book.

Anderson, Benedict. 1988. "Cacique Democracy in the Philippines: Origins and Dreams." *New Left Review* 169 (May–June): 3–31. Also in Rafael 1995.

Associated Press. 1967. "34 Filipinos Killed in Political Clash." *Los Angeles Times,* May 21, 1967, 1.

Azurin, Arnold Molina. 2002. "Orientalism? Privileged Vistas Most Probably." *Philippine Political Science Journal* 23(46): 139–50.DOI: 10.1080/01154451.2002.9754239.

Cruz, Elfren S. 2017. "The Forgotten War: A Filipino View." Breakthrough, *The Philippine Star,* May 13, 2017. https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2017/05/13/1699716/forgotten-war-filipino-view.

Delmendo, Sharon. 2004. "Back to Bataan Once More: Pax Americana and the Pacific Theater." In *The Star-Entangled Banner: One Hundred Years of America in the Philippines,* 86–114. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Facundo, Ignacio. 1948. *Sa Lupa ng mga Lakan.* Manila: Bookman, Inc.

Guillermo, Ramon. 2009. *Pook at Paninindigan: Kritika ng Pantayong Pananaw.* Quezon City: The University of the Philippines Press.

Hau, Caroline Sy. 2014. "Privileging Roots and Routes: Filipino Intellectuals and the Contest over Epistemic Power and Authority." *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints*, 62 (1): 29–65. DOI:https://doi.org/10.1353/phs.2014.0000.

Ileto, Reynaldo C. (1979) 1997. *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840–1910.* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

——. 1998. "The 'Unfinished Revolution' in Political Discourse." In *Filipinos and Their Revolution: Event, Discourse, and Historiography,* 177–201. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

——. 2001. "Orientalism and the Study of Philippine Politics." *Philippine Political Science Journal* 22 (45): 1–32. DOI: 10.1080/01154451.2001.9754223.

——. 2002. "On Sidel's Response and Bossism in the Philippines." *Philippine Political Science Journal* 23 (46): 151–74. DOI: 10.1080/01154451.2002.9754240.

Jose, Ricardo T. 1992. "The Japanese Occupation and Philippine Culture: An Overview." In *Panahon ng Hapon: Sining sa Digmaan, Digmaan sa Sining,* edited by Gina V. Barte, 9–20. Pasay City, Metro Manila: Sentrong Pangkultura ng Pilipinas.

Lande, Carl H. 2002. "Political Clientelism, Developmentalism and Postcolonial Theory." *Philippine Political Science Journal* 23 (46): 119–28. DOI: 10.1080/01154451.2002.9754237.

McCallus, Joseph P. 1989. "The Myths of the New Filipino: Philippine Government Propaganda during the Early Years of Martial Law." *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 17 (2): 129–48.

Mojares, Resil B. 2017. "Discourses of the Devil's Advocate." In *Interrogations in Philippine Cultural History,* 3–18. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Ocampo, Ambeth R. 2017. "Forgetting as Part of Remembering." Looking Back, *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* April 21, 2017. https://opinion.inquirer.net/103363/forgetting-part-remembering.

Quezon, Manuel L., Carlos P. Romulo, and Salvador P. Lopez. (1940) 1973. *Literature under the Commonwealth.* n.p.: Alberto S. Florentino.

Rafael, Vicente L., ed. 1995. *Discrepant Histories: Translocal Essays on Filipino Cultures.* Pasig, Metro Manila: Anvil Publishing, Inc.

Setsuho, Ikehata. 1999. "The Japanese Occupation Period in Philippine History." In *The Philippines under Japan: Occupation Policy and Reaction,* edited by Ikehata Setsuho and Ricardo Trota Jose, 1–20. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Sidel, John T. 2002. "Response to Ileto: Or, Why I Am Not an Orientalist." *Philippine Political Science Journal* 23(46): 129–38. DOI: 10.1080/01154451.2002.9754238.

Tiongson, Nicanor G., and Ma. Teresa Escoda Roxas. 1992. "Preface." In *Panahon ng Hapon: Sining sa Digmaan, Digmaan sa Sining,* edited by Gina V. Barte, 5–6. Pasay City, Metro Manila: Sentrong Pangkultura ng Pilipinas.

The Tribune. 1938. "509 Pass 1938 Bar Examinations." *The Tribune,* December 14, 1938, 12.

United Press Despatch. 1933. "Filipinos Praise Revolutionary." *The Vancouver News-Herald,* November 30, 1933, 1.