

COLONIAL WARS IN SOUTHERN LUZON: REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING

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In Philippine history the beginning of the twentieth century is marked by the US Army's invasion of the southern Tagalog provinces of Luzon. The Schwan expeditionary force left Manila on New Year's Day 1900, and by the end of March most of the Filipino defenders had been driven out of the town centers or *poblaciones* of Laguna, Batangas and Tayabas.¹ As the year progressed, the Americans set up their garrisons in the old Spanish convents, while the Filipino army regrouped in the hills and outlying villages. For the inhabitants of the region this was the beginning of a guerrilla war that would last for another two years.

The documentation on the war in southern Tagalog is plentiful enough. They lead to narratives that enlighten us not just about how Filipinos fought in the war, but how they lived through a time of crisis just as intense as the Japanese occupation some forty years later. My enthusiasm about retrieving this history is unfortunately not shared by the general public. Filipinos who experienced the war with the United States, it seems, were not keen to transmit their memories of the event to the next generation.

For example, in my archival research I discovered a letter written by my grandfather, Francisco Yleto, to General Ysidoro Torres, the revolutionary commander in Bulacan, describing his activities and reiterating that he is at Torres' service.² US army intelligence intercepted the document, scribbled "revolutionary spy" over it, and no doubt kept an eye on Yleto's movements in Bulacan and Nueva Ecija hauling firewood. There is surely an exciting historical episode to be retold here, yet Lolo Ysco never mentioned such matters to my father who grew up knowing next to nothing about a war with the US. Perhaps he kept his silence after having been recruited as a schoolteacher by the Americans in 1904. In his eagerness to succeed in the new era, he needed to erase his revolutionary or even anti-American past, to forget that there ever was a war.

A similar pattern can be identified in the forgetting — or selective remembering — of the career of my wife's grandfather. The Carandang family can proudly recount that Lolo Pedro had been appointed the first *presidente*, or mayor, of Tanauan when the US army organized the town in mid-1901. But I discovered documents in the US archives showing that mayor Carandang was eventually shorn of office in late 1901 and imprisoned for providing information and supplies to the guerrillas while pretending to be an Americanista.³ He practiced what

¹ The best account thus far of the Schwan expedition and of the various stages of the war in southern Tagalog, is Glenn A. May, *Battle for Batangas*. New Haven and London: Yale University, 1991.

² Francisco Yleto to Ysidoro Torres (in Spanish), 23 July 1900, Selected Documents folder 99, folio 10, Philippine Insurgent Records (on microfilm, USNA).

³ Various letters by presidente Pedro Carandang to the US Post Commander can be found in the US National Archives (henceforth USNA), Record Group (henceforth RG) 395, E2408 box 3. For lists of prisoners see USNA, RG395, E2635 no.3499.

the US authorities then called “amigo warfare,” features of which I will discuss later in this paper. No one in my wife’s family seemed to know about the incarceration of Lolo Pedro.

When I asked Maria Gonzales Carandang in 1972 whether she had any recollection of her late husband Pedro’s clandestine activities, she knew — or at least claimed to know — nothing. She also had next to nothing to say about her first cousin, Nicolas Gonzales, who was the revolutionary Colonel commanding the guerrilla movement in her district and outranked only by the famed General Miguel Malvar. Perhaps Lola Angge was too young or hadn’t been married to Don Pedro yet at that time. But she *did* remember something about those early years of occupation, recounting to me in some detail how the American post commander in Tanauan was a kind fellow (*mabait*) who had even danced with her at a public ball (*baile*). Perhaps, as I will argue later in this paper, it was the Americans’ “kindness” toward a defeated people, their ability to turn violent conquest into a phase in a redemptive process that encouraged silence about the years of turmoil.

On a more general level, the Philippine-American war is definitely not the sort of topic that the Filipino public likes to talk about. To imagine Filipinos warring with Americans simply contradicts the dominant tropes of the Philippine-American relationship. In popular and official discourse, this relationship has been a special one, expressed in kinship terms like “compadre colonialism” and “little brown brother.” “Mother America” is owed a lifelong inner debt or *utang na loób* by the Filipino people she had nurtured. The fourth of July is a public holiday in both the United States and the Philippines: in the former it is Independence Day, in the Philippines it is celebrated as “Philippine-American Friendship Day.” The fourth of July, after the day on which the US granted full sovereignty to the Philippines in 1946, was in fact Independence Day for Filipinos as well, until President Diosdado Macapagal changed it to June 12, in commemoration of Emilio Aguinaldo’s declaration of independence from Spain. Macapagal made the right decision in more ways than one, because the fourth of July 1902, also marked the official end of the “Philippine insurrection” against the United States.

Why is it so difficult to speak of the Philippine-American relationship in terms such as invasion, resistance, and collaboration—terms so readily applied in relation to the Japanese who likewise invaded the Philippines and elicited much the same responses? There are a number of explanations for this which I will bring out in the course of this paper, but from the perspective of the twentieth century as a whole, the “problem” persists mainly because a special relationship with America has become an intrinsic part of the history of the Filipino nation-state’s emergence and development. Official history, at least, is built upon the forgetting of the war that brought the nation-state into being.

In official history, the transitional years from the nineteenth to the twentieth century mark the start of a historical trajectory from colonialism to independence, tradition to modernity. That this emplotment of the past is unable to accommodate the war with the United States, was quite starkly revealed during the recent centennial celebrations of the revolution against Spain in 1896 and the birth of the republic in 1898. Colorful floats in the centennial Grand Parade displayed to the public how the goals of the leaders of the 1898 revolution were apparently fulfilled through U.S. intervention in 1899 and after.⁴ The repressive, anti-liberal regime of Spain was apparently replaced by U.S. “tutelage” towards eventual self-rule.

⁴ see Reynaldo C. Ileto, *Filipinos and their Revolution; Event, Discourse, and Historiography*. Quezon City: Ateneo University Press, 1998, epilogue.

Understandably, then, the lavish parade lacked even a single float depicting the American invasion and the war that raged for three and a half years. Yet there was a huge moving display depicting the Japanese invasion long after the revolution.

The very theme of the Grand Parade, *The Making of the Nation*, ensured that the wars against Spain and Japan would serve as key framing events in the epic struggle of the people against colonialism that would bring forth the nation-state. Within this framework a war against the US, to whom the Filipino nation-state owed its tutelage, could be nothing more than “a great misunderstanding.” It was American educator David Barrows who, writing the first colonial history textbook in 1903, coined that term to describe the war with the US, then termed an insurrection.⁵ The American naming of the event as “the Philippine insurrection” is itself significant, because this war of resistance to US occupation then became detached from the phenomenon that the revolutionary intellectual Apolinario Mabini called “la revolucion Filipina.” For Mabini, who had advised Aguinaldo in setting up the Republic of 1898, as well as for those who led the war against the US, the events of 1899 to 1901 were always part and parcel of the Philippine revolution that began in 1896. If Mabini were alive today, he would be puzzled and angry that the centennial celebrations occluded the war with the United States.

To further make the insurrection a non-event, Barrows argued that “many of the Filipino leaders were necessarily not well instructed in those rules for the conduct of warfare which civilized peoples have agreed upon as being humane and honorable.” Totally silent about American atrocities, he went on and on about the assassinations of fellow Filipinos by the insurrectionists; “the very worst passions,” he said, were let loose in carrying out this policy. He criticized the “irregular warfare of the Filipinos” as a sign of immaturity. The events of the insurrection demonstrated why “the American nation will not entrust the Philippines with independence until they have immeasurably gained in *political experience and social self-control*.”

With memories of the past being reshaped by educators such as Barrows, is it any wonder that the generations of Filipinos who learned their Philippine history in American colonial schools — my father included — could not envision the war as the US suppression of revolutionary and nationalist dreams? Instead the war, if it was remembered at all, came to look more like a misguided, even stupid, rejection of a gift of further enlightenment. The fact that many Filipino officers who had fought against the Americans came to hold public office under colonial rule, only reinforced the view that the war of resistance was a waste of effort, an event that was best forgotten.

We can understand why those who experienced the war were not disposed to transmit their knowledge to their children. But their silence about 1900-1902 has only made it more difficult for Filipinos to chart the future of their nation-state after independence in 1946. It is too late now to recover that lost knowledge from the participants; none of the Filipino veterans are still alive today. Fortunately, however, plentiful written records are available: captured Filipino correspondence and battle orders, records of US Army post commands in most towns, US War Department reports, and newspaper accounts. There are even some diaries and memoirs from both the Filipino and American side. Given such plentiful records, though, why has the historical recuperation of the war taken so long to accomplish?

For one thing, the most easily accessible of the documents are the published US war

⁵ David P. Barrows, *A History of the Philippines*. Manila, 1905 (revised in 1907 and 1924).

department records. The extensive and uncritical use of US records, nearly all in English, naturally reproduces the official US view of the Filipinos as insurgents. This view became hegemonic from the beginning of the twentieth century thanks to colonial education. Barrows highlighted in 1903 the basic lack of “political experience and social self-control” that doomed the insurrection to failure and necessitated American control in order to set the Filipinos on the right path to democracy and independence. Another early commentator, James Le Roy, argued that the Philippine revolution was led not by genuine patriots but by local bosses or *caciques*. Furthermore, he said, the Filipino government and its citizens had clashing views about what independence really meant. The logical conclusion to such arguments was that US intervention was needed in order to instill the spirit of true democracy in such a setting.⁶ In a funny way these themes from American writings shortly after the war have resurfaced in modern writings about Philippine history and politics.

Writing some seventy years after Barrows and Le Roy, with the Philippines now an independent nation-state and the US fighting a war in Vietnam, the American historian John Gates deploys a rather different language in discussing the war. In his book, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, published in 1973, he does not name the event an “insurrection.”⁷ He uses instead the term “Filipino-American war.” His book is, in a way, a reaction to the bad press the US Army had been receiving in relation to its activities in the Philippines in 1899-1902 and Vietnam in the 1960s. Opposition to the Vietnam war was making concerned scholars look back to — or remember — its precedent in the Philippine islands.⁸ Gates book seeks to neutralize this challenge by portraying the Army in the Philippines as basically a benevolent and modernizing force, despite the excesses of some of its personnel.

Gates tries to see the war through the eyes of what he regards as the two great exemplars of pacification efforts: General Arthur MacArthur (father of Douglas), who attempted till the very end to implement a policy of “benevolent assimilation”, and General James Franklin Bell, noted for his successful “benevolent pacification” of the Ilocos and Southern Tagalog regions in 1901 and 1902. Basically Gates chronicles the US army’s attempts to hold fast to the notions of “benevolence” and “friendship” as the guiding principles of conquest and pacification. These principles are, in fact, the basis of Barrows’ 1903 depiction of the war as a “great misunderstanding.” Barrows was simply disseminating in a high school textbook for Filipinos the official US assumption that their presence was for the good of the Filipino people, that it was benevolent and uplifting, and that they came as friends. Gates, in 1973, latches on to this idea, suggesting that the US success was due to the creative combination of friendship and military pressure.

The fact that benevolence and friendship seemed to be spurned, or at least manipulated for the revolutionists’ ends, is attributed by Gates to propaganda and terrorism. In fact, he

⁶ James A. Le Roy, *The Americans in the Philippines*, vol. 1, 1914: 143-44; see also Le Roy’s “The Philippines, 1860-1898—Some comment and bibliographical notes,” in Emma Blair and James Robertson, compilers, *The Philippine Islands*, vol. 52, 1907.

⁷ John M. Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags: The United States Army in the Philippines, 1899-1902*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975.

⁸ The most influential of these critical, anti-imperialist revisions of the war with the US was Renato Constantino’s *A History of the Philippines*, Monthly Review Press, 1975, which originally appeared in the Philippines titled *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* and swiftly established itself as a college textbook of choice during the Marcos regime.

says, "Terror continued to be their principal means of combating the growing American influence in the towns. The widespread terrorism evident in 1901 indicated, as it had in 1900, that if left alone and unthreatened the great mass of Filipinos would not voluntary support the revolution." Gates was familiar with the writings of Filipino historian Teodoro Agoncillo which depicted the revolution as mass-based, and resistance to the US as driven by popular patriotism. To Agoncillo, it was the well-heeled elites or *ilustrados* whose support for the revolution faltered upon the arrival of the Americans and who in the end betrayed the masses. Gates stands the argument on its head by drawing upon the work of another American historian, David Sturtevant, who was then rereading Philippine history through the lenses of sociologist Robert Redfield's "great tradition" versus "little tradition" paradigm in analyzing change in modernizing societies. Sturtevant insisted that the revolution and the war with the US were mainly "great tradition" projects of Filipino elites, an entirely different thing from the backward-looking religious revolts and millenarianism associated with the masses.⁹ Gates depends on this formulation for his dogged insistence that terrorism was the fundamental weapon of the elite revolutionists in combating US benevolence. "Filipino terrorism," he concludes, "was highly successful.... The majority of Filipinos were unwilling, in 1900, to attach themselves completely to the Americans no matter how humanely or benevolently they were treated."

Gates' book is a good example of how modern scholarship reiterates a discourse of pacification that can only facilitate the forgetting of a war. It helps to perpetuate the myth that the Philippine war was merely a spillover of the "Spanish-American War" of 1898, which almost magically landed the Philippines on Uncle Sam's lap after some treaty in Paris and the payment of a check to Spain. The myths of "benevolent pacification," "benevolent assimilation" and "a splendid little war" persist because they help to conceal a profound contradiction that was perceived even by some American officers in the 1900 invasion force.

Colonel Cornelius Gardener, for example, thought that something wasn't right when they were opposing a people whose goal was familiar to any American who knew his history. "Let us guarantee independence to Luzon," he wrote to a friend back home, for it is "in every way capable of self government... We then wait till the rest of the islands are more or less civilized." After granting independence "let us apply the Monroe doctrine to the entire Philippine archipelago and say to the nations of Europe *hands off, this is our foster-child, a republic in Asiatic waters*. Let us become a leaven to overcome tyrants and monarchs in the orient, this our children will be more proud of than the role we are now playing."¹⁰ These words clearly echo the official, moral and paternalistic justifications of the conquest of the Philippines.

But what the Filipinos witnessed instead in the towns occupied by the Schwan expedition were American soldiers on the rampage. Col. Gardener knew all too well the gap between the official discourse of a civilizing mission, and the actual behavior of his army: "Of course the best houses in every town were occupied by them," he wrote, "and every hidden place ransacked in hope of the booty of Eastern lands, so often read of in novels; dreams of buried treasure in graveyards, churches or vaults." These are the sorts of details that remind us of the real war that gripped the towns of southern Luzon. We need to ask, however, why this war is

⁹ David R. Sturtevant, *Popular Uprisings in the Philippines, 1840-1940*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976.

¹⁰ See Gardener's confidential letter of 21 Feb. 1900, published in Melvin Holli, ed., "A View of the American Campaign against 'Filipino Insurgents': 1900," *Philippine Studies* 17, 1, January 1969.

largely forgotten, while the comparable experience with Japanese invaders is well remembered. One reason is because the official US justifications of the conquest are still being reiterated today in various forms.

How do we then begin to rewrite the history of the Philippine-American war so that it doesn't signify lack and failure on the part of Filipinos, benevolent pacification on the part of the American nation, or simply lapse into a non-event? First we need to avoid being "captured" — as John Gates obviously was — by the US documentary machine that produced self-serving representations of that event. Even Filipino records can be processed through this machine. The most commonly used compilation of "insurgent records" is the set of selected documents in translation put together by Captain John Taylor and published in the 1970s.¹¹ The problem with this compilation is that the selection and translation of the Filipino documents was carried out during the war itself. It was important at that time to produce an image of an uncivilized or barbaric brown enemy for not only would this justify the use of severe measures, but also it would prod Congress to approve more funds for the expansion of the war cause. And so the much-cited 6-volume collection of Philippine insurgent records edited by Taylor can actually lead us farther astray because of its omissions and wanton mistranslations.¹²

Another way of effectively rewriting the war is not to take the existing narratives of progress and modernity at face value. For example, I went back to the sources for the story of medical and sanitary triumph and discovered that these sanitary campaigns were battle-fields, combat zones, over competing definitions of sickness and cure.¹³ Filipino resistance to cholera inspections and quarantine had been reduced in official reports to some kind of crude or backward native resistance to modern medicine and hygiene, when in fact it could just as well be read as resistance against the colonial invasion of households and the disciplining of bodies. In 1902, US Army doctors were, by their own admission, engaging in "pacification" by other means. A couple of surgeons were in fact reprimanded for being too eager to burn down houses because they supposedly harbored cholera germs. The same critical reading should be applied to the activities of the American teachers, scientists, political advisers, and missionaries. Much of the scholarly literature on these figures still takes for granted their own representations of themselves as agents of progress, rather than agents of pacification in a war that took a long time to end.

In the sections that follow I address further issues about the war and its forgetting by focusing on several towns in Tayabas occupied by the Schwan Expeditionary Force. The perspective I bring is that of local history. In the course of my research on southwestern Luzon

¹¹ The story of this collection is outlined in John Farrell, "An Abandoned Approach to Philippine History: John R. M. Taylor and the Philippine Insurrection Records," *Catholic Historical Review* 39 (1954): 385-407. The five volumes of Taylor's *The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States, 1898-1903: A Compilation of Documents and Introduction* (1906) were reprinted in 1971 by the Eugenio Lopez Foundation under the supervision of Renato Constantino who, however, did not check the translations against the originals..

¹² For example, in the original document collection there is a letter to a certain Colonel Ramon Santos calling for the use of poisoned arrows against US troops. This letter was selected by army intelligence for translation, and later published in Taylor's collection. Comparing this much-quoted document with the original, what I found conspicuously missing was the order, penned by Col. Santos at the bottom of the original, forbidding the adoption of such inhuman tactics.

¹³ see Reynaldo C. Ileto "Cholera and the Origins of the American Sanitary Order in the Philippines," in Vicente L. Rafael, ed., *Discrepant Histories: Translocal Essays on Filipino Cultures*, Philadelphia: Temple University, 1995: 51-81.

during the war, I have come across hundreds of documents that enable us to reconstruct the world of the revolutionary *insurrectos* and the populace on whom the guerrilla forces depended for their continued existence.¹⁴ Let me illustrate in the following pages how our understanding of the “big picture” of the war can be deepened considerably through local or “micro” historical studies. My focus will be on the themes of resistance, collaboration, destruction, redemption, and forgetting.

One of the most revealing accounts I have come across is that of Concepcion Herrera of Tiaong.¹⁵ During the American invasion in 1900 she and her family were living in an outlying barrio — a typical case of withdrawal to the countryside practiced during times of crisis, but more commonly associated today with “Japanese times” (*panahon ng Hapón*). She describes in detail how she and her mother would prepare food and shelter for guerrilla units periodically passing through their country property, while her father, a wealthy and educated man, would discuss the latest developments with the visiting commanders. One day there came news that their copra warehouse in Sariaya had been razed by the US Cavalry, which threatened the same fate for their family home if her father did not return to the población and cooperate with the US authorities. Her father, Isidro Herrera, did not have much choice but to go back to Sariaya.

It was all done out of fear, but conventional US accounts would interpret Señor Herrera’s behavior as a rural ilustrado’s attraction to the benefits of progress and good government offered by the US. Radical nationalists, on the other hand, would most likely see this as a typical case of elite collaboration with the enemy. Herrera was one of thousands of principales and ordinary citizens who trickled back to the center from the countryside in 1900 and 1901 in order to participate, ostensibly, in the new colonial order. By mid-1900, in fact, just about all of the towns I have been studying were under US civil or military control. This has facilitated the war’s forgetting. For unlike the analogous situation in 1942, when the Japanese army came to rule the town centers only to be booted out two to three years later, US occupation in 1900 was not followed by a “liberation” phase, a forced withdrawal of the Americans, that would have led to a recovery of war memories and a celebration of guerilla resistance. Instead, US pacification and education programs after the official end of the war in 1902 managed to transform Filipino resistance to a condition of banditry while the American towns came to signify the vanguard of progress and democratic tutelage.

A rereading of the 1900-1902 period clearly reveals the existence of a war situation not unlike the experience of “Japanese times.” The war can be detailed at two levels: first, and more conventionally, by focusing on the guerrilla columns organized by local commanders; and second, by looking into the manifestations of what the Americans called “amigo warfare” in the pacified towns themselves.

The problem with presenting a history of the war as waged by local guerrilla units is that, in contrast to the narrative of the main events involving General Aguinaldo’s activities in central and northern Luzon, nothing much seems to have happened in post-1900 southwestern Luzon. To take an example from my current research, for almost two years after the US invasion of their region, the guerrilla columns of Lieutenant Colonels Norberto Mayo and

¹⁴ A survey of the kinds of sources I used and some major themes that arise from a preliminary read of such can be found in my essay “Toward a Local History of the Philippine-American War: The Case of Tiaong, Tayabas (Quezon) Province, 1901-1902.” *The Journal of History* 27 (1982): 67-79.

¹⁵ Concepcion Herrera vda. de Umali, “Fragmentos de mi juventud” (typescript), compiled in 1975.

Ladislao Masangcay dominated the hinterland of Tiaong and Candelaria. For a year the townspeople lived alongside them. There are distinct parallels here with the “evacuation” period following the Japanese invasion. But in early 1901 — as in 1943 — townspeople started trickling back to their homes in the poblacions. The defeat of the anti-imperialist candidate William Jennings Bryan in the November 1900 US elections, the ravages of malaria in the hills, and fears of more drastic US army measures against their lives and property, were among the reasons for the massive return. Meanwhile, the guerrilla chiefs Mayo and Masangcay remained in the field throughout 1901 and early 1902, not to directly confront the Americans with their meager resources but hoping for help—in the form of weapons from the Japanese, perhaps, or a German fleet that would come to the rescue, or an American shift in policy. In such circumstances, much could easily be forgotten about the war, because the epic battles just aren’t there to memorialize.

What the local wartime history of Tiaong and Candelaria reveals instead is the Filipino experience of dealing with a superior force through various mechanisms, like feigning defeat, playing dead, changing identities, allowing oneself to bend with the wind like the bamboo. The problem for the US garrison commanders in so-called pacified towns was not that there was much danger of American soldiers being harmed by those pesky guerrilla bands that couldn’t shoot straight, but that the Americans couldn’t be certain that the friendly, cooperative presidente, or mayor, they were dealing with during daytime, wasn’t the chairman of the town’s revolutionary committee by night. This was not what the US army wanted or expected. The enemy had to be visible and stable, an object of confrontation that could be destroyed, yes, but possibly also turned into willing subjects and even friends. After all, the official ideology of the US takeover of the islands was “benevolent assimilation”—conquest construed as a moral imperative to adopt and civilize the “Orphans of the Pacific.”¹⁶

“Amigo warfare” (from the Spanish word *amigo*, meaning “friend”) was what the Americans derisively called the Filipino style of resistance. The Filipinos were friends during the day or when confronted, but at night or when no one was looking, they were guerrillas. When the US cavalry approached, most of the enemy disappeared, or their uniforms were shed for peasant gear. Even more frustrating was when Filipinos donned American uniforms. American patrols incurred several mishaps as a result of mistaken identity. Knowing more about the dynamics of amigo warfare, the ability to shift identities in changing contexts, should enlighten us about the whole issue of collaboration—collaboration not just during the war itself but throughout the whole period of colonial rule. It might even explain why Filipinos today seem to be so adept at handling tricky situations that demand shifting or multiple identifications and commitments.

Townspeople in southwestern Luzon, then, straddled both regimes, colonial and nationalist, with relative ease. The “American” towns were, in reality, under dual governments, an intrinsic feature of amigo warfare. The office of *presidente* or town mayor was crucial in this situation, because he had to deal with the commanding officer of the American garrison. A good illustration of this mode of behavior is the career of the presidente of Tiaong, Pedro Cantos. Although meant to be a puppet of the revolutionary Colonels, he became important in

¹⁶ Vicente L. Rafael, “White love: Surveillance and nationalist resistance in the U.S. colonization of the Philippines,” in Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, *Cultures of United States Imperialism*. Durham and London: Duke University, 1993: 185. This essay has been compiled and published with others by Rafael in *White Love, and Other Events in Filipino History*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000.

his own right due to his growing influence over the commander officer of the local garrison. Working with Captain Moore could not have been easy, for this American was clearly disdainful of the ordinary villager. As he once explained to a visitor, *these black niggers would have to take their hats off when he passed*. He would walk over to anyone who failed to do so, pull off his hat and throw it to the ground, cursing in Spanish.¹⁷

Captain Moore's behavior partly confirms Colonel Gardener's allegation that "almost without exception, soldiers and also many officers refer to the natives in their presence as *niggers*."¹⁸ But not all natives were lumped in this category. Moore was very friendly with the Spanish-speaking town dwellers. He was seen chatting with them often, attending their dance parties, getting caught up in relationships he only partly understood—for among themselves, the town elite spoke in Tagalog, a language totally foreign to Moore. Through Tagalog they established another circuit of communication that led instead to the revolutionary Colonels in the hills. Captain Moore and presidente Cantos got along very well, then, through the medium of Spanish. Through this relationship, Captain Moore's appalling behavior toward the townspeople was somewhat redeemed by the presidente's mediation. This contrasts quite sharply with the experience of World War II, when Japanese commanding officers could hardly communicate with anyone in the towns.

Being in touch with the "inside" as well as "outside" of town, and being bilingual, Cantos played a delicate and often dangerous role in dealing simultaneously with the *principales*, the guerrilla chiefs, and the American commander. Ultimately his goal was to keep the lines of communication open between the town and the countryside. Supplies, gifts, relatives, lovers, and even the soldiers themselves moved in and out of town, thus easing the burden of the increasingly difficult life in the guerrilla zones. Such are the events that constitute much of the history of the Philippine-American war from 1900 on. They have less to do with battles between two armies than with *amigo* warfare in the form of "dual governments" and the circulation of people, goods and information between the "inside" and "outside" of town centers.

Amigo warfare, in fact, also characterizes the period of Japanese occupation. What interests me is the experience of straddling the divide between the colonial and revolutionary orders. The linear history of either the revolutionary struggle or colonial progress is interrupted by the "duality" (or should I say, "ambiguity") of much of Filipino behavior. In the case of the Japanese occupation, "duality" has not been a permissible paradigm thus far: one was identified as either a resister or collaborator. In the case of the Philippine-American war, it seems easier to forget about the whole thing than to take this duality or "being-in-between" as the basis for serious reflection.

American military solutions to amigo warfare were often draconian, blatantly contradicting the imperial ideology of "benevolent assimilation" and other American myths of a benign occupation. There were many frustrated army officers like Lieutenant Parker who proposed the following solution in May 1900: "Serve notice thoroughly that all who live in Dolores, Tiaong and San Pablo must return to their proper homes at once in order to prevent destruction; serve notice that hereafter all natives must stand and face American Soldiers,

¹⁷ Bruin, Patrick (Inspector of Constabulary). Testimony. Lucena, 13 May 1902, RG94 AGO421607

¹⁸ Gardener to Civil Governor of PI, Lucena, 16 December 1901, Report of conditions in the province since U.S. occupation," RG94 421607 encl. 99.

either to fight or in a friendly manner, and that all that do not, but run away, will be killed.”¹⁹ Sentiments like this help explain why the war is memorialized in US textbooks as simply “the Spanish-American war,” conjuring up images of armies and navies in battle rather than duplicitous natives being shot on the run.

American frustrations intensified as the months wore on and “peace” was not in sight. Looking back on the latter part of 1901, Maj. Gen. Lloyd Wheaton concluded that the policy of “benevolent assimilation” had not worked because of certain intractable qualities in the Filipino psyche. To put an end to such “perfidious and treacherous behavior,” at the end of November General J. Franklin Bell, having successfully “pacified” the Ilocos provinces in the north, was put in command of the 3rd Separate Brigade based in southern Tagalog. Bell promptly announced that amigo warfare would be terminated,

and to effect this every barrio in Batangas and Laguna will be burned, if necessary, and all the people concentrated in the towns ... Henceforth no one will be permitted to be neutral ... The towns of Tiaong, Dolores and Candelaria will probably be destroyed unless the insurgents who take refuge in them are destroyed.²⁰

This was “a policy of permitting no neutrality”—meaning to say one had to be for or against, not just in words but in deed. *I realized that it would do no good to try to force the inhabitants to be our friends* (Bell).²¹ The way forward was to force the inhabitants to stop aiding the resistance in order to save themselves from destruction. In order to apply pressure on them, they would be herded into “protected zones.”

At first glance it appeared to be a voluntary thing. As *friendship cannot be created to order by force, I deemed it best not to compel the people to enter these zones ... but merely to offer them the opportunity and permit them to decide for themselves whether they would be friends or enemies.*²² But could they practice “free choice” and still save their skins?

General Bell assumed that those who didn’t come into the zones were either guerrilla supporters who would be treated accordingly, or were being forced against their will to stay outside the towns. An ominous discourse was developing in US army circles as to why many of the rural folk remained outside the American-controlled towns. Bell explained that this was because a “reign of terror” existed in the countryside and that the guerrilla leaders were really bandit chiefs who held some of the people under “domination as complete as ever existed in the days of feudalism.” So the US army had to “hunt these intimidated people and bring them with their families into protected zones.”²³ They were to liberate the masses and protect them from their oppressive *caciques*.

What we notice in Bell’s speech is how a discourse of emancipation or democratic change emerges alongside a discourse of native duplicity, despotism and backwardness. One needed the other in the context of the imperial war. But the former is remembered as the precursor of the colonial hallmarks of “tutelage” and “development,” while its complement of orientalism and racism are pointedly forgotten.

¹⁹ Parker, John (Maj., 39th U.S.V.), “Report of a scout toward Tiaong and San Pablo,” 24 May 1900, USNA RG395 E2408.

²⁰ Bell, J.F., Telegraphic circular no. 13, 21 December 1901, USNA RG94 AGO415839

²¹ Bell Report, December 1902

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

We also notice a play on the notion of friendship. Amigo warfare was an attempt to come to terms with the new colonizer — to deflect its massive power by being friends and negotiating with its representatives in the town centers, while maintaining a certain commitment to the revolutionary project. Bell however, in a pointed reference to amigo warfare, pronounced friendship to mean full submission to US rule. One cannot force Filipinos to be friends, he says, but those who do not submit will be treated as enemies and destroyed. Since the Philippine-American relationship is celebrated today in terms of “friendship,” it is hardly surprising that its disciplinary origins are best forgotten.

The establishment of “true” friendship required the delineation of firm boundaries between the American “inside”—the town centers—and the “outside” which would be turned into a no-man’s land. Dual government would no longer survive if communications were totally cut. The US army, in a throwback to Spanish army methods in quelling the revolution in 1897, implemented a “protected zones” or “reconcentration” policy in December 1901. Bell ordered everyone to transfer to the town centers bringing all their food and property. Everything left outside would be confiscated or destroyed.²⁴

The hub of the protected zone was the church and U.S. garrison. On each of the streets surrounding the center a barrio was relocated, properly labeled and all.²⁵ It was like a theme park where a vast and variegated landscape consisting of barrios and sitios with their own histories and physical features, was reproduced in the pueblo center, the better to be watched and controlled by the US army. In one of the documents concerning the zones in Batangas the word “concentration camp” appears but is crossed out.²⁶ While the benign term “protected zone” connotes protection against external threat—i.e., the bad insurgents—“concentration camp” more fittingly describes what the zones were all about. Within the bounded confines, the population could be systematically viewed and counted street by street. In such a controlled environment, dependency relations could be established by distributing food and other necessities. Individual houses and tents could be penetrated in the name of hygiene and sanitation.

US post commanders often complained that benevolent American intentions were not getting through to the masses because of elite interference. Things would be different with reconcentration. Bell noted with satisfaction that hundreds of people were being brought into intimate contact with Americans, whom they had never seen or known before; “As a consequence no one will again be able to mislead them as to the real character of Americans.”²⁷ The redemptive process could now begin.

Curiously enough, Bell seemed unaware that his actions were replicating what Spain and its missionaries had achieved two centuries earlier. Through the policy of the *reducción*, scattered settlements were reconcentrated in Spanish-style pueblos dominated by a church-center. This center was the embodiment not just of a superior Hispanic-Christian order, but of

²⁴ Due to space constraints I have omitted the plentiful descriptions in the archival records of scorched earth methods practiced by the US Cavalry outside the “protected zones.” The well-known “kill and burn” methods of General Jacob Smith on Samar island following the massacre of some of his men at Balangiga on 28 September 1901, was replicated elsewhere, particularly in the southern Tagalog provinces.

²⁵ Wagner, Arthur., Col., Report on reconcentration in Tanauan and Sto. Tomas, 22 March 1902, USNA RG 395 E2635 no. 7788

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Bell Report, December 1902

civilization itself. By occupying the church-centers in the protected zones, the US Army was in effect recolonizing the landscape. There the American commanders installed themselves as the new padres, representatives of a powerful nation bringing a new religion of modernity. Forty years later, the Japanese would attempt the same thing, rounding up the population into *zonas*, and introducing this time a religion of "Greater East Asia" — this is well-remembered.

The "protected zones" policy facilitated harsh measures by the US Army. In an anonymous Spanish document that found its way to General Bell's headquarters in April 1902, there were damning accusations that he had to deal with, such as the following:

The Provost of Candelaria, having brought about the incarceration of the whole Municipio and almost all of the pueblo, including a hundred or more women married, widowed, and single, submitted the men to cruel torture, forcing them to confess what he wanted, and proof of this is that no one who has been the victim of this cruel venting of fury, has denied his imaginary guilt owing to the sorrow and pain he has suffered ...

During the interrogations almost all of the inhabitants of Candelaria proper had been detained, which meant "the unfortunate young women of the poblacion were defenseless. They began to commit a thousand atrocities; the women were molested by officers and soldiers alike without any kind of consideration; those who resisted such barbarity were threatened with imprisonment, deportation, or death, and those who were disgraced had succumbed to force." Looting was rampant, as well, when nearly no one was around to protect their homes. The best horses, furniture, household effects, saddles and trappings, and other property fell into the hands of the Scouts, and no one dared to reclaim them for fear of the threats which were actually carried out when the occasion warranted.

Among the many cases brought up in this document, let us look into one that involved the commander of the Candelaria garrison himself. In late February a certain Alicia C. had been confined by the provost judge as a hostage for the return of some relative who had been sent out to secure guns. While in prison the girl was approached by the CO's interpreter, a Filipina, with the proposition that she become his mistress. To quote from the report: "To this arrangement, Alicia finally consented, the relation being consummated after her release... The father of this girl was a prisoner at the same time, and it appears that she requested his release from Lieutenant N. but was refused." Although Alicia's story was initially brought up as a case of rape, and became "public and notorious," subsequent investigations seemed to point to the fact that "the relation was entirely voluntary on the part of Alicia and that she still wished it to continue." Her parents had furthermore given their consent. Therefore, he concluded, there was no ground for the charge of violation.²⁸

Alicia C.'s case of rape, submission and consent can be read as an allegory of the Philippine-American relationship as it was evolving at the turn of the century. Gardener's words in the early stages of the war were prophetic: the Philippines did become "our foster-child, a republic in Asiatic waters." Filipinos seemed in the end to willingly accept America's tutelage. Throughout the past century we have seen all sorts of variations on the theme of stewardship, tutelage, partnership, alliance, and the "special relationship." And it all seems voluntary, like Alicia C.'s relationship with Lieutenant N., which was ongoing as well. Yet we can easily forget that Alicia C.'s story begins when she was in detention and then

²⁸ Boughton, Investigation

"invited" to be the white lieutenant's mistress. Her consent was conditional upon the release of her father, also in detention. Allegorically, then, the birth of America's foster child in the Pacific was in fact preceded by detention and violation, with the victim then attaining liberty by working through the relationship of submission.

The "Philippine Insurrection" officially ended on July 4, 1902. Philippine history textbooks identify Miguel Malvar as the last Filipino general to surrender to the Americans. Sometimes the date is even mentioned: April 16, 1902. But nothing much else is said, for by this time the focus of attention is on the political campaigns of the pro-American Federalistas, and on the positive hallmarks of the new regime: sanitation, health, education, and political tutelage. Of course there continued to be resistance and unrest of all sorts, but whatever cannot be assimilated into the discourse of national development is left to wallow in its colonial representations: banditry, religious fanaticism, ignorance, *caciquism* (or its American counterpart, bossism), and so forth.

In reconsidering this historical period, it would help to remember the circumstances of Malvar's surrender: the imprisonment of guerrilla supporters or their relatives, mass destruction in the countryside, a cholera epidemic spreading out from Manila, people languishing in protected zones unable to engage in agriculture, the specter of famine. Much of the southern Tagalog provinces was a wasteland by March 1902. The loss of farm animals and implements, and the overall breakdown of agriculture, would make the region dependent, for eight years at least, on food imports from the outside. This was the ideal situation in which to turn destruction into redemption.

Only the colonial regime, of course, was capable of importing food stocks into war-ravaged southern Luzon. The commissaries in the US garrisons became the local distribution centers. By March 1902, US post commanders began receiving emotional letters from barrio heads pleading for assistance.²⁹ In such a situation of utter dependence on the occupation forces for such basic necessities as rice and medicine, it is not difficult to imagine how "resistance" could be forgotten, and the generosity, the kindness, of the US commissaries remembered. The US army played the role of benefactor extremely well. Sentiments of *utang na loób* [or debt of gratitude] then came into play as lives were actually saved through interaction with the Americans. When the population was on its knees, the use of force was lifted. There were no mass executions, no long-term imprisonment—just a rigorous disciplining as befitting a people under so-called tutelage. This immediate postwar program was, I think, crucial for the switching of memories from the dark side of the war to the positive future it promised.

So to understand the deeper implications of "surrender" in the towns of southern Tagalog, we have to look beyond the officers and soldiers who laid down their weapons in April 1902. We should note the wives and relatives of the hundreds of detainees who approached American officers, day or night, to seek their release; the townsfolk who lined up at the US commissaries to receive their allocation of food. Ultimate surrender took the form of a rather quick forgetting. In the meeting where seventy women of Candelaria were told to file formal rape charges against native scouts as well as their American officers, no one came forward. As Captain Boughton reports, "Some of the better class when asked why it was that no complaint was made against any individual scout replied that it was probably due to the fact that *the war*

²⁹ see "Cholera and the Origins of the American Sanitary Order."

being over the people were disposed to let the dead past bury its dead.”³⁰

What does it mean to bury the past? At one level, it could mean that the women wished to erase a tragic and shameful event from public memory. But since this erasure seems to have been contingent upon “the war being over,” it seems also to reflect the acceptance of a new era by the people of Candelaria. Forgetting the “dead past” can be taken to mean that the ravages of war had not diminished the Candelarian’s ability to come to terms with another set of impositions from an outside power—to establish relationships of hierarchy and indebtedness with the Americans and thus ultimately to domesticate them.³¹ One crucial explanation we might thus consider for the forgetting of the war with the US is that the townspeople of southern Tagalog could not be burdened by history as they commenced *still another* period of accommodation to colonial rule.

I have suggested that in many ways the war with the United States from 1899 to 1902 is comparable to the war with Japan from 1942 to 1945. The first is largely forgotten while the second is intensely remembered. Why? I am tempted to conclude that the sufferings and turmoil of the first war were elided or marginalized from history, because what the American invaders brought to the islands, and nurtured through the century, was perceived to be too important and valuable to be tarnished by memories of war. I stress the word “perceived” here, because what we are dealing with is an interpretation and representation of the past with a history of its own. It began with the post-war reorganization of memories that enabled the US and its Filipino allies to transform a destructive event into a redemptive or salvation process. I have alluded to the dependency relations that were established in the immediate postwar period, when the populace appealed for food, medicine and shelter from the US military garrisons, and were graciously and generously accommodated. In tandem with this gesture was the marginalization and demonization of all remaining outward forms of resistance.

I should add to my earlier discussion of Barrows’ 1903 textbook that it exemplifies how historical writing itself was made a weapon of war. Resistance to US occupation in southern Tagalog was not fully stamped out by the end of the war in July 1902. The reconcentration of “problematic” towns by the US army from December 1901 was meant to gather up the populace under the gaze of the new colonial power and its local allies, and cut the links between “inside” and “outside.” The locus of resistance, however, simply moved out of the US Army’s reach. In the mountains to the north and in isolated towns guerrilla warfare continued under the label of “banditry” and religiopolitical groups continued to uphold the notion of an “unfinished revolution” with utopian overtones. The discourse of American-led modernization that suffuses the Barrows and other postwar history texts was meant to marginalize such forms of unrest by locating them in the realm of the backward, conservative, reactionary, and illegal. Spanish rule was pictured by Barrows *et al* as a Dark Age from which Filipinos would be rescued through US guidance and tutelage. A progressive future would thus come about only through identification with America. Given such imperatives, an official forgetting of the war was not difficult to instill among the more educated Filipinos and, of course, the succeeding generations who attended colonial schools.

³⁰ Boughton, *Investigation* (my italics)

³¹ Recent work, particularly by Rafael, on the Spanish colonial period could be applied to the Philippine-American war; see Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993.

When the Japanese army invaded the Philippines four decades later, it faced a population that had mostly forgotten, or were not taught about, the earlier resistance to the US invasion. Yet the patterns of resistance to the Japanese forces in the towns I have studied reveal some stunning similarities to earlier events. Amigo warfare was also practiced in the 1940s. In place of the US discourse of Benevolent Assimilation was Japan's discourse of Greater East Asian Prosperity. The "White Man's Burden" was replaced by the "Oriental Man's Burden." While the Filipino guerrillas in 1901 awaited help from German and Japanese fleets, the guerrillas of 1943 awaited the return of the American Redeemer, Douglas MacArthur. There were people in the towns who were beginning to accommodate the Japanese presence as they had come to the terms with the Americans before. The Japanese army dealt with local resistance in much the same manner as the US Army did in 1901-02, but with more intensity and less mercy perhaps.

What is the crucial difference, then, between the two periods in terms of how they are remembered? Official rememberings, at least, have obviously have been shaped by the outcomes of those wars — US victory in 1902 and Japan's defeat in 1945. General MacArthur, the new Redeemer, did arrive to the relief and delight of most Filipinos tired of the rigors of war and enemy occupation. The irony of friendship and forgetting is starkly demonstrated in the August 1945 speech of Filipino leader Sergio Osmeña when MacArthur handed over to him control of the government. "In this crusade [against Japan]," says Osmeña, "[Douglas MacArthur] is finishing the noble work began by his illustrious father, General Arthur MacArthur who, on August 13, 1898, successfully led another American army to free Manila from a European power."³² Arthur MacArthur, father of Douglas, is here portrayed as leading a liberation army to help free the Philippines from the Spanish, creating the precedent for his son's liberation of the country from the Japanese. Osmeña's juxtaposition, in a public speech, of the work of the two MacArthurs illustrates the triumph of the earlier post-war construction of history by the US colonial regime.

The war with Japan, like its predecessor, generated radical visions and new social movements among Filipinos, but it is against these that official postwar remembering would be established. During the short period of occupation, Filipino intellectuals were resurrecting previously forgotten aspects of their history such as the Philippine-American war. An Asia-centered nationalism based on the revaluing of the "indigenous"—whatever this meant—was encouraged. And among the guerrilla groups fighting the Japanese army, a new entity was formed, the Communist-led Hukbalahap, which tapped into the tradition of "unfinished revolution" still alive in peasant movements. While the Hukbalahap army also welcomed the savior MacArthur when he returned, this enthusiasm quickly turned to disillusionment when the US army began to disarm them and arrest their leaders. A communist-led insurrection was soon in the making.

Liberation from Japan was thus accompanied by political turmoil that threatened to unravel the special relationship between the US and the Philippines. This is the context in which the newly-independent government, at least up to the early 1950s, encouraged the public to remember the Japanese occupation as a Dark Age that followed upon the Golden Age of US

³² For the full text, see "Address of Sergio S. Osmeña on the occasion of the restoration of Commonwealth government," 27 February 1945, in Consuelo V. Fonacier, compiler, *At the Helm of the Nation: Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the Philippine Republic and the Commonwealth*, (Manila : National Media Production Center, 1973), 33-39..

colonial rule.³³ They built lavish monuments in Corregidor and Capas (Tarlac) to commemorate the last stand and the “death march” — visible icons of the common martyrdom of Filipino and American soldiers who fought the Japanese invaders.³⁴ The redemption of the country from Japanese rule was thus represented as a joint Filipino-American enterprise — what better way to rebuild and cement the “special friendship” in the context of the “Cold War.” Official history, at least until the late 1950s, thus managed to push into the shadows competing discourses from the Huk movement and radical nationalists.

Official postwar discourse was efficacious because it connected somehow with lived experience, and this perhaps more than anything else contributed to the lopsided memories of the two wars. Researchers in the 1960s and 70s who interviewed veterans of the Philippine-American war noted with some exasperation that details of the war with the US seemed to have been displaced from their memories. Their accounts of atrocities, reconcentration, interrogation and so forth, while vaguely referring to 1901 were attributed to Japanese invaders particularly in 1944. It seems that the forgetting of the earlier war was facilitated by the intervention of a new set of memories in which the Japanese loom as the clear enemy — a case, perhaps, of the “purging” of aging memory banks by fresh and intense experiences? If my father did know about Lolo Ysco’s involvement as a revolutionary spy in the war against the US, this would have been trivialized by his own participation in the war against Japan as the leader of a platoon of American soldiers that landed behind enemy lines in 1944 to spy. And Lola Angge? If she knew about her husband’s incarceration by the US Army for secretly aiding Malvar, this would have been rendered immaterial by the Kenpetai’s execution of her eldest son in their family home for rendering medical treatment to Fil-American guerrillas.

Those who lived through the first half of the twentieth century have their personal reasons for selectively remembering the past wars whether or not they participated in them. But it must also be said that the American colonial state and its Philippine progeny have politicized the past through their emplotment and dissemination of a narrative that suits their ends. By emphasizing difference, they have facilitated the forgetting of one event and the remembering of the other. But from the perspective of one who was born in 1946, who lived through the ironies of the Cold War from the Vietnam episode through the rise and fall of America’s boy Marcos, and witnessed the destruction that can be wrought by the modern, can difference make more sense than sameness? A combination of more exhaustive micro studies and the deconstruction of historical metanarratives that have imposed restrictive meanings on recent Philippine history, will no doubt show that the American war and the Japanese war are (to borrow a line from Pedro Calosa) really the same banana.

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³³ On the official establishment of this new “Dark Age” see “Inaugural Address of Roxas as Commonwealth President,” in Fonacier, 41-55.

³⁴ Vice-President and, from 1948, President Elpidio Quirino was particularly effusive about the theme of a common martyrdom. See his speeches, “Corregidor: Shrine and Symbol (On the turning-over of Corregidor to the Republic of the Philippines), October 12, 1947; and “Capas: Saga of Heroism,” National Heroes Day, Capas, 30 November 1947, in Elpidio Quirino, *The Quirino Way* (Collected Speeches).