



IN BUT NOT OF ASIA: REFLECTIONS ON PHILIPPINE NATIONALISM AS DISCOURSE, PROJECT AND EVALUATION

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ABSTRACT This article rehearses the critical theory of Craig Calhoun's book on nationalism and applies his threefold typology of 'project, discourse, evaluation' to the peculiar case of modern Philippine nationalism. The Republic of the Philippines is a marine archipelago of over 7100 islands and 85 million people of various ethnic, linguistic and cultural identities. Because of its history of colonizations (Spanish, American, Japanese), the predominance of Christianity, and the lack of a unified or prestigious pre-modern religious, political or economic order, the Philippines is frequently positioned as 'in but not of Asia'. Because Filipinos are made acutely aware of their peculiar trajectory as a modern nation-state and precarious position within the region, the dominant discourses of 'the Philippines' have been too anxious to construct a genealogy of the modern nation-state as *telos* and to assert some form of 'Filipino' identity and spirit. Now that the nationalist moment of contemporary nation-states has passed with the fading of the post-Second World War 'developmentalist state' project and its usurpation since the 1980s by 'the globalization' project, an opportunity is afforded for a changing of our critical lens from searches for revolutionary projects of founding myths and ends, of romantic nationalisms, or of nostalgic returns to pre-modern idylls (whether ethnic or colonial). Accordingly, this article has three parts. Part One provides a brief synopsis of Calhoun's arguments about nationalism. Part Two applies these critical insights to the case of Philippine nationalism, especially as it is expressed in the historical and social sciences. Part Three then introduces alternative ways of thinking about the Philippines as sites of cultural hybridity and traffic.

KEYWORDS colonialism • Craig Calhoun • cultural traffic • Philippine national history • Philippine nationalism • Philippines

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INTRODUCTION

For much of the 20th century, nationalism was the ideology of choice for revolutionary insurrections against European and American colonizers, and somewhat paradoxically the moral cement of the newly established but still politically unstable post-colonial states. Contemporary expressions of nationalism, however, are much more widespread, complex and diverse than the mid-century experience – not least because they are involving first world developed nation-states again. Nationalism is a perennially re-invented set of discourses and traditions intrinsically important to nation-state formation and maintenance, even though it contains the seeds of the state's own relativization. This time around, however, nationalism is tied up with a new wave of intensive globalization processes in the world-system. The last two decades of the 20th century witnessed the unleashing of radical neo-liberal forms of globalization, coupled with the rapid development and diffusion of new information and communication technologies. The world nation-state system was restructured and destabilized in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and communist regimes throughout Europe. Recent globalization processes appear not only to entail convergence and homogenization of the financial and technological dimensions of a world-system, but also the balkanization of states, religious sectarianism, ethnic struggles and racism, mass migrations of the world's poor as refugees and workers, and the fragmentation of cultural identities (Hogan, 2002).

These challenges of revived nationalisms over the past two decades have been present in the Philippines also (Bankoff and Weekley, 2002; Pertierra, 2001). Nationalist discourses have been tied to both state projects and contestations in the name of various revolutionary interests and reform groups. The differences in nationalist discourses of the state since the 1960s (Presidents Marcos, Aquino, Ramos, Estrada and Arroyo respectively) are significant in themselves, but are even more interesting when interpreted against the various anti-state nationalisms, such as the EDSA people revolutions of 1986 and 1998, communist insurrections, ethnic resistances of the Cordillera, the granting of semi-autonomous governance in both the Northern Luzon and Mindanao regions, and the overlay of ethnic and religious claims to autonomy by the various Muslim 'nations' in the south of Mindanao. The story of Philippine nationalisms during this period is even more intriguing when one recalls the central role of the global hegemon, the United States, in its ex-colony – for example, the politics of American military and communications bases in the Philippines (a key location for the American war effort in Indochina) and the recent return of American military personnel on Filipino sovereign territory, against the Constitution. 'The Philippines' is indeed a complex signifier of a modern nation-state.

How best then can we interpret contemporary nations, nation-states and nationalist ideologies, discourses and struggles? In the midst of a whole

host of new titles on nationalism by political and social theorists and historians in the last decade of the 20th century was an important little book by Professor Craig Calhoun simply called *Nationalism* (1997). It was commissioned as part of the Open University Series 'Concepts in the Social Sciences' and so is devised as an introductory teaching text for general and graduate readers. The book is more than a textbook, however, as it also represents a concise compendium of theories and histories of nationalism and contains a clear argument about how best to understand the world of multiple, coexisting and overlapping nationalisms. This article, then, develops a general argument about the Philippine nationalisms and its narrators by first turning to the work of Calhoun and his theoretical frame as stimulus and critique. Part One offers a short synopsis of his main arguments in *Nationalism*. Part Two works with and against Calhoun's theoretical frame to develop some critical reflections on the special case of Philippine nationalisms. Part Three introduces a range of contemporary writings on Philippine nationalisms. It concludes with some suggestions about alternative ways of thinking about Philippine nationalisms that are, on the one hand, self-consciously post-nationalist and yet, on the other, not simply advocating the cosmopolitan or internationalist exits in their normative commitment and aspiration that too readily inhabits the world-weary intellectual survivors of emancipatory dreams, dropped on the polluted sidewalk of EDSA. In broad terms, this article is a first venture of an outside observer of the Philippines in understanding Philippine nationalisms. It is a search for better ways of connecting the discursive, critical and evaluative aspects of political and intellectual engagement, even as we all experience and express our own versions of 'entering and leaving our hybrid societies, cultures and nation-states' – in this case, the Philippines and Australia respectively (Canclini, 1996).¹

PART ONE: CRAIG CALHOUN ON NATIONALISM

Nationalism is intrinsic to modernity: 'it is basic to collective identity in the modern era . . . [it] is not only a matter of politics, but of culture and personal identity' (Calhoun, 1997: 2). It is possible to speak of pre-modern nations and states, but the nation-state is a uniquely modern invention. A nation-state can only exist as part of a nation-state system and is predetermined by nationalism as a 'discursive formation'; this is because the demarcation of borders of nation-state territories and the concept of popular sovereignty are part of nationalist discourse in the first place. Before there were modern nation-states, there had to be nationalists with nationalist discourses, and yet the proclamation of a nation-state often leads to a nationalist programme of making 'the people' in the image of the nation. Moreover, nationalism has been a reaction to the imposition of other forms of economic, political and cultural domination by foreign powers, such as those in the European imperial world-system over four centuries since 1492. While

nationalism is an important discursive source of nation-state formation, this is not an inevitable genealogy. Anti-colonial nationalisms often entailed dreams of alternative utopias, and combined the politics of collaboration as much as resistance, reform or revolution.

When nationalism is understood as a 'discursive formation' (after Foucault), it is 'a way of speaking that shapes our consciousness, but also is problematic enough that it keeps generating more issues and questions, keeps propelling us into further talk, keeps producing debates over how to think about it' (Calhoun, 1997: 3). Nationalism is therefore neither an intrinsically good nor bad phenomenon, and is capable of taking benign and malignant forms, even within the same social and political forms. It is both a pre-eminently inter-national set of discourses and a local, subjective set of self-understandings of people in everyday life. There is no essence of nation and therefore no essential definition of nationalism: 'grasping nationalism in its multiplicity of forms requires multiple theories' (p. 8). We can identify specific patterns of preponderant characteristics of a nation but these themselves are part of the discourse of nationalism. We can speak (after Wittgenstein) of a 'family resemblance' of nations and nationalisms, but we cannot develop 'an operational definition or an empirically testable description' of them (p. 5). Instead of worrying about listing the ideal types of nations and nationalisms,² Calhoun suggests that it is more productive to delimit three dimensions: nationalism as discourse, project, and evaluation (p. 6). Here I use and explicate these dimensions for the purposes of understanding the case of Philippine nationalism in Part Two.

The task of understanding the universal and multiple phenomenon of nationalism then is 'partly theoretical, partly historical' (p. 8). This is how Calhoun structures his discussion of nationalism as discursive formation. Chapter One maps the diversity of nationalisms in modernity in order to demonstrate their peculiarly modern pedigree and construction. Chapter Two further clarifies this claim to modernity by sorting out primordial notions of nation and group loyalties, particularly those derived from locality, language, kinship and ethnic claims. Calhoun demonstrates how primordial and historical claims of descent in nationalist discourses are transformed by the abstract, individualist and trans-national nature of modern, complex, globally integrated societies. Nationalism in this sense is a discourse that reintegrates our webs of interpersonal networks, loyalties and relationships in wider political, economic and cultural commitments; as such it can be deployed as a discourse of resistance against globalization, even as it calls upon moderns to commit to an abstract set of signifiers of the 'imagined community' (after Benedict Anderson) of nation-state. A paradoxical sign of the modernity of nationalist discourses is their propensity to 'invent tradition' (after Hobsbawm and Ranger), rewriting histories, revivifying long dead customs, and inventing new forms and traditions with apparently primordial origins. Nationalists of course write history, and the winners of nationalist

struggles get to write the genealogies of their own nation-state. Not all nationalist histories have the same purposes, genres and outcomes, however, and this needs explaining, especially with respect to the vexed questions of ethnicity and difference (Chapter 3). Chapter 5 on 'universalism and parochialism' explores the questions of nationalism as evaluation: of the contested nature of political and moral values that can take on chauvinistic forms of patriotism and prejudice and yet, at other times and in other contexts, can be a source of liberal cosmopolitanism.

Calhoun dedicates two chapters to explaining the rise of the modern nation-state system, both in terms of its discursive formation of modern political communities, as a set of arguments about popular sovereignty, rule of law, individualism and democracy (Chapter 4) and as the outworkings, rationalization and then contestation and modification of the historical processes of capitalism and imperialism as world-systems since 1492 (Chapter 6). Empires are by definition political formations that 'do *not* attempt to forge a unity between nation and state' (p. 104). The formation of political communities as nation-states based on local and ethnic groups is the achievement of nationalist movements seeking to overthrow their colonial masters. As the work of Benedict Anderson (1991) has sought to demonstrate, the leaders of these resistance movements were largely made up of subaltern colonial elites who had been educated in the imperial metropole and were significantly involved in the reproduction of its system: 'colonialism drove nationalism forward even while it resisted it' (p. 108). Nationalism was an international discourse of oppressors and subalterns, metropolitans and provincials alike. It is first available at the imperial centres but historically is more developed in revolutionary nationalist movements by anti-colonial elites at the peripheries of empire and exported back to the centres. Because of its utility as a discourse of resistance against rulers, anti-colonial nationalists are able to mobilize the masses by claiming to represent their sovereignty as citizens of a new nation-state. This is possible irrespective of the form of government envisaged and 'no matter how elitist their agendas for post-colonial rule' may be (p. 108). Recourse to nationalist discourse 'commonly subjugates', obscures and flattens other differences in the emergent nation of citizens such as gender and class, region and ancestry, religion and language – differences that could have provided alternative bases of counter-nationalist secession, and which do so once the post-colonial nation-state is established (p. 111). These alternative sources of solidarities in turn propagate secessionist struggles in post-colonial states not able to sustain conformity and control over territories and populations obtained at the time of decolonization. This is one significant challenge facing 'the Philippines' in the 21st century.

PART TWO: CONTESTED NARRATIVES OF PHILIPPINE NATIONALISM/S

The history of Philippine nationalism/s is yet to be written. There are many nationalist histories of the Philippines (e.g. Constantino, 1975, 1978) but as yet no comprehensive history of nationalist historiographies. How might such a project be undertaken? Here I provide some notes, speculative and tentative, towards a history and theory of Philippine nationalism/s that are inspired by Calhoun's reflections.

The impossibility of providing an unilinear, unified and unitary theory of all nationalisms – 'as distinct from producing a taxonomy of nationalism and theories (plural) of different dimensions of nationalism' (Calhoun, 1997: 128) – liberates the historian, for it provides the provocation and the motivation to narrate particular discourses, traditions and experiences of nationalism. This hermeneutical task does not relieve the historian of the challenge to theorize these stories, for s/he has to think through his/her own discursive formation and normative commitments, as these shape how the history of the specific difference of the Philippines is to be framed.

Here Calhoun's tripartite categorization of the dimensions of nationalism is helpful. As we have previously noted, for Calhoun, nationalism as *discourse* refers to

the production of a cultural understanding and rhetoric which leads people . . . to think and frame their aspirations in terms of the idea of nation and national identity, and the production of particular versions of nationalist thought and language in particular settings and traditions. (Calhoun, 1997: 6)

Nationalism as *project*, however, refers to those social movements and state policies

by which people attempt to advance the interests of collectivities they understand as nations, usually pursuing in some combination (or in a historical progression) increased participation in an existing state, national autonomy, independence and self-determination, or the amalgamation of territories. (p. 6)

Third, but not least, nationalism as *discourse* and *project* are often combined into a nationalism as *evaluation*. Political and cultural ideologies of group loyalty give nationalism 'the status of an ethical imperative' when, for example, it is argued that 'national boundaries ought to coincide with state boundaries' or that 'members of a nation ought to conform to its moral values' (p. 6).

If we keep Calhoun's three dimensions of nationalism as *discourse*, *project* and *evaluation* in mind, we can discern three further tasks for the intrepid historian seeking to rethink a history of Philippine nationalism. First, the historian – in confronting one's own con/texts – necessarily problematizes the conceptual task. What do the keywords 'nation', 'nation-state' and 'nationalism' mean in the Filipino context, and how do their meanings

change over time? As I am endeavouring to demonstrate here, Calhoun's *Nationalism* is a useful starting point for such systematic reflections on concept formation for teachers and students alike.

The second task of the historian of Philippine nationalism should be to seek to foreground and historicise his/her own theoretical, discursive and normative presuppositions. This includes rethinking the institutional frame and ideological and pedagogic values informing the project. What is and should be the teaching and thinking of Philippine history and the history of Philippine nationalism in the Filipino academy? In times of tumultuous cultural, political and economic change, this is no idle question. To use but one example of a university I know – Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Historians at Ateneo have the material and spiritual resources of a religious order. Ateneo is a private university that is independent of state endowment but nevertheless an important provider of tertiary education in the national education system. The relationship of the university to the nation-state is as fascinating as it is long and complex. The history of the Society of Jesus is important to the emergence of modern nationalist discourses as it is related closely to struggles over Counter-Reformation Catholicism in Spain, Mexico and the Philippines for three centuries and then to North American Catholic traditions and changes in the 20th century tied to the *imperium* of Roman Catholicism. To choose but a few significant historical events of some moment for nationalist discourses, the introduction of Christianity, print technology, education systems and mass literacy were innovations with profound long-term implications. Any history of the emergence of modern nationalism in the Philippines must make sense of such specific events and episodes as the expulsion of the Jesuit Order in 1768 leading to a shortage of priests and the Filipinization of the priesthood, the struggle between lay and religious orders, and secular and religious priests within the Catholic Church in the Philippines provinces, the martyrdom of the *Ilustrados*, and Ateneo's own role in training the new generations of nationalist organic intellectuals, including Jose Rizal no less (Arcilla, 2001: 171–7; Joaquin, 1991: 133–5).

If this seems too remote a set of historical concerns in relation to the teaching of Philippine history today, we need only remind ourselves of the politics of resistance to the Marcos regime and martial law in the 1970s and 1980s and the complexities of political alignments in the social movements caused by global Cold War logics. The Society of Jesus – an important source of nationalist discursive formations in the 19th century and a significant corporate advocate for American style liberal democracy in the 20th century – found itself embroiled in struggles for the 'national soul' in the 1980s. The practice of responsible intellectual work in the humanities and social sciences is so much harder under repressive than in democratic states. The Marcos era was no less a difficult era in which to teach, think and publish than in comparable right-wing and military dictatorships of Latin America.

Opponents of the Marcos regime were confronted with a series of profound existential, ethical and political life-choices: between the politics of revolution and reform, Catholicism and communism, underground or legal social movements, and constructing arguments for various forms of liberal, social or economic democracy. Some of these stories are still to be told (Ablett, 2000).

Students attending Ateneo de Manila University are in the main the cultural, intellectual and material elites of Filipino society and its future leaders. Unreconstructed nationalist historians then would view their task as that of equipping their students to become Plato's republican state guardian class and cultural elite. The responsibility of the post-nationalist historian, however, might be to tell stories about their society and nation that complicates, pluralizes and relativizes the nation's own self-understandings and the identity politics of being 'Filipino'. This kind of historian does not evade the responsibility of inculcating a normative vision of justice and fairness and cultural pride but nevertheless refuses to reproduce uncritically state policies and ideologies, or unthinkingly affirm forms of group loyalty that suppress cultural, linguistic and ethnic differences. Part of the challenge to all teachers in the humanities and social sciences is to rethink nationalism as evaluation. In what ways, for example, have we unwittingly reproduced political maps as cultural units of analysis in our teaching? Labeling courses with 'the Philippines' in the title implies a unitary coherence and fit between nation and state, culture and society, that is neither true of contemporary conditions nor at any other time in history. Where teachers do not problematize the terms of their own discourse, students are presented with norms and values that too readily reproduce the dominant ideologies of their own age.³

Above all, the teaching of history cannot avoid developing a self-reflexivity of the forms and genres of history making/writing. In this respect, one useful exercise for Ateneo historians and social scientists alike might be to hold a workshop that would examine the changing pedagogy and curricula of the past three decades, and to note the competing (conscious and unconscious) discourses of nationalism contained in the texts, topics and approaches chosen for Philippine history. This applies not only to graduate curricula but also to the types of popular historiographies for the general reader and the textbooks written by Ateneo historians for use in the school system. Already critiques have been conducted on the construction of multimedia celebrations of the Centennial of the 1896 revolution (Ocampo, 1998), but these could be linked back to the more ordinary, everyday instituted practices of historiography in the life of the academy.

A third task for the historian is to build on the critical insights garnered through undertaking the first two tasks above (that is, of concept formation and clarification, and a self-reflexivity about his/her own theoretical, discursive and normative presuppositions respectively). The historian seeks to pluralize Philippine nationalism – there is not one nationalism but many

nationalisms across time and space, and with differing collective subjects/actors with changing state/civil society relationships, and differing meanings and discursive formations. A key component of this task of pluralization is to undertake comparative study of nationalisms both within and beyond the borders of the archipelago nation-state nominated as 'the Philippines'.

'The Philippines' as nation-state is born modern but its gestation from 'nation' to 'nation-state' was very slow and its form is ever-changing. The centre of the Philippines has always been defined elsewhere or at its margins; its boundaries are ambiguous and porous. As the name implies, 'the Philippines' (*las islas Filipinas*) is an artefact of Iberian imperialism, an unintended consequence of imperial conquest, Spanish Counter-Reformation Catholic evangelization, trade, mapping and governance. The trade routes for many centuries ran between Acapulco and Chinese ports via Manila. As Joaquin (1991: 53) notes, it is only with the Spanish 'Galleon Trade that [the Philippines] becomes a part of Asia'. The maps of the Philippines were not devised to define territories so much as to reflect zones and flows of trade and vested interests. Spain did not seek to establish the conditions for the retrenchment of its control of its dominions. Neither did it devise a system of governance that would facilitate an independent nation-state. With Joaquin we might say that the accidents of geography are political and the development of the modern nation-state of the Philippines is a matter of many contingencies and struggles across many centuries.

As pointed out above, religion is crucial to an adequate account of Philippine nationalism. This is one dimension of the Filipino version of nationalism that is not accounted for in Calhoun's universal survey of nationalism. Indeed, religion is a conceptual blindspot of Calhoun's book: his few, unsystematic references to religion position it as of historical importance in early European modernity, but he does not account for its place in the world-system. He also alludes to contemporary 'fundamentalist' reactions to America's global hegemony – these have Islam as a spectral presence. There is nothing in-between and he does not make an attempt to explain religious movements *vis-à-vis* nationalist discursive formations in Africa, the Americas and Asia. Calhoun's argument for the modernity of nationalism is strong on the Philippines as nation-state (a 20th-century story) but weak on understanding the historic cultural sources of Philippine nationalisms because of this under-valuation of the central place of religion since the arrival of the Spaniards in 1561. The Spaniards were unique among the Europeans in Southeast Asia in pursuing an active campaign of Christianization and Hispanization:

Before the nineteenth century, the Portuguese, Dutch, British and French resolutely confined their regional involvement to affairs of commerce, steadfastly avoided lengthy and costly wars, rarely embarked on campaigns of territorial expansion, seldom challenged the powerful rulers of inland indigenous states, and rarely assembled large colonial bureaucracies. The singular goal of

these Western imperialists was to maximise the profits of trade. In distinct contrast, the Spanish *conquistadores* orchestrated a multifaceted program designed to promote the Christianization and cultural transformation of Filipinos, to facilitate lowland conquests throughout the archipelago, and to guarantee absolute political dominion over the native peoples, as well as their exploitation. (Reed, 1999: 151)

While Christianization and Hispanization overlapped, they are nevertheless distinct in their colonizing effects on Filipino indigenous cultures. As Adrian Hastings has argued with reference to the English case, 'Christianity is a religion of translation, capable of recognizing the full diversity of nations, customs and languages' (Hastings in Arnason, 2001: 85). As a culture of the book, 'Christianity's openness to linguistic diversity was a crucial precondition for the progressive (but very uneven) vernacularization of culture, and this was in turn, a major landmark in the prehistory of nations and nationalism' (Arnason, 2001: 86). With Christianization came also urbanization based on Catholic principles of organizing social space, and a liturgical calendar that structured the seasons and culture of the colonized. As Reed notes, however, colonization is never one-way cultural traffic, and the locals have been most adept and creative in their adaptations and transformations of imported religious traditions, myths and rituals. Today, Catholicism and the Catholic Church are vital sources of Filipino national identity – not least because 83 per cent are self-nominating Catholics (9% Protestants, 5% Muslims, 3% Buddhists; Dalton, 2004: vi), and the meanings and practices of Catholicism in the Philippines is enculturated to and by Filipinos themselves over four centuries. The close alignment of the two signifiers 'Catholic' and 'Filipino' presents itself as not only a potent organizing principle for the rise of modern nationalism but its very success as a political project poses many difficult questions of identity politics for Muslim 'Filipinos' in particular. The significance of vernacular literature has been transposed in contemporary times to the explosive question of ethnicity and nation. How this came to pass requires a careful reconstruction of the processes of codification of 'civilization', 'race' and 'ethnicity' in intellectual (theology, anthropology and biological sciences), state and popular discourses across the centuries in comparative perspective.

If Philippine nationalism emerges in major part as a reaction to colonial domination by Spain, then we must perforce also study the emergent understandings of 'nation', 'nation-state' and 'nationalism' of the Spanish themselves in comparative perspective – and how these were transformed in the process of being transported between the metropolitan centres and the colonies, and by the provincial elites. In the case of the Philippines, this also means making sense of the Mexican case – as this was a mediating centre of governance of, and cultural traffic to, the Philippines until the end of the Manila Galleons at the beginning of the 19th century.

Since the arrival of the Spaniards in the mid-16th century, the Philippines has regularly been the site of contestation between foreign empires

(and pirates and raiders): Spain and Portugal, Spain and the Dutch, Spain and the English, Spain and the Americans, America and the Japanese. Exposure to global power struggles – and the consequences of political subjugation, economic exploitation, and cultural repression – has deeply marked the national identity of ‘the Philippines’. Nationalist struggles against foreign domination have sometimes led to the mythologization of indigenous cultures and genealogical accounts of primordial national identity. These, however, fail to appreciate the intricate and labyrinthine range of cultural adaptations, syntheses, resistances, subversions and transformations of exotic cultures into indigenous traditions that in turn are transformed in and through the encounter. That these hybrid transformations are undertaken in conditions of uneven development and unequal power relations and structures does not undermine the collective creativity of the Filipinos. It is these processes of colonial and postcolonial cultural traffic that constitute the difference of Filipino identities and nationalisms from the historic experiences and cultures of neighbouring Southeast Asian nation-states.

The Philippines then is part of what Johann Arnason has called the ‘Southeast Asian civilizational labyrinth’, but its history and development is signally different to its neighbours (Arnason, 1997). While it shares some distinctive regional ecologies and trading networks with the region as a whole, its political economy and its instituted national imaginary is modern and unique. Moreover, the linguistic heritages of the Philippines are different, with the intriguing outcome that whereas the American colonization in the 20th century led to the widespread use of English, three and half centuries of Spanish colonization did not lead to the Spanish language being widely understood (the only Spanish colony where this is the case). Unlike the Chinese and Indian civilizations, and those of Indonesia and Thailand, no pre-modern Filipino societies had a court culture or kingdom. Patriarchal and feudal patterns of cultural organization are therefore Iberian, not Asian. As part of the Spanish Empire, the Philippines are ‘best seen as a Pacific offshoot of Latin America, which survived the collapse of the main imperial domain’ (Arnason, 1997: 120). In this sense, then, as part of the Iberian Pacific, the 1896 nationalist revolution against the Spanish occurs some 75 years after the uprisings in Latin America. As Benedict Anderson notes, however, ‘seen from Asia’ it is ‘the visionary forerunner of all other anti-colonial movements in the region’ (Anderson, 1998: 227).⁴

It is the 1896 revolution that is the historic and mythic marker of modern nationhood, however, and here Calhoun’s argument for the modernity of nationalism is more effective in explaining Philippine nationalism in terms of the decolonization process and the making of the Philippine nation-state. The protean myth of 1896 is freely appropriated and claimed by nearly all Filipino nationalists alike, irrespective of their own ideological pedigree. Even Marxists, who (it might be thought) would be rigorously internationalist in outlook, have perennially appealed to the anti-imperial

and revolutionary legacy of 1896. Nevertheless, nationalistic, rhetorical appeals to 'the masses' and 'the people' can also paradoxically undercut the universal and representative nature of the 1896 revolution. For example, critics can point to the elitist, unrepresentative nature of the revolutionaries themselves. Social history and people's history as advocated in Europe in the 1970s had a popular adaptation in Filipino contexts (McCoy and de Jesus, 1982). Recent revisionist histories of the nationalist revolution of 1896 have been keen to counter-assert the social categories of gender, class and ethnicity, at times debunking the hero-worshipping styles of (nationalist) historiography and mythology and to write histories of those normally not considered subjects of their own history (Rodao and Rodriguez, 2001).

The appeal of 1896 revolutionary nationalism as *ur* source of Philippine nation-state formation also has a curious relationship to the historic experience of American colonialism and the place of anti-Americanism in contemporary forms of Philippine nationalism. Commemoration and critique of the American grab for power in 1898 and its subsequent bloody repression of Filipino nationalist movements is largely occluded by a Whiggish interpretation of history that posits the Americans as benevolent empire – bringing Protestantism, liberal democracy, education, medicine and a particular form of economic development that further integrates the Philippines into the capitalist world-system on American terms. And again, the American carpet-bombing obliteration of Manila in 1945 is overlooked in favor of a story of gratitude that proclaims the Americans as liberators of the Philippines from the Japanese. In stark contrast to the French in Indochina and the Dutch in Indonesia, America did at least grant independence to the Philippines. Nevertheless, in stark contrast to the Marshall Plan in Europe, it did little to assist the Philippines to rebuild its economy after the devastation of war, much of which the United States had inflicted itself. Paradoxically, these occlusions of history sit uneasily with a form of Filipino romantic nationalism that perennially asserts an everyday anti-Americanism that worries about the ubiquity of American popular culture in Filipino culture, polluting and corrupting some imagined essential hierarchy of pure Filipino values and identity. Such a view fails to see that such everyday Filipino mimesis, bricolage and trafficking of transposed American cultural artifacts and imaginaries is not evidence of failure but rather of cultural creativity.

The Philippines as a nation-state comes after nationalism but then develops new meanings and trajectories of nationalism by making it the official ideology of the 'developmentalist state project' since the Second World War (McMichael, 1995). The 'developmentalist state project' as a form of state-sponsored nationalism is often called 'economic nationalism' (Rodan et al., 1997). Whilst the industrialization strategy of the emergent post-colonial states of Southeast Asia shifted from import-substitution to export-oriented industrialization, the national interest remained throughout the guiding dominant public rhetoric. In the Philippines under Marcos this was

turned to rent-seeking for cronies, but the Marcoses were more than the sum of economic strategies pushed by American-based international agencies such as the IMF, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. They were also masters at linking economic nationalism to romantic populism. The Marcoses, for example, were grand patrons of modernist nationalist architecture (e.g. Locsin) and the production of national monuments and public venues that could put the Philippines on the global stage but also provide forums for the staging of international events that focused Filipino national identity for local and international consumption. They also were sponsors of a romantic nationalist history. Witness, for example, the Presidential Decrees to protect National Heritage sites such as historic churches and above all the rebuilding and 'restoration' of Intramuros. They sought to encourage the reinvention of ethnographic traditions in the interests of promoting Filipino identity as at once plural, pre-colonial and yet in both senses confirming its unitary character for advancing the progress of the modern Philippine nation-state. We think here of the establishment of state sponsored national councils concerned with indigenous 'tribal heritage', which in turn have been used for the promotion of Philippine tourism even as a series of infrastructure development projects threatened the very existence of the indigenous peoples as their cultures were being extolled and recorded (e.g. Chico River Dam Project, Cordillera region, Luzon in the 1980s). All this was married to World Bank and Asian Development Bank projects, and to rent roting from American bases on Filipino soil (Hedman and Sidel, 2001; Hutchinson, 1997). The Marcoses were masters of manipulating populist nationalism in their own image (Hamilton-Paterson, 1998).

PART THREE: ALTERNATIVE POST-NATIONALIST DISCOURSES ON PHILIPPINE NATIONALISM/S

Thus far I have endeavored to establish that not only are contemporary Philippine nationalisms multiple and complex – not least due to major geo-political realignments in the region and globally – but that their expression and form are peculiar to the Philippines, not least due to a long lineage of colonization processes and cultural traffic across the Pacific and across three different civilizational complexes. I have argued that the study of nationalisms therefore requires an appreciation of the state-formation process, state ideologies, and the state-civil society dialectic, and in the case of the Philippines chameleon and romantic nationalisms, especially of the inter-textural knotty discourses of religion (de Jesus, 2001; Hedman and Sidel, 2001; Pertierra, 1999; Young, 1997). This is an area of social science and historical research replete with as yet under-examined possibilities. One thinker who goes some way to remedying this gap in Philippine historiography and social theory is Vicente L. Rafael, the historian and cultural theorist, who is part of the Filipino diaspora living in the United States –

especially his book of essays, entitled *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (2000). Rafael is part of a new generation of Filipino writers who might be dubbed 'post-nationalist', in that he is most anxious to avoid any kinds of historical narratives of nationalism that imply essentialist notions of identity, whether originary or teleological. Even Joaquin, who Rafael admires, is viewed as still writing for an 'emergent Filipino identity' and therefore stands accused of reinstating an essentialist definition of 'Filipino' (Rafael, 2000: 18). Rather than grand narratives, Rafael offers 'episodic' and 'discrepant' histories. Rafael wants to understand 'the languages of rule, resistance and collaboration as these are conjugated by the technologies of imagery in the production of colonial and national histories' (2000: 2). In this approach he is able to see continuities and repetitions as much as ruptures between colonial interventions and nationalist responses. *White Love* is arguably the first self-consciously constructed critical analysis of nationalism as discourse, project and evaluation in the manner recommended by Calhoun. For Rafael, 'Filipino' is a name that signifies a 'history that coming from the outside, continues to arrive from the future' (2000: 18).

Are there other and more useful ways of rethinking 'Filipino', 'the Philippines' and Philippine nationalism? This is not the place to undertake such a task. I suggest that to think of 'Filipino' as advocated by Rafael, and to rethink the narratives of Philippine nationalisms *vis-à-vis* Calhoun's global discursive survey, coupled with a re-narration and critical evaluation of contemporary nationalist historiographies in the Philippines (e.g. Bankoff and Weekley, 2002), are important contributions to the broader tasks of conceptualizing nationalism, nations, and nation-states writ large. Through an engagement with these thinkers and texts, I have hinted at ways that a history and theory of nationalism might be explored that helps us to evade the tyranny of malignant forms of nationalism (as *evaluation*) tied to state and world-system projects of domination and subjugation, on the one hand, and, on the other, empowers us to look beyond the myopia of discourses of resistance and identity politics. I believe there are some useful theoretical frames for undertaking such a re-visioning of the Philippines that 'come from the outside' and yet 'speak out of the future'. Here I can only gesture towards some of these possibilities, this time emanating from Australia and Mexico. I recommend the following approaches: first, to re-think 'the Philippines' as relation rather than as place or people (Beilharz, 2001), for this enables us to avoid essentialist notions of Filipino identity on the one hand and to evade obsessive concerns with colonial/post-colonial forms of nationalism as evaluative ideologies on the other. Second, it is important to re-think the terms of discussion about the centrality of the colonization processes in the Philippine path to and in modern state-formation. Too readily the nationalist struggle against Spanish colonization not only occludes understanding of the Spanish period itself but also under-conceptualizes the American era and for that matter the short period of Japanese control. Romantic nationalism mythologizes the 'revolution' and has made Rizal in particular a Jesus figure

that, in his perfect mimesis of the last days and Passion of Jesus of Nazareth, forges the messianic rising and mission of the nation. Not least of the problems bequeathed by this romantic ahistorical revisionism is that it leaves the 'Philippines' without a useable past prior to the 'immaculate conception' of 1896, and with a future after 1896 too readily given over to uncritical populism that serves the interests of old patrimonial elites who control state power. As Raul Pertierra has observed of the 1996 national Centennial celebrations of 'independence', these were both 'a sleight of hand' that enabled 'many Filipinos [to] deny the significance of the US Colonial period', and also ensured that 'history is put to the service of the strategic present' (Pertierra, 2001: 90). So one task is to re-narrate Philippine historiography of nationalism and nationalist histories. In the work of Filipino public intellectuals, who reside at home and abroad, such as Reynaldo Ileto (1998), Nick Joaquin (1988, 1991), Ambeth Ocampo (1998), Raul Pertierra (2001, 2002), Floro Quibuyen (1999), Vicente Rafael (2000) and Fernando Zialcita (1999), we have exemplary, thought-provoking interventions that move us towards a re-conceptualization of Philippine historiography and self-interpretations.

If we wish to avoid the pitfalls of modern romantic nationalism then at the very least we should consider starting afresh by re-conceptualizing 'the Philippines' as a crossroads of cultural traffic and uneven development (that makes sense of the emergence of a modern nation-state without teleological over-determination, and of the colonial pasts that both invent and subvert the meanings of the 'Philippines'). Here, I can only point, by way of analogy, to the exploratory thinking on Australia and the Pacific in these terms by Peter Beilharz (1997), Bernard Smith (1960) and Nicholas Thomas (1991). 'The Philippines' as a site and mediator of cultural traffic and as a place subject to uneven development, as a nation-state and political economy that is semi-peripheral to regional and global processes of the capitalist world-system, is also a site of continuous innovation and transposition that feeds back to metropolitan centres and systems, new ways of seeing and being in the world. This brings me to my final suggestion that, above all, we rethink 'the Philippines' as a hybrid set and flux of cultures that embodies an alternative modernity, rather than as a developing nation on the path of a pre-determined model of western modernization (Arnason, 1997, 2001, 2003; Canclini, 1996; Kahn, 1995, 2000). Not only should we wish to evade the dead ends of essentialist notions of identity, values and place, but positively value the utility and virtue of being marginal to such constructions of the world. Indeed, insofar as the Philippines remains in but not of Asia, a more democratic polity (or polities) – borne out of a post-nationalist appreciation of hybrid and plural cultural traffic – might be instituted across the next century.

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Notes

1. This article has two origins – in the first place from regular visits to the Philippines and many conversations, seminars, and collaborative work with Filipino scholars at Ateneo de Manila University, especially Felice Noelle Rodriguez, Emma Porio, Raul Pertierra, Fernando ‘Butch’ Zialcita, Luis David, Augustin Martin Rodriguez, Leo Garcia and Antonette Palma-Angeles. Needless to say, these scholars and friends are responsible for the stimulus but not the argument of this article and its errors of judgement and perspective. Its second source was the *Thesis Eleven* Centre for Critical Theory Seminar celebrating the work and thought of Craig Calhoun held at the School of Social Sciences, La Trobe University, in Melbourne, Australia, in July 2002.
2. Calhoun (1997: 4ff.) lists 10 features of the rhetoric of nation that form the pattern where a preponderance of these characteristics in common are crucial to the term’s meaning.
3. So, for example, we have Spanish inflected histories of the Philippines in the 19th century, American inflected histories in the first half of the 20th century, romantic nationalist histories following independence after the Second World War, and revolutionary romantic nationalist histories in the Marcos years (see Arcilla, 2001: 154–65; Constantino, 1975, 1978).
4. For a comparative sense of revolutionary nationalisms see also Krejčí (2000). As I have argued above, the roots of nationalism, *contra* Anderson and Calhoun, are to be found in pre-modern religious discourses. Adrian Hastings (medieval) and Liah Greenfeld (1997) (16th century) make this claim for England/Britain, but the issue here is not one of origins so much as acknowledging a larger and longer story of significant nationalist consciousness prior to the ‘imagined communities’ of Latin America in the late 18th century as located by Anderson.

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