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History of the Filipino People and Martial Law: A Forgotten Chapter in the History of a History Book, 1960–2010

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VERNON R. TOTANES

History of the Filipino People and Martial Law **A Forgotten Chapter in the History of a History Book, 1960–2010**

In 1960 a mimeographed history textbook, which was considered groundbreaking for looking at Philippine history from a Filipino perspective, was introduced at the University of the Philippines. By 1967, when its second edition entitled *History of the Filipino People* was published in hardcover and paperback, it had replaced prescribed texts in other universities. Fifty years after the first edition came out, its eighth edition remains required reading for many college students. Using archival documents, this article traces the untold story of a forgotten chapter in this book and argues that the study of a book's history illumines the influence of political realities and personal relationships on the publication of history books.

KEYWORDS: TEODORO A. AGONCILLO · BOOK HISTORY · HISTORIANS · HISTORIOGRAPHY · TEXTBOOKS

“**T**he fast-moving events that took place during the last twelve months, particularly the declaration of martial law, necessitated the updating of this book. Consequently, I have included in the present edition some sections on the martial law regime. One whole chapter has been deleted” (Agoncillo and Guerrero 1973, iii). This passage is the entire three-sentence preface to the fourth edition of the book that is now commonly referred to as Teodoro A. Agoncillo’s *History of the Filipino People* (HFP).¹ Eight editions of this book have been published over the last fifty years, but very few reviews have appeared in print.² A review of the fourth edition noted that the textbook had been updated to include the declaration of martial law by then Pres. Ferdinand Marcos and the adoption of a new constitution, and that “The impact of martial law and its initial success are properly assessed” (Hila 1973). Otherwise, the reviewer might well have been writing about one of the book’s previous editions. No mention was made of the chapter entitled “The Continuing Crisis,” which had been deleted in its entirety.

This silence, however, was not unusual. No scholar, historian, or journalist has ever alluded to this missing chapter in print. Aside from the cryptic sentence in Agoncillo’s 1973 preface, the only other published reference to the deleted chapter may be found in the same book’s seventh edition, which was released after Marcos was overthrown in 1986—more than a year after Agoncillo had passed away. In a note inserted below the previous edition’s preface, the book’s publisher disclosed that, “After the February 25, 1986 popular revolution, the heirs of Teodoro A. Agoncillo decided to include the chapter THE CONTINUING CRISIS which was ordered removed during the Martial Law years. The result is this Seventh Edition” (Agoncillo and Guerrero 1986, [iii]).³ Considering that the excised chapter dealt with the early years of Marcos’s presidency, the reason it was “ordered removed” seems rather obvious, especially to those who still remember the systematic suppression of news unfavorable to the government during the martial law era. But this explanation also implies that the chapter was deleted for purely political reasons, and that Agoncillo had no choice but to comply. Those who knew Agoncillo as a fighter—who took on his critics in the pages of the most popular newspapers during his heyday, leaked stories about internal battles at the University of the Philippines (U.P.) to his journalist-friends, and did not care if he was challenging conventional wisdom—would find

this difficult to believe. It would have been more consistent with the image of Agoncillo painted by friends and foes alike if he had engaged in an unpublicized effort to fight censorship, but was silenced.

The truth, however, is that only certain passages—not the entire chapter—were ordered deleted or revised during the early years of martial law. Although the political situation undoubtedly influenced Agoncillo’s decision to remove the chapter voluntarily, his reasons for doing so were not exclusively political in nature. This article, using the emerging discipline of book history as a framework to examine the untold story of this deleted chapter, seeks to call attention to a textbook largely ignored in surveys of Philippine historiography. While many avenues of inquiry are possible, the discussion here focuses on the events leading to and surrounding the addition and deletion of “The Continuing Crisis.” Based on evidence gathered from Agoncillo’s correspondence as well as from the books he wrote and other documents, this study shows that the unique history of HFP reflects not only the changes in Philippine politics in the latter half of the twentieth century, but also the realities of its publishing industry and the nature of Philippine historiography.⁴

The formal study of Philippine book history may be said to have begun with the publication in *Philippine Studies* of “What Book?” by Patricia May B. Jurilla (2003), an article that introduced the basic concepts of a discipline hitherto largely concerned with books published in the West. Jurilla’s *Tagalog Bestsellers of the Twentieth Century* (2008), based on her doctoral dissertation, illustrated the importance of studying the popular novels, comic books, and romances read by many Filipinos, and not just the literary and scholarly works that very few even know about. Instead of devoting her attention to textual analysis—as most literary scholars and some book historians do—Jurilla turns to the lesser-known aspects of the publication, manufacture, distribution, reception, and survival of Tagalog bestsellers. This study will do the same with HFP.

Although a few articles have been published that allude to the histories of specific Filipino history books (e.g., Cano 2008, Curaming 2008), most of these are concerned with texts that had very limited print runs, and few look into the publishing histories of the books themselves. The situation is not much different worldwide, and this is the reason why the pioneering works by Gregory Pfitzer (2008) and Leslie Howsam (2009) on the history of history books in the United States and Britain, respectively, are used as the

models for this article. Both Pfitzer and Howsam acknowledge the importance of scholarly monographs on history, but argue that popular histories have a greater impact because more people read them.

Agoncillo wrote both scholarly monographs and textbooks used by students at the elementary, high school, and college levels. Of all these books, the one cited most by scholars is *The Revolt of the Masses*, but the one that has sold the most copies is *History of the Filipino People*.

Agoncillo and *The Revolt of the Masses*

Teodoro A. Agoncillo was an extraordinary man. He was born in 1912, learned Spanish in kindergarten (Ocampo 1995, 67), gained recognition for his Tagalog poems and short stories, and is remembered for the history books he wrote in English. He grew up surrounded by relatives and friends who fought in the 1896 revolution and lived through the transition from Spanish to American rule (ibid., 124; Agoncillo 1984, 16). He was a grandnephew of Felipe Agoncillo, one of the first Filipino diplomats who tried to gain recognition for the first Philippine republic from the United States, and Marcela Agoncillo, one of the three women who sewed the very first Philippine flag (Agoncillo 1990, 201, 211; Tadena 1967, 20–21). He was also a distant relative of Emilio Aguinaldo, the first president of the Philippines, who married Maria Agoncillo after his first wife died in 1921 (Ocampo 1995, 81).⁵

Agoncillo wanted to study for a degree in English at the University of the Philippines but was convinced by Leandro Fernandez, one of the first professionally trained Filipino historians, that he did not have to major in English to write in English (ibid., 65). He graduated with a master's degree in history in 1935, but became much better known as an award-winning writer of Tagalog literature even after cowriting a history book with Gregorio Zaide, his former professor in history (Agoncillo and Zaide 1941). He survived Japanese rule during the Second World War because his wife refused to let him work for fear that he would be picked up and sent elsewhere, which was common during that period (Canauay 1978, 21). In 1948 his entry in a government-sponsored, biography-writing contest was unanimously chosen by the board of judges as the winner, but not until *The Revolt of the Masses* was actually published in 1956 did he finally gain acclaim as a historian.

Today Agoncillo's *Revolt* is considered a turning point in Philippine historiography, but what is rarely mentioned is that the circumstances surrounding its controversial publication are indicative of the political and social

tensions that existed during that time.⁶ The publication of Agoncillo's biography of Andres Bonifacio and the Katipunan was delayed for eight years, initially because of objections posed by former President Aguinaldo. Early in 1956, Pres. Ramon Magsaysay stopped the book's release once again, upon the urging of Catholic conservatives, who alleged the book was anti-Catholic and Marxist, and thus government funds should not be spent to publish it (Agoncillo 1976a; Hernandez and del Rosario 1956). At about the same time, the Catholic Church was battling a proposed bill—filed by lawmakers seeking to promote nationalism—which would require Filipino students to read uncensored editions of José Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, on the grounds that it violated freedom of conscience and religion. On 12 June 1956, a modified version of the bill was signed into law, which is now known as the Rizal Law (Totanes 1987). By then Agoncillo had been granted permission to have *Revolt* printed privately, and the U.P.'s College of Liberal Arts had won the right to do so (Ocampo 1995, 183).

This, however, was done through the intercession of the college dean, not someone from its history department, which was considered the best in the Philippines—partly because of the U.P.'s reputation as a center for scholarship, and partly due to the stature of previous chairs and professors. The department's chair at that time was Nicolas Zafra (1947), and his *Readings in Philippine History* had been the textbook at the U.P. for almost a decade.⁷ Thus, his lengthy review (Zafra 1956) of Agoncillo's *Revolt*, published in the *Manila Times* over a period of five days, was not to be taken lightly. The review—written in collaboration with four female faculty members—faulted Agoncillo's book for, among other things, its reliance on literary license (e.g., “Is the author writing history or fiction . . . ?”) and being anti-Catholic. Agoncillo (1956a) responded the following week in the same newspaper with an equally lengthy rebuttal entitled “Four Girls and a Man.”⁸ He later explained in a letter why he felt it necessary to defend his work, even though he had not bothered to reply to other reviews.

Disagreement is healthy for the intellect, but that disagreement must not be marred by professional jealousy, nor by bad faith, nor by self-pity . . . What really got my goat was their dogmatic statement that I was “naive, credulous, unscholarly,” and such other phrases as “Agoncillo's devious method” . . . which I did not expect of Zafra . . . Had Zafra et al. criticized me in a scholarly way . . . I would not even have answered

them, believing that an honest difference of opinion is salutary to any discussion. (Agoncillo 1956b)⁹

In short, it was the manner by which Zafra delivered his critique that provoked Agoncillo's reply. In later years, Agoncillo would become known for his fiery temper, which was usually triggered not by those who disagreed with him intellectually, but when he perceived that his adversaries were being unprofessional.

Despite the criticism from Zafra and other scholars, Agoncillo's book is now recognized as a milestone in Philippine historiography. The controversy ignited by *The Revolt of the Masses* resulted in widespread recognition for Agoncillo as a historian, and an invitation to teach at the U.P.'s history department—as a full professor. In 1958 he was finally persuaded to accept the appointment, and within two years the history textbook he coauthored had replaced Zafra's (Canauay 1978, 24; Ocampo 1995, 134). By 1963 Agoncillo had taken over as chair of the Department of History (University of the Philippines 1963), and went on to produce other books—most of which he wrote alone—including ones on the Philippine revolution and the Japanese occupation that are still essential reading for scholars. When he retired in 1977, Agoncillo had been conferred numerous awards, bestowed an honorary doctorate, and promoted to University Professor, the highest academic rank at the U.P. A few months after his death in 1985, he was posthumously proclaimed a National Scientist.

The Significance of *History of the Filipino People*

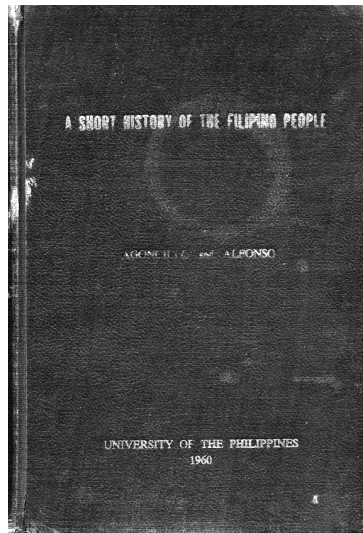
In 1960 *A Short History of the Filipino People* (SHFP) by Teodoro A. Agoncillo and Oscar M. Alfonso was mimeographed for the use of students of the University of the Philippines. As its preface indicated, “In some ways the present textbook is a radical departure from any textbook on Philippine history” (Agoncillo and Alfonso 1960, iii). The book was different from other history textbooks because it considered “Philippine history before 1872, in the main, a lost history” (ibid.). In contrast to other books that allocated a proportional number of pages to the length of Spanish rule in the Philippines, SHFP devoted three chapters out of thirty to the Spanish period. This was much less than the number of chapters in the separate sections allotted to the Philippine Revolution and the American and postwar periods, all of which—even when taken together—were much shorter in duration than the

three centuries of Spanish rule. This was done, as explained in the book's preface, to correct interpretations of Philippine history that were more concerned with the history of Spain and the Catholic Church in the Philippines than with the history of the Filipino people. The preface also emphasized that “the point of view taken is that of a Filipino” (ibid.). While Agoncillo was not the first to write Philippine history from the Filipino point of view, he was certainly the one who popularized the need for it.¹⁰ Today references are still made to Agoncillo's controversial assertions—validating, if not necessarily supporting, the radical nature of the views expressed.

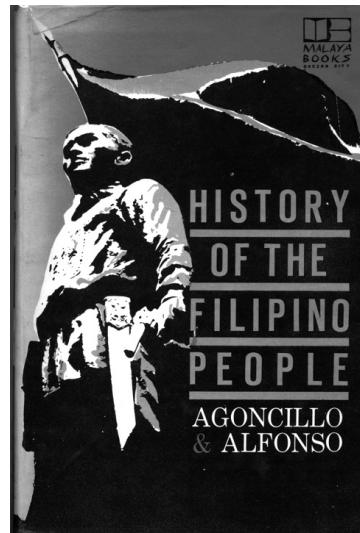
The authorship of the preface, as well as the entire work, was attributed to Agoncillo and his coauthor, but references to “the senior author” and “Mr. Oscar M. Alfonso” indicate that it was Agoncillo alone who penned the preface. He, in fact, wrote twenty of the book's original thirty chapters, which perhaps explains why he now receives most of the credit for what was renamed as *History of the Filipino People* beginning with the second edition.¹¹ Agoncillo, however, was never the sole author of any of the book's eight editions. Alfonso and Milagros C. Guerrero were credited as his coauthors at different times, and three more remained uncredited in the eighth edition.

Four different publishers worked with Agoncillo and his coauthors as chapters were revised, merged, added, deleted, and restored over a period of more than three decades. It is quite possibly the Filipino history book with the most complicated publishing history. While it is likely that more comprehensive and recently updated history textbooks for college students have been published since the last edition of HFP came out in 1990, the simple truth is that no other comparable work has sold as many copies.¹² Sales grew from about 800 mimeographed copies in 1960 (Agoncillo 1962a) to as many as 50,000 copies yearly during the late 1980s, as the printer who ran the copies attests (Pastrana 2009). More recently, official royalty statements given to Teodoro V. Agoncillo III, Agoncillo's son, suggest that an average of almost 10,000 copies were sold annually from 1993 to 2008. The copies manufactured included hardbound and paperback editions printed on book paper and newsprint.

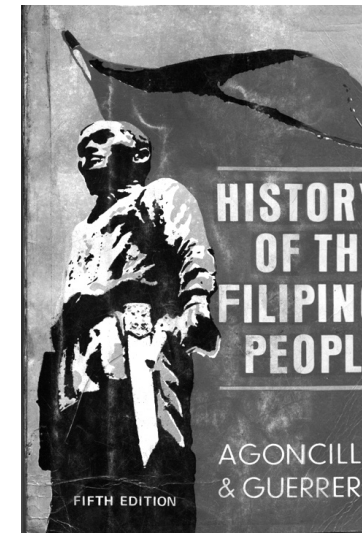
All that this proves, however, is that the book has sold a lot of copies, not necessarily that it is considered “important” by historians. Except for a few references in brief discussions of history textbooks, HFP has been practically invisible in surveys of Philippine historiography.¹³ And yet, because of its continued use in classrooms, hundreds of thousands of copies of its



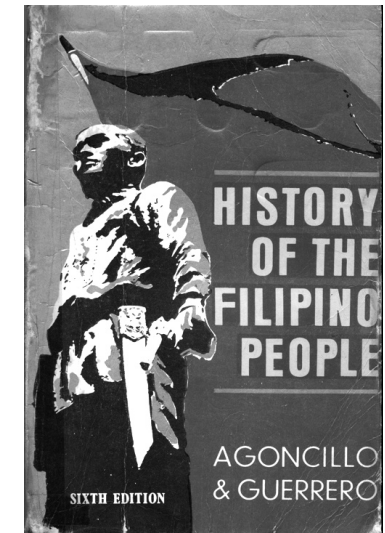
1st edition, 1960



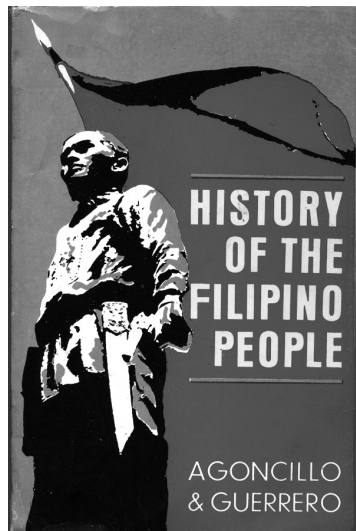
2nd edition, 1967



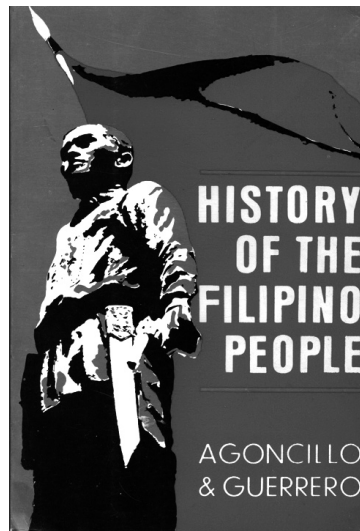
5th edition, 1977



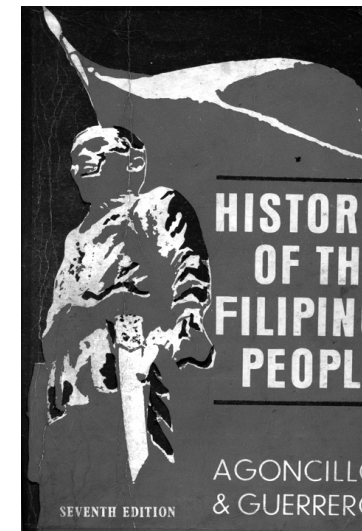
6th edition, 1984



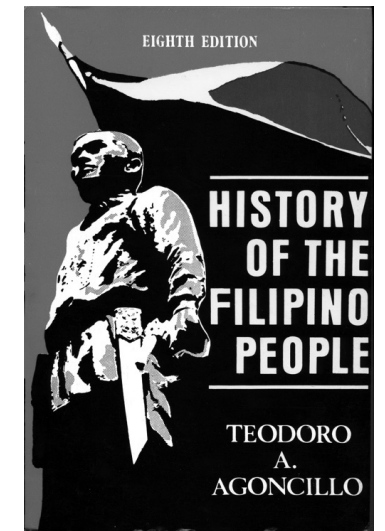
3rd edition, 1970



4th edition, 1973



7th edition, 1986



8th edition, 1990

Fig. 1. Except for the first edition, the covers of *History of the Filipino People*—based on Malang's original design—are practically the same, with minor variations in color. Textual changes, especially the name of Agoncillo's coauthor, are easier to identify when the covers are viewed together.

eight editions have been reprinted, counterfeited, and photocopied in the last five decades. Nonhistorians from a variety of disciplines continue to cite it almost as if it were the definitive history of the Philippines. Then there is the fact that its eighth edition—and, occasionally, a copy as old as the second edition—is still being used by university students to this day, even though it was published in 1990.

Historians continue to fault Agoncillo for declaring the period before 1872 a “lost history” (Richardson 1989, 27; Ocampo 1993). Rightly or wrongly, this approach to Philippine history has been adopted by many history textbooks published since then. Fifty years after the first mimeographed copy of *A Short History of the Filipino People* was sold, it has become the most widely used history book in Philippine colleges and universities, and just one of many—where once there were hardly any—that look at Philippine history from the Filipino point of view.

Distinguishing Editions

Because of *History of the Filipino People*’s complicated publication history, it is not surprising that scholars, historians, journalists, and students have committed errors when they refer to *HFP* in their books, articles, or reports. Whether in the main text, footnotes, or bibliographies, writers frequently assign titles, authors, publishers, and/or years of publication to the wrong editions. Some, perhaps, were just not trained well enough in the need for accuracy in scholarly research; because even distinguished historians have erred in similar ways, it is possible that these writers are not entirely to blame.¹⁴

For instance, *HFP*’s cover has not changed much since 1967, when the cover designed by Malang was first used for the second edition published by Malaya Books. In fact, a potential buyer looking at copies of the book’s different editions from 1967 onward might be forgiven for commenting that the only difference between their covers is the color scheme, which is more pronounced for some than others (fig. 1). The more observant might notice that most of the books bear the names “Agoncillo & Guerrero” on the cover, with the second edition (“Agoncillo & Alfonso”) and the eighth edition (“Teodoro A. Agoncillo”) as the exceptions. Still others may perceive that it is only on the covers of the fifth to eighth editions that the book’s particular edition (e.g., “Fifth Edition,” “Sixth Edition”) is indicated. In addition, if all the different editions were lined up on a shelf and their spines compared, it would not be entirely wrong for some to conclude that the first, second, and

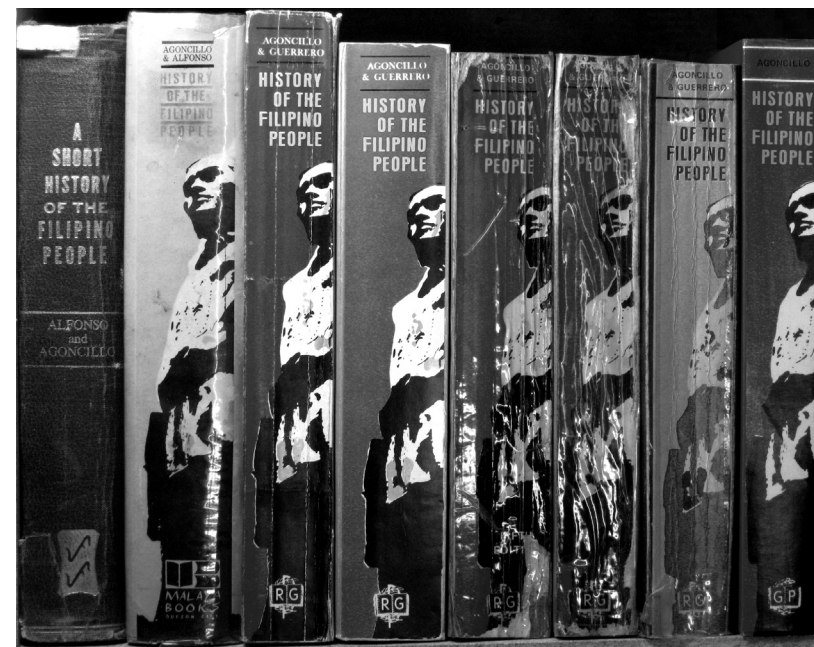


Fig. 2. The spines of the different editions of *History of the Filipino People* show that most of the editions bear the logo of one publisher, but some were printed by three different publishers. Not evident in the photo is the fact that the third and eighth editions were each printed by two publishers.

eighth editions each had a different publisher from the one who produced the third to the seventh editions (fig. 2). Even a look at title pages probably gives the same impression.

Closer examination of several copies of each edition reveals, however, that who published which edition is not so clear-cut. Both the third and eighth editions, for instance, each had two different publishers. More importantly, significant changes in the text as well as pagination did occur—especially from the second edition to the third, and from the seventh to the eighth. Thus an incorrect reference to a particular edition can make it difficult to trace a citation’s source. It is important, therefore, to distinguish each edition as clearly as possible from all the others. The table on page 325 summarizes the information that can be gleaned from the covers, title and copyright pages, and prefaces and tables of contents of as many different copies of each edition as could be found.

The details presented in the table—as well as closer examination of each edition’s contents—raise many questions: Why did the book have so

many coauthors and publishers? Why was the second edition still being reprinted as late as 1972, even though the third edition had already been published in 1970? Why was it necessary to delete one chapter for the fourth edition in 1973 and restore it for the seventh in 1986? Why was Agoncillo the sole copyright-holder for the fourth to the seventh editions, which Guerrero coauthored? Did Agoncillo voluntarily write the chapter entitled “Under Martial Law,” which reads like a Marcos press release, for the fifth edition in 1977? Who wrote the ten new chapters for the eighth edition, published in 1990, after Agoncillo’s death in 1985? How did the political and economic realities of the 1970s and 1980s, especially the imposition of martial law in 1972 and the restoration of democracy in 1986, influence the content and publication of the different editions?

The book’s longevity leads to other questions. Was it the book’s content or the style in which it was written that prompted *HFP*’s adoption by many schools? Or was it Agoncillo’s name and controversial pronouncements that served to promote the book and distinguish it from competing textbooks in the market? Why has no other history book taken its place as a required textbook in more than just a few schools? Did books published in the past fifty years have limited markets or were they just not as good as *HFP*? Other evidence can also be examined: royalty statements and the relationship between the book’s selling price, copies sold, the minimum wage and the peso-dollar exchange rate from 1960 to the present; the books themselves and the relevance of the shift from hardbound editions printed on book paper to paperback editions in newsprint; the importance of the pages added and deleted in relation to the book’s selling price and/or arguments; and the cover, which featured Andres Bonifacio, and its significance not only in relation to the text, but also to readers in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many of whom were marching in the streets.¹⁵

But these questions and evidence will not all be answered or examined in detail in the present study. Instead this article revolves around the untold story of one chapter—“The Continuing Crisis”—as a means to illustrate the ways in which the history of one book may be used to understand the broader history of the Filipino history book.

Oscar M. Alfonso, Junior Coauthor

In taped conversations that were published a decade after his death in 1985 (Ocampo 1995), Agoncillo narrated the story of how he came to write *A Short History of the Filipino People* with a coauthor, and indicated that he

Selected data on the different editions of Teodoro Agoncillo’s *History of the Filipino People*

EDITION	TITLE	AUTHOR/S	PUBLISHER	COPYRIGHT	YEAR AND PRINTING	MAJOR CHANGES	NO. OF PAGES
1st	<i>SHFP</i>	TAA/OMA	U.P.	1961 U.P.	1960 (1st)	Mimeographed	648
					1961 (2nd) – 1966 (5th)	Offset printing	629
2nd	<i>HFP</i>	TAA/OMA	MB	1967 TAA/OMA	1967 (1st) – 1969 (4th); 1971 (5th) – 1972 (8th)	New publisher; new cover; shortened title; two chapters merged; one new chapter; index added	725
3rd	<i>HFP</i>	TAA/MCG	MB	1970 TAA/MCG	1970 (1st)	Coauthor and nine chapters replaced; new index	734
			RPG		1971 (2nd) – 1972 (3rd)	New publisher	734
4th	<i>HFP</i>	TAA/MCG	RPG	1973 TAA	1973 (1st) – 1976 (14th)	One chapter removed; index not corrected	700
5th	<i>HFP</i>	TAA/MCG	RPG	1977 TAA	1977 (1st) – 1983 (18th)	One chapter added; readings pruned; new index	710
6th	<i>HFP</i>	TAA/MCG	RPG	1977 TAA	1984 (1st)	Readings removed; new index	620
7th	<i>HFP</i>	TAA/MCG	RPG	1977 TAA	1986 (1st) – 1987 (2nd)	One chapter restored; index not corrected	648
8th	<i>HFP</i>	TAA	RPG	1990 TAA’s family	1990 (1st); other printing unknown	Coauthor and nine chapters replaced; one chapter added; new index	637
			Garotech		1993 (unknown); other printings unknown	New publisher	637

was disappointed with what the first wrote, so he got a second. His letters, however, suggest that the story was much more complex. In 1959 Agoncillo was instructed by the U.P. president to write a new history textbook within three months for a new course on Philippine history that would be offered the following year. When Agoncillo protested that he could not meet the deadline, he was given an assistant, whom he then promoted to what he called “junior co-author” because he wanted to “encourage young people” (ibid., 135).

Oscar M. Alfonso, Agoncillo’s first coauthor, wrote ten of the first edition’s thirty chapters before leaving to begin his Ph.D. studies at the University of Chicago. In his letters to Alfonso, Agoncillo (1962a, 1962c) praised his coauthor’s writing ability and, aside from asking that duplications in two chapters be removed for the next edition, did not indicate that he was dissatisfied with his coauthor’s chapters in any way. Agoncillo (1962b) even hinted that he was grooming Alfonso to take over as the expert on Philippine studies when he retired.¹⁶ By the time the second edition was published in 1967, Agoncillo had been chair of the U.P.’s history department for almost four years, and Alfonso had returned with his Ph.D. degree. Changes made in the new edition included updates, the combination of two chapters by Alfonso into one, and the addition of a new chapter by Agoncillo. But these changes—as Agoncillo thought it necessary to assert in his new preface—did not affect the book’s main thesis that “the book is about the Filipinos as seen through Filipino eyes, and not about the Spaniards and the Americans . . .” (Agoncillo and Alfonso 1967, iii).

Agoncillo’s close relationship with Alfonso, however, did not last. In the preface to the third edition, Agoncillo expressed satisfaction with the widespread adoption of his book with Alfonso—who goes unnamed—and noted that

Those who used to denounce the senior author for passionately advocating looking at Philippine history through Filipino eyes are today repeating and repeating what he has been saying all these years. And so what was then strange, unorthodox, and bold—as the writer’s works had been described by the Johnnies-come-lately—is now commonplace and, therefore, taken for granted. (Agoncillo and Guerrero 1970, iii)¹⁷

But the closest that Agoncillo ever came to explaining why Alfonso was no longer his coauthor was when he referred to the third edition as “a decided

improvement over its predecessor” (ibid.). Aside from the fact that some passages were rewritten and the narrative was brought up to December 1969, he emphasized that “completely new chapters on the Spanish, American, and Commonwealth period have been written by Miss Milagros C. Guerrero” (ibid.). He did not disclose why these new chapters had to be written. Were the previous ones defective? Did the author of the old chapters withdraw them voluntarily? Was Alfonso, perhaps, planning to write his own book?

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, Agoncillo later revealed that he was “terribly disappointed with [Alfonso’s] chapters” and that he realized “Alfonso was useless” (Ocampo 1995, 78, 134). Maybe Agoncillo chose not to openly express reservations about Alfonso and his work while they were collaborating, but what is clear is that the former’s attitude to the latter changed drastically after an incident that occurred toward the end of Agoncillo’s term as chair. In response to an impending reorganization, the majority of faculty members of the Department of History (1969) had signed a petition requesting the retention of their current chair. Alfonso declined to join the majority and cited his coauthor’s publicly announced preference for being “just plain professor of history” as his reason (Alfonso 1969a).

Even though Agoncillo (1969a) was serious about not seeking reappointment, he considered Alfonso’s position as “flimsy” and “Fishy!” He began to suspect that Alfonso wanted to become the next chair and had chosen to align himself with another faction in the department, three of whom had recently been promoted without Agoncillo’s approval.¹⁸ All this he recounted in a letter to Guerrero, who was then doing research in Washington, D.C., in which he instructed her to “PREPARE THE CHAPTERS ALFONSO WROTE FOR History of the Filipino People and in the revised (second) edition next year, I will drop him like a hot potato.”¹⁹ It was also then that Agoncillo told Guerrero, “as I have said time and time again, I was not, still not, satisfied with Alfonso’s chapters. He is ignorant, and were it not for the fact that President Sinco was in a hurry to have the book printed by June 1960 I would have done the whole work alone.”

At about the same time recommendations for promotions were due, and Agoncillo, as outgoing chair, decided to give Alfonso a one-step promotion, which the latter deemed was less than he deserved, especially considering that some faculty members were recommended for two- or three-step promotions. Alfonso (1969b) complained in a letter to Agoncillo about what he perceived to be a glaring injustice, demanded a reply, and ended with,

“Lacking a satisfactory explanation and wanting redress from you otherwise, I shall be constrained to seek recourse to administrative remedies as a matter of fairness and justice.” In the letter’s margins, Agoncillo scrawled, “This is a threat! I am not frightened by any threat.” He did not reply to Alfonso. Instead Agoncillo (1969b) fired off a letter the following day to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences urgently withdrawing Alfonso’s promotion. He outlined his reasons for taking back his recommendation, and explained that the latest promotions were intended to narrow the gap between Alfonso and members of the department with doctorates. This gap, he admitted, was a result of the extraordinary promotion he had recommended for Alfonso—from Assistant Professor I to Associate Professor I—a few years earlier, which was unprecedented in the history department, as well as the rest of the university. Agoncillo’s reasons were consistent with his pronouncements on the need to follow policies and procedures, but he was apparently deeply offended by Alfonso’s letter, which he referred to as an “ungraceful, impolite letter” that showed Alfonso was “not a man. Otherwise, he would have talked to me first before writing that impolite letter” (Agoncillo 1969c). Alfonso’s letter was not quite the same as Zafra’s critique of *The Revolt of the Masses* (1956) but the manner in which the message was delivered certainly seems to have further provoked Agoncillo’s ire.

As scheduled Agoncillo stepped down as chair in June 1969, and Alfonso—who did not, in fact, seek “administrative remedies”—was appointed as his replacement over the objections of faculty members, which triggered a university-wide clamor for democratic consultations related to the selection of department chairs, deans, directors, and even the university president (Evangelista 1985). All this ended with Alfonso voluntarily vacating his position after fewer than eight months as chair, and the installation of a new, faculty-approved replacement, one of whose first tasks was to announce “the adoption of a new textbook History of the Filipino People (1970) edition, by Professor Agoncillo and Miss Guerrero . . . [to] replace Agoncillo and Alfonso History of the Filipino People revised edition (1967)” (Villanueva 1970).

U.P. and Malaya Books, Publishers

Not surprisingly, the memo announcing the adoption of the third edition did not mention the name of its publisher. It is rare that a publisher’s identity is considered important—except perhaps by authors looking for one—but

the role that publishers play must be recognized because they are those who make the initial decision and investment to publish a book. In the case of *SHFP* and *HFP*, all four of its publishers made significant contributions in different ways. The first two did not publish as many editions as the third or as many copies as the fourth, but were probably much more influential in assuring the book’s legacy. The first may be said to have commissioned the book and guaranteed its initial buyers; the second made it possible for the book to acquire the distinctive cover it retains to this day.

The University of the Philippines, which “published” the first edition, was not really in the business of publishing books, but it did occasionally undertake the printing of a few, most notably Agoncillo’s *The Revolt of the Masses* in 1956, before its university press was established. Thus those early publications were practically endorsements from the state university, which enhanced the salability of the books it published. About 800 copies of *SHFP* were mimeographed throughout school year 1960–1961 (Agoncillo 1961), but after receiving inquiries on whether the book could be used in other universities, Agoncillo and Alfonso (1961) urged the U.P. president to grant them permission to have the book printed privately. The request was denied, but perhaps due to their efforts the original mimeographed edition was eventually, as Agoncillo (1963) himself described it, “copied in the typewriter, photostated, and printed by offset process. It’s smaller, but bound.” There was no U.P. Press in 1960, but it had been set up by 1967, and Agoncillo was assured that the second edition would be ready for the opening of classes that year. Unfortunately, maybe because the press was still new, delays were encountered and the promise was not kept. This angered Agoncillo (1970a), who decided to withdraw the manuscript after waiting for several months, and handed it over to the newly established Malaya Books, which had invited Agoncillo to join its board.

Malaya, the Tagalog word for “free,” was essentially a group of friends who got together for the purpose of publishing books “to serve the cause of nationalism, with little profit if possible” (Agoncillo 1970b). The most obvious changes to the book brought about by the move to Malaya were the full-color cover of the second edition, which would be altered minimally in subsequent editions; and the shift from photographing typewritten pages to typesetting the text. Agoncillo (1967b) liked the cover so much—for aesthetic as well as ideological reasons—that he told Malang, “The cover is beauuuutiful! You got my psychology — Boni facing defiantly the enemy of

freedom . . .” “Boni” was short for Bonifacio, the hero of *The Revolt of the Masses*, the essence of which was summarized in three chapters of *HFP*.²⁰

Agoncillo’s letters show that his relationship with his new publisher, including its general manager Joaquin Po, was quite satisfactory until the publication of the Agoncillo-Guerrero third edition in 1970. Soon after that, Agoncillo (1970b) resolved to find another publisher because, as he put it, “In spite of the written contract, Mr. Po wanted to lower my royalty on the flimsy ground that I was earning more than the company.” Agoncillo, contrary to allegations that he was a Marxist, was very conscious of the importance of financial security, and was not beyond indulging in a few luxuries.²¹ For example, his sartorial elegance and chauffeur-driven vehicle led a former student to dub him “the barong Tagalog-Mercedes Benz nationalist” (Lapuz 1977). One of the reasons he had resisted transferring to the U.P. in 1958 was that he stood to earn less than what he was getting from the different positions he held at the Philippine Information Agency, the Far Eastern University, the Manuel L. Quezon University, and his freelance writing and editing (Ocampo 1995, 101). In fact, his earnings from a social studies textbook published in 1953 had been large enough for him to build a two-storey home for his family on a spacious lot on Quezon Avenue (Canauay 1978, 27). This, however, did not mean that Agoncillo was interested only in making as much money as he could. He wanted to take care of his family’s needs. As he explained, “you can write better if you’re financially stable . . . You cannot think well if you have children and you hear them crying because of hunger” (ibid., 24). Financial independence also meant that he was not beholden to anyone or any institution, and was free to say what he thought needed to be said. It was not surprising, therefore, that he kept a watchful eye on his royalty statements, and insisted that publishers deliver them every year before Christmas.

Mercedes Benz notwithstanding, Agoncillo was still a nationalist. This led him to revisit his discussions with Po concerning *HFP*’s latest selling price, which he felt was excessive. Agoncillo (1970c) emphasized that he wanted to make the book affordable for students and “disseminate the nationalistic posture of the book throughout the country.” Thus, he questioned Po’s statement that Malaya was earning less than Agoncillo on his books, and that bookstores had been receiving 30 percent discounts. After Agoncillo (1970b) discovered that this assertion was not true—because the bookstores had only been given 15 percent discounts—he accused Malaya’s general manager of being untruthful, and alleged that Po’s “interest lies purely and

primarily in profit — his pretensions to having a social conscience notwithstanding.” He then literally crossed the street and gave the rights to *HFP* to R. P. Garcia Publishing Co., which had already put out several of his books and was owned by his friend Ricardo P. Garcia. As Agoncillo pointed out to Malaya’s board, his existing contract referred to “the second or 1967 edition, NOT TO THE PRESENT OR THIRD EDITION, which is very different from the second edition.”²²

Malaya complied with his request to discontinue publication of the third edition, but as the table on page 325 shows it immediately resumed publication of the second edition—despite Agoncillo’s request that Malaya stop reproducing the chapters he wrote for the second edition. In any case, official statements indicate that he continued receiving royalties from the previous editions published by Malaya Books (1972), even after R. P. Garcia took over the printing of the third edition.

Martial Law and Censorship

All of this was not, of course, happening in a vacuum. In 1962 the celebration of Philippine Independence was moved from 4 July to 12 June, Ferdinand Marcos was elected president of the Philippines in 1965, and the Huks assassinated the president of the Anti-Huk Mayors’ League a year later. Two years into Marcos’s term, Agoncillo added a chapter entitled “The Continuing Crisis” to *HFP*’s second edition. Although the new chapter began with the presidential election of 1961, most of it—as the title suggested—was devoted to a series of crises involving Marcos’s contentious path to the presidency, the rise of student activism, the deterioration of peace and order, and a “witch-hunt” that occurred toward the end of 1966. Agoncillo (1967a) proudly told a Malaysian student that, even though he found fault with the president in this latest addition to *HFP*, it continued to be used in many universities and that he was in no danger of being arrested because the Philippines was a democracy. To a Malaysian professor, he recounted a private conversation with Marcos, who said that he had read the new chapter and laughed when he saw the criticism Agoncillo (1967c) directed at the Manila summit of 1966, which the president himself had convened.²³

Agoncillo later made minor revisions in the third edition, and added two paragraphs to the chapter on “The Continuing Crisis,” which noted that Marcos’s reelection in 1969 disproved the notion that “the Filipino people do not want their presidents to serve two successive terms” (Agoncillo and Guerrero 1970, 581). After Marcos declared martial law in 1972—ostensibly

due to the worsening peace-and-order situation—a crackdown on mass media was ordered, including limits on the publication of books. The censorship that occurred during the first few months of martial law (Youngblood 1981)—courtesy of the Mass Media Council (MMC)—is not mentioned in any of *HFP*’s later editions.²⁴ Considering that Marcos had by then closed democratic institutions and suspended constitutional privileges—and many of his critics had disappeared, gone into exile, been jailed or even killed—it would not be unreasonable to suspect that the deletion of the chapter critical of the Marcos administration’s earlier years was related to the declaration of martial law. And it was.

Marcos, however, was not directly involved. As a letter from the MMC’s executive director to Malaya’s president indicates, the former’s reviewers had found the latter’s submission—namely the Agoncillo-Alfonso second edition—rather subjective in its treatment of contemporary events and happenings, “notably those that have something to do with the present administration and the military” (Crisol 1972). A subsequent letter from the MMC’s cochairs—who also happened to be the Secretaries of Public Information and National Defense—reveals that reviewers were more concerned about passages involving the military, intelligence agencies, Congress, and anti-communists, not Marcos himself. Conditional approval to reprint the book was granted, but the senior author was required to “delete or rewrite objectionable portions” (Tatad and Enrile 1972), four samples of which were attached to the letter.

The first example dealt with the aftermath of the anti-Huk mayor’s death:

Units of the Army and the Constabulary, numbering 1,000 well-armed men, ran after the alleged leader of the Huks and machine-gunned the house where Commander Delio was supposed to be hiding in the town of Candaba. All that this show of force accomplished was the killing of a pig — Commander Delio having escaped without the knowledge of the 1,000 Constabulary and Army men who surrounded and machine-gunned the house. (Agoncillo and Alfonso 1967, 578)²⁵

The last sentence of the passage quoted above, which was actually more objective than subjective, indicates that what was objectionable about this particular example was not the author’s interpretation, but the disclosure of an embarrassing occurrence. The same was not true of the examples related

to the congressional investigation into the dispersal of a student demonstration critical of the Manila summit:

Three Committees of Congress summoned some student leaders allegedly to investigate police brutality, but the investigations turned out to be nothing more than witch-hunting and name-calling. The students who appeared in good faith at the Congressional hearings were shouted at, insulted, bamboozled, and accused of being subversives by some over-enthusiastic and narrow-minded congressmen . . . When the intelligence agencies and their paid witnesses who are supposed, as Filipinos, to uphold and protect the national interests above those of any other country and who are expected to respect the civil liberties of the people, make unfounded and unproved accusations which cannot stand in court, and when they resort to character assassination through trial by publicity, then Filipino society has indeed returned to the Dark Ages when burning at the stakes of alleged witches was the rule. (ibid., 586–87)

Agoncillo could have complied very easily with the MMC’s conditions by deleting or rewriting the passages identified as objectionable. It was not as if he considered the text to be cast in stone. In fact, he had previously shortened the chapter by approximately three pages—removing several paragraphs, sentences, and phrases—before the book was published in 1967.²⁶ He could also have appealed to Marcos himself, who along with his wife Imelda had unsuccessfully tried to convince Agoncillo (1976b) to write a postwar history for them in 1968 and then, later, to become editor-in-chief of *Tadhana*, a multivolume history of the Philippines.²⁷ Considering that Agoncillo was personally informed by Marcos in 1967 that he laughed after reading the new chapter, it is possible that the latter could have been persuaded to overrule the MMC.

Agoncillo, however, did none of these things. After all, the edition in question was the one coauthored by Alfonso, and published by Malaya. He was not about to do them any favors.

The Continuing Crisis

Martial law affected the lives of Filipinos in very significant ways, but their political environment did not solely determine their interactions with one another. Agoncillo (1969d, 1972), for instance, had not forgotten his earlier

conflicts with Alfonso and Malaya. He had previously told Guerrero that he did not wish “to continue to give money (in the form of royalty) to a slimy traitor and skunk,” namely Alfonso, and grudgingly accepted royalties remitted by Malaya, which continued selling copies of the Agoncillo-Alfonso (A-A) second edition until martial law was declared. Hence, it should not be surprising that Agoncillo considered the MMC’s order not as a curtailment of freedom of speech, but as “magandang balita” (good news) for him and Guerrero, who by then had begun her Ph.D. studies at the University of Michigan.

After the publication of the Agoncillo-Guerrero (A-G) fourth edition, he informed his new coauthor that the military had banned the reprinting of A-A because of its antimilitary content. Agoncillo (1973b) added that

Nilakad ako ni Po . . . nguni’t ayaw kong alisin ang tinututulan ng militar. Nais ko’y talagang ipagbawal ang A-A. Kaya’t hindi na lumalabas ito at solo na ng A-G, na totoong mabili ngayon . . . Kaya, mauunawaan mo kung bakit malaki ang royalty mo noong nakaraang Hunyo.

Po asked me to cooperate . . . but I refused to remove the passages to which the military objected. I really want A-A banned . . . That’s why it’s not being sold anymore and A-G, which is truly selling so well now, has the market to itself . . . So you can understand the reason your royalty was huge last June.

His letter to Guerrero, however, was not as detailed as the one he sent a few months later to a reader who inquired about entries in the fourth edition’s index that did not lead to the pages he sought. Instead of merely stating that a chapter had been deleted, and the pagination altered without updating the index, Agoncillo (1974) volunteered much more:

When martial law was imposed, the Department of National Defense [DND], specifically Undersecretary Jose M. Crisol, wrote my publishers, Malaya Books, Inc., to delete certain passages in my chapter entitled “The Continuing Crisis” . . . Since Malaya Books violated our contract, I refused to delete the passages objected to by the DND. In other words, I allowed the book (pre-1973 edition) to be banned. The same book was also being published by an Ilonggo, Mr. R. P. Garcia,

and it was this book (Agoncillo and Guerrero not the Agoncillo and Alfonso, which the Malaya Books, Inc. published) which I edited for publication; that is, I deleted not only the passages objected to by the DND but the whole chapter, for to delete the passages would destroy the unity and coherence of the whole chapter.²⁸

Both accounts show that Agoncillo believed, as many did, that the MMC—although cochaired by the Secretary of Public Information, a civilian—was actually controlled by the military (Youngblood 1981). But unlike his first letter, which is more concerned with relating the events that occurred, the second provides Agoncillo’s justifications for his actions, and raises a few questions. In the second letter, he identifies an unspecified contract violation as the sole reason for refusing to revise the second edition published by Malaya, and suggests that he preferred to remove the entire chapter from R. P. Garcia’s version of the third edition rather than detract from the chapter’s unity and coherence. He was, of course, right but he did leave out a few details.

It is curious for instance that Agoncillo, having already disclosed more than was necessary, did not mention his feud with Alfonso at all. But this perhaps had more to do with the fact that he was writing to a complete stranger, not that he had changed his mind about Alfonso. Meanwhile, the reason he offered for deleting an entire chapter overlooks the reality that he was given the option to *rewrite* passages the censors found unacceptable. He had, after all, previously revised parts of certain chapters for the second and third editions, and he did not seem to have had any difficulty deleting an “objectionable portion” from chapter 29 for the fourth edition. Neither of these actions destroyed the unity and coherence of the chapters involved, and he could have done the same for chapter 27. But it is possible that he was determined to delete the entire chapter for the fourth edition not only so that the A-A edition would be banned, but also as a way of signaling his displeasure with the MMC’s order. Perhaps it was Agoncillo’s own form of rebellion, which allowed him to imply in his preface to the fourth edition that one chapter was removed because of the imposition of martial law.

There is no way, however, of ascertaining the veracity of these conjectures based on the available documents alone. But there is enough evidence to confirm that the chapter on “The Continuing Crisis” was *not* “ordered removed during the Martial Law years,” as his publisher asserted in the

seventh edition. The official correspondence indicates that Agoncillo could have deleted or rewritten the objectionable portions, but his letters show that he decided to excise the entire chapter voluntarily and that he wanted the second edition banned because of previous disagreements with Alfonso and Malaya. Thus he refused to make any changes to the second edition, and modified only the third, so that the fourth—with Guerrero as coauthor and published by R. P. Garcia—could be released with the approval of the proper authorities. Agoncillo's voluntary deletion of an entire chapter illustrates how the content and publication of history books can be shaped by political realities, as well as personal relationships, and that the authors involved do not necessarily view censorship negatively.

The Later Editions

Changes made to subsequent editions of *History of the Filipino People* would be less dramatic, but no less revealing. The fifth edition came with a few updates, and the pruning of some of the readings—that is, excerpts from or entire texts of historical documents—that accompanied each chapter. The reduction was an indication of the rising cost of printing and the reality that, by law, the book's price could not be increased. Perhaps more significant was the addition of a new chapter, which Agoncillo's latest preface declared was about “the martial law regime and the changes it wrought—and continue[d] to bring about—in Filipino society” (Agoncillo and Guerrero 1977, iii). Unlike the deleted chapter on “The Continuing Crisis,” the new one entitled “Under Martial Law” did not mention specific instances of corruption or police brutality—even though these continued to occur. Instead, the new chapter showed that Marcos's imposition of martial law resulted in improvements in the peace and order situation, infrastructure, labor conditions, and so on, and that restrictions on civil liberties were in the best interests of the people. This was not very different from the articles that appeared in government-owned newspapers at that time, but it must be noted that Agoncillo's assessments were not inaccurate.²⁹ Even *Time*'s correspondent acknowledged that there was, at that time, “a note of hope in the city and an apparent willingness on the part of Filipinos to suspend judgment” (Elson 1972).

No significant changes in the text were made for the sixth edition, but the readings at the end of each chapter, which had merely been pruned for the previous edition, were completely removed in 1984 after the peso-dollar exchange rate—and the cost of paper—soared following the assassination of

opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino in 1983 (BSP 2010). The book's price, meanwhile, rose from P35.90 in November 1983 to P59.85 in November 1984—an increase of almost 70 percent in one year—despite the decrease in number of pages (R. P. Garcia Publishing Co. 1984; 1985). In 1986, a year after Agoncillo's death and a few months after the overthrow of Marcos, the chapter on “The Continuing Crisis” was restored for the seventh edition. The text, however, was based not on the revised version from the third edition, but on the uncorrected proofs for the second edition. This meant, in practical terms, that approximately three pages, which Agoncillo ([1967?]) had removed before the second edition was published, were restored as well. Among the passages that were appearing in print for the first time was a reference to the 1965 presidential campaign, when “Money flowed like spring water. Rumor had it that Marcos was the fair-haired boy of the American Department of Defense, while Macapagal was painted as the fair-haired boy of the Department of State” (Agoncillo and Guerrero 1986, 494). It is uncertain whether the use of the uncorrected proofs was intentional.

In 1990 the eighth edition was published, with Agoncillo named as its lone author. All nine chapters by Guerrero were replaced with new ones written by uncredited coauthors—namely, Isagani R. Medina, Samuel K. Tan, and Bernardita R. Churchill (1993, 27, n. 30)—and another chapter was added about events that occurred *after* Agoncillo's death.³⁰ This made it appear almost as if Agoncillo were writing from the grave. The replacement of Guerrero's chapters occurred because—like Agoncillo who was offended by Alfonso—Teodoro V. Agoncillo III, who took over his parents' affairs, was affronted by Guerrero's statement in a newspaper article that some of his father's ideas regarding Philippine history were, perhaps, no longer applicable.³¹ The new addition to the eighth edition was a three-page chapter entitled “The Edsa Revolution,” which summarized the events that resulted in the restoration of democracy in the Philippines. It is remarkable that this chapter appears in the same book as the restored “The Continuing Crisis,” and immediately after “Under Martial Law,” with no explanation regarding the dramatic shifts in the characterizations of Marcos from a newly elected president dealing with instability, to a benevolent leader during the martial law years, to a dictator overthrown by the Filipino people. Another way of appreciating the differences in how Marcos is portrayed in the eighth edition is by counting the number of times he is referred to as “President Marcos.” In the thirty pages of “The Continuing Crisis,” the term appears only eleven

times, or about once every three pages.³² In “Under Martial Law,” “President Marcos” is used twenty-two times within twelve pages, almost twice on each page.³³ And then there is “The Edsa Revolution,” where Marcos’s name is mentioned twenty-four times in three pages—or eight times per page—but the word “President” never precedes it.

One more major change occurred in 1993, when *HFP* acquired its fourth publisher after production delays caused by disagreements among the heirs of Ricardo P. Garcia contributed to significant decreases in sales. Agoncillo III (1992) decided it was time to find another publisher for the eighth edition and chose Garotech, the new company established by Ricardo M. Garcia Jr., one of the previous publisher’s five sons. When Garcia Jr. died in 2007, his children continued running the business, but finally decided to close it down in 2009 due to financial difficulties. It is unclear whether the company’s demise means that *HFP*, the company’s most profitable book, is no longer as popular as it used to be, but a much larger company does not seem to have such reservations. This fifth publisher has committed to publish a new edition, and not merely a reprint of the eighth (Agoncillo III 2009).

Conclusion

History of the Filipino People is fifty years old. Its “latest” edition is twenty years old. Its eight editions, from four different publishers, bear Agoncillo’s name and those of two credited coauthors, with three more not explicitly recognized as such. It continues to be cited by scholars and nonscholars alike, and sells far more copies in one year than most scholarly Filipino history books have sold in the past fifty years. This reality shows just how important *HFP* is, if not to Philippine historiography, then at the very least to the college students whose exposure to history books is usually limited to the ones they are required to read in class. The book’s adoption beyond the University of the Philippines may be attributed not only to the content or readability of *HFP* compared with similar textbooks, but also to the U.P.’s status as the premiere university in the Philippines and the timeliness of its publication in 1960. The influence of the Catholic Church on political affairs was waning, nationalism was on the rise, and colleges and even a few high schools (some run by the more liberal Catholic orders) replaced existing textbooks with *HFP*, despite—or maybe because of—objections to the alleged Marxist and anti-Catholic bent of its senior author.

Aside from the book’s popularity, it is also worth noting that its complicated history provides a glimpse of other realities. For instance, the publishers

of its different editions reflect the development of the publishing industry in the Philippines from 1960 onward. There were, in fact, no Philippine university presses as we know them today when *HFP*’s first mimeographed edition was published. By the time the first such press was established in 1965, a few idealistic publishers who sought to provide more than the usual fare had also emerged.³⁴ There was, however, no way of avoiding the publishers’ need to make a profit—and all the problems that went with it—as Agoncillo’s frustration with his second publisher illustrates. The difficulties of sustaining a family-run business may also be viewed in the odyssey of a publishing company that flourished under the leadership of a first-generation entrepreneur, but which later floundered because of feuding second-generation managers, and whose subsequent incarnation was shut down by third-generation heirs less than two years after their father’s death.

The book’s unusual number of coauthors, meanwhile, hints at the importance of personal relationships among Filipino historians. There were, of course, unique circumstances surrounding the changes in coauthor, but Agoncillo’s falling out with Alfonso, as well as Agoncillo III’s conflict with Guerrero later on, may be seen as examples of professional relationships that have soured because of personal disagreements. While this reality is true of just about every profession, there seems to be much more of it among Filipino historians, especially when one considers that the existence of two rival historical associations in the Philippines—sometimes more, depending on the decade—is not due to ideological differences. It is also worth noting that all his coauthors—both credited and uncredited—were former students and colleagues at the University of the Philippines, who obtained graduate degrees at American universities. This reflects the perceived dominance of the members of the U.P.’s history department among Filipino historians based in the Philippines, as well as the continuing influence of American education on the telling of Philippine history, as seen in the overwhelming number of history books written in English by Filipinos, many of whom obtained their graduate degrees at foreign universities.

Finally, the jarring juxtaposition of three different portrayals of the same government preserved in the eighth edition, which has escaped scholarly scrutiny in print since 1990, illustrates concretely how the rise and fall of a head of state can influence the content of history books. This observation is not new, but it demonstrates that the study of the history of a fifty-year-old history book using a book history approach can accomplish what other studies—by committed readers who expose errors in recently-published

textbooks and dedicated academics who deconstruct the texts of important-but-not-as-widely-read histories—cannot. What is not so easily determined, however, is whether those who bought or borrowed the book actually read it, and, if so, did they read the entire book or just certain chapters? Could it be that the chapters related to the years before, during, and after the martial law era were not read at all?

Perhaps it is time to examine the histories—not just the texts—of other history books and pose questions similar to those raised in this article. Who wrote the books? Who published them? How many copies were printed? How many were sold? Did the buyers read them? What did readers think of the books? What do they remember? How did political, economic, and social realities affect the publication, manufacture, distribution, reception, and survival of history books? The answers to these questions may not seem relevant to the development of Philippine historiography, but they are in fact significant. After all, an unpublished manuscript cannot be purchased, and an unread book cannot be remembered. Teodoro A. Agoncillo's *History of the Filipino People* has a unique history and deserves more attention than it has received thus far, but it cannot be denied that it is essentially a required textbook. Perhaps it is time to examine the histories of the history books that are read *voluntarily* by Filipinos. Perhaps more such books can even be written and published. And maybe, just maybe, more Filipinos will then learn about the history of the Filipino people.

Abbreviations used

HFP	<i>History of the Filipino People</i>
MB	Malaya Books
MCG	Milagros C. Guerrero
MMC	Mass Media Council
OMA	Oscar M. Alfonso
RPG	R. [Ricardo] P. Garcia Publishing
SHFP	<i>A Short History of the Filipino People</i>
TAA	Teodoro A. Agoncillo
TAA Papers	Teodoro A. Agoncillo Papers, University Archives and Records Depository, U. P. Library, Diliman, Quezon City
U.P.	University of the Philippines

Notes

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- 1 The word "edition" is used in this article not in the bibliographic sense, but according to the usage by Agoncillo and his publishers, as reflected in the copyright pages of the different editions.
- 2 Reviews of the first edition were written by Quirino (1962) and Soliongco (1962). The latter was reproduced on the jacket flaps of the second edition.
- 3 This publisher's note was not in the seventh edition's first printing. It was added beginning with the second printing. Capitalized words are in the original.
- 4 Agoncillo was a compulsive letter-writer who kept carbon copies of the letters he sent and compiled them in scrapbooks along with the letters he received. These letters are now part of the Teodoro A. Agoncillo Papers at the U.P. Library's University Archives and Records Depository. The collection is still being processed, so some of the box numbers given in this article are necessarily provisional in nature.
- 5 Agoncillo rarely mentioned these connections, however, and it was his critics who tended to cite these relationships to bolster their claims regarding his biases for and against Aguinaldo, the United States, and whoever else they perceived Agoncillo to be praising or bashing.
- 6 Iletto (2010, 237) is one of the few historians who has written about the significance of "a kind of history war highlighted by the Rizal Bill controversy, [and] the uproar over Agoncillo's *Revolt of the Masses*," among others, from the 1950s onward.
- 7 Zafra's book was an annotated compilation of materials from various sources, and included documents that traced Philippine history from Magellan's 1521 voyage to the beginning of the 1896 revolution.
- 8 Agoncillo (1976a) later wrote that Zafra's critique was intended as a statement from the entire U.P. Department of History, but that the "four girls" who received credit as his collaborators—namely, Guadalupe Fores Ganzon, Josefa M. Sanie, Donata V. Taylo, and Juliana A. Salta—were the only ones who affixed their signatures.
- 9 Agoncillo was paraphrasing. The exact sentences from the review were: "He is, to put it mildly, quite naive, credulous and uncritical" and "Any one will readily see how irregular and devious is the author's method of historical presentation and interpretation" (Zafra 1956, 506).

- 10 Among the few Filipinos whom Agoncillo (1973a, 1984) acknowledged as having written history from the Filipino point of view before him were José Rizal (his annotation of Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, 1890) and Encarnacion Alzona (*A History of Education in the Philippines: 1565–1930*, 1932).
- 11 At more than 600 pages, as Agoncillo's friends and students pointed out, the book was anything but short, so "the offending word [was] dropped for good" (Agoncillo and Alfonso 1967, iii).
- 12 It is possible that Renato Constantino's *A Past Revisited* (1975) or Sonia Zaide's *The Philippines: A Unique Nation* (1999)—the only one of Gregorio Zaide's numerous books on Philippine history for college students that may be considered as still in print (assuming that the definition of authorship is not strictly followed)—have sold more copies than *HFP* at certain points, but because neither has been in print for the past fifty years it is not really a fair comparison. The same may be said of textbooks by Nicolas Zafra, Horacio de la Costa, Amado Guerrero, and Jose Arcilla.
- 13 A passage from one of the few surveys that mention *HFP*—or any textbook, for that matter—is perhaps indicative of the reason for this invisibility. Salamanca (1993, 36) prefaced his brief survey of textbooks by saying that, although the section he was writing was limited to the period 1946–1955, he was extending its coverage to include "the entire period under review [1946–1993] to get this type of historical writing out of the way before tackling the more important, at least for the history of the discipline, monographic studies."
- 14 The preface to an award-winning history book leaves out the word "Short" when it indicates that "*A History of the Filipino People* . . . [was] published in 1960." One of the best-reviewed monographs on Philippine history went further and suggested that *HFP*—not *SHFP*—was published by the University of the Philippines in 1956 with Alfonso as coauthor, and revised only in 1977 with Guerrero as coauthor. Another award winner matched the correct title and coauthor with R. P. Garcia as publisher, but put down 1960 as the year of publication. Unfortunately, since the author cited specific page numbers—and the third to seventh editions published by R. P. Garcia varied by as much as 114 pages from one edition to the next—a reader searching the wrong edition would find it difficult to determine the pages to which the author alluded.
- 15 Even the text on the back cover—composed of quotes from reviews of Agoncillo's previous books and essentially the same from the second edition to the eighth, except for the deletion of one paragraph and the addition of an ISBN for later copies of the last edition—may be used as a clear sign of the changing times, especially in relation to distribution practices.
- 16 Agoncillo (1962b) was not about to retire, but felt it was necessary to plan ahead because "there's nobody in the Department now who has any interest and devotion to Philippine studies."
- 17 This passage is exactly the same in the Malaya and R. P. Garcia versions of the third edition.
- 18 Alfonso was approached for an interview regarding his collaboration with Agoncillo, but declined to comment.
- 19 Capitalized words and underlining in original.
- 20 Because more Filipinos have been exposed to *HFP* than *Revolt*, it is quite possible that the former, with Bonifacio on its cover, contributed more to increased awareness of Bonifacio as a possible replacement for José Rizal as national hero than *Revolt* ever did.
- 21 Agoncillo, who was born Catholic but stopped attending mass in high school, was also not anti-Catholic. Two of his children studied at Catholic schools during the 1950s and 1960s (Ocampo 1995, 59, 102).
- 22 Capitalized words in original.
- 23 Note, however, that both letters were written *before* the imposition of martial law in 1972. Agoncillo (1967d) later wrote, "I don't know what President and Mrs. Marcos will think of poor me when they read my new chapter . . ." He was worried because the final version of the new chapter was not exactly flattering, and the Marcoses had been very thoughtful and kind to him. But he hastened to add that they were kind "not in the sense that they have given me any favor (none!), but in the sense that they always think of me whenever they need my help in one way or other (for which I consistently refuse to accept anything, including per diems). But as a student of history, I forget personal relations and cling closely to facts no matter how unpalatable these may be." He was later suspected of going easy on the Marcoses because he did not criticize them openly during the martial law years—and even said that he admired the president's "sense of history" (Jose 1976, 148)—but since he twice refused offers to write history books for the Marcoses (and get paid handsomely for his efforts), it is clear that his appreciation of their kindness did not extend to acceding to every request. As he put it, "I can easily become a multi-millionaire overnight by the simple expedient of prostituting my pen and brains, but I am a simple man and prostitution is not in my character" (Agoncillo 1971).
- 24 The only references, if they can be called such, to censorship during that time may be found in the prefaces of the fourth and seventh editions, which allude to the removal and restoration of "The Continuing Crisis."
- 25 Examples cited in the MMC's letter were not always complete or correct, so this passage and the next are taken from the second edition. Underlining in original.
- 26 See Agoncillo ([1967?]), where he wrote, "Note my deletion[s] for obvious reasons."
- 27 Curiously enough, *Tadhana*'s subtitle would be "The History of the Filipino People." Even more bizarre, however, is that, as recently as 2002, Agoncillo and unnamed colleagues at the U.P. Department of History were still being accused of having "formed the core of ghostwriters and consultants for Marcos' epic project" (Abinales 2002), more than a decade *after* the actual collaborators had gone public (Salazar 1989).
- 28 In both letters, Agoncillo misidentified chapter 28 as the one he removed for the A-G fourth edition, even though it was chapter 27 that the military identified as problematic in the A-A second edition.
- 29 It is unclear whether Agoncillo wrote freely or was coerced into writing what he did, but because the views expressed in his letters in the months that followed the declaration of martial law are very similar to those presented in the chapter, it is likely that he wrote the chapter with no interference from anyone.
- 30 In his preface to the eighth edition, Teodoro V. Agoncillo III (1990) states that "The difficult task of revision was assumed by the family with the invaluable help of scholar friends," and acknowledges Medina, Tan, and Churchill for their "many acts of kindness and assistance." According to Agoncillo III (2009), the three agreed that Agoncillo would be credited as the eighth edition's lone author.
- 31 Guerrero was quoted in the final installment of a three-part, front-page series by J. P. Fenix (1988) in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* as saying, "Agoncillo's words may no longer hold true," in reference to Agoncillo's much-criticized assertion that Philippine history before 1872 was a "lost history." For specific objections and the denouement, see Agoncillo III 1988, Tan 1988, and Guerrero 1988. Tan also states that Agoncillo himself had wanted to replace Guerrero as his coauthor before he died.

32 Marcos's name is mentioned fifty-three times in the chapter, but is primarily referred to as "Marcos."

33 He is referred to as "Marcos" only once in the entire chapter.

34 Like Malaya Books, Alberto Florentino's Peso Books and F. Sionil Jose's Solidaridad were founded in the 1960s. Only Solidaridad remains, but it makes more money from selling books—at the bookstore with the same name—than publishing them (Florentino 2000; Jose 1992).

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