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Modern Urban Designing in the Philippines, 1898–1916

The importation of modern American urban design practices into East Asia during the opening decades of the twentieth century fundamentally redefined the environmental form of cities. Although it is acknowledged that the introduction of the City Beautiful led to the endorsement of spatial forms dissimilar to what had hitherto existed, not much is currently known about (a) why city planning became such a fundamental component of governance at that time and (b) what impact urban design had upon the local civilization and the construction of nationhood. Consequently this article investigates the form and meaning of the first generation of Asian City Beautiful projects implemented prior to 1916 as part of America's early colonial administration of the Philippines.

KEYWORDS: URBAN DESIGN · DANIEL H. BURNHAM · WILLIAM E. PARSONS · COLONIAL GOVERNANCE · NATIONHOOD

The early twentieth century is an age of great significance in the evolution of city design practices. During its opening decades major advances were made in North and South America, Asia, Australasia, and Europe with respect to the appearance and plan of urban settlements. Notable as well was the international dissemination of urban design practices. The City Beautiful, to offer an example, originated in the United States yet affected city design conventions outside North America. As authors including Jeffrey Cody (2003), Robert Freestone (2004), and Wolfgang Sonne (2004) have shown, the City Beautiful enthused architect-planners in places as culturally diverse and geographically far afield as Argentina, Australia, Britain, Canada, China, Cuba, Panama, and the Philippines. Yet, notwithstanding the advent of City Beautiful urbanism in East Asia during the early 1900s, little is currently known about its implications for American colonization and the development of Philippine nationalism.

In order to grasp when and where the first cohort of Asian City Beautiful schemes commenced, we need to recognize two events: the sinking of the USS *Maine* (on 15 February 1898 in Havana, Cuba) and the Battle of Manila Bay (on 1 May 1898). As turning points in the build up and intensification of the Spanish–American War, a conflict that ultimately led, by December 1898, to the signing of the Treaty of Paris and consequently Spain’s relinquishing of authority in Cuba, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines to the Americans, the transfer of colonial rule in the Philippine Islands meant that the character of local society was fundamentally revised in the years that followed. By way of example in 1905 the American colonial government enacted a policy to restructure local cities. However, with regard to the introduction of modern urban planning, there is still much to learn about how it contributed to the American transformation of Philippine society.

Against such a backdrop this article seeks to explore the relationship between imperial notions of spatial design and the maturation of the new “Filipino nation” after 1898. Accordingly it presents an examination of the impact of urban design practice upon both the evolution of the Philippines and the development of the “Filipino nation,” that is, the shared sentiment of *being Filipino*, an emotion that authors such as Vicente Rafael (2000) and Floro Quibuyen (2008) have shown existed prior to the onset of American colonial rule in 1898. Significantly, in this context, I argue that city

planning was not merely a tool to transform urban space in order to socially engineer society into a happier, healthier, wealthier, and more culturally sophisticated state of being. Rather I contend that urban design was applied to facilitate what the Americans saw as the formation of nationhood in the Philippine Islands: nationalism thus was a colonial construct promoted by the Americans.

To help explain these matters I now put forward information with respect to the emergence of modern urban design in the US and the development of Philippine society at the end of the 1800s and the start of the 1900s, that is, in the years between 1898 and the passing of the Philippine Autonomy Act in 1916, which for the first time gave legislative authority and responsibility to Filipinos.

The Surfacing and Rise of City Beautiful

Toward the end of the nineteenth century a number of significant developments in the US affected the design and meaning of cities (Rodgers 1998, 52). Among these advances was “a nationalization of taste” (Wright 2008, 47), a matter that emphasized the aesthetic faults of existing built environments and encouraged architect-planners to take on more responsibility in directing contemporary urban growth. A shift arose in the understanding of the function and worth of urban design. As a result city planning was recognized as a means not only to configure urban environments, but also to elevate social conditions in the US. Central to this change was a reform group known as the City Beautiful Movement. Venturing to resolve social and environmental defects evident in urban communities, such as crime, corruption in government, and squalid and unhealthy living conditions, City Beautiful advocates stressed the value of orderly formed urban settings. Aroused by the French Beaux Arts concept of urban design, the movement bequeathed by the early 1900s a new urban vision for American society. In promoting this vision the movement perceived urban planning and citizenship to be aligned with each other (Wilson 1989, 72). Beautiful cities denoted moral, intellectual, and governmental progress (Robinson 1904, 17). Significantly, too, beautiful cities manufactured what was labelled at the start of the twentieth century as “social religion” (Ross 1901, 200), which united people together as members of a community.

In comprehending the rise of the City Beautiful we need to take note of two cities: Chicago and Washington, DC. In Chicago the World’s

Columbian Exposition was held in 1893, an event that despite its temporary existence redirected the urban design narrative in the United States (ibid., 275). As the largest cultural event ever held in North America, and one in which a large number of enormously sized buildings were laid out in an axial arrangement, the exposition showcased the prudence of diligently positioning edifices, statuary, and spaces within an urban setting (Reps 1965, 502). The splendor of the environment, in the words of Jon A. Peterson (2003, 69), “left many fairgoers awestruck, as if transported into an ideal realm.”

Designed by the architect Daniel Burnham,¹ with assistance from landscape designer Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., the environment of the World’s Columbian Exposition proved to be an object lesson in formulating an urban plan. As William E. Parsons (1915, 14) noted, “it demonstrated to the American people the effectiveness of the grouping of buildings in orderly relation to each other.” The impressive nature of the event’s surroundings had far-reaching impacts (Burnham and Bennett 1909, 6) that touched upon dynamics shaping American society at that time: wealth, culture, and power (Peterson 2003, 71). Importantly, too, the World’s Columbian Exposition illustrated that modern civilization could be distilled into a spatial form manufactured by the trained individual, the architect-planner, and hence all that was necessary to ameliorate society was an opportunity to implement a grand plan within an existing settlement. In 1901 that chance arose in arguably the country’s most important city, Washington, DC.

Designed by Daniel Burnham, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., Charles McKim, and Augustus Saint-Gaudins, the McMillan Plan² bestowed a fresh peak to modern American urban designing. It aroused the imagination of the public (Gutheim and Lee 2006, 131), and under the organization of the Senate Park Commission transformed Washington, DC, into a model urban environment (Wilson 1989, 51). Its aggrandizement also aroused much patriotic fervor on account of the city being rehabilitated during an age when American nationalism was enlarging (Peterson 2003, 79). The renewed environment evoked an image of imperial splendor deemed pertinent to the capital of the emerging American empire (Hines 1972, 35). As a place exemplifying its nation’s identity, status, and growing international power (Rapoport 1993, 32), the revamped city, with its large open spaces and grand vistas toward prominent public buildings and monuments, incited the public to venerate individuals and institutions allied to the history, evolution, and distinctive character of American society (Morley 2010, 236).

To appreciate how this sentiment was to transpire, attention can be put upon one environmental feature: the Mall. Three kilometers long and more than 240 meters wide, the space, the principal open area within the city’s core, granted a magnificent view of the most important public building in the United States, the Capitol (fig. 1). Based on the example of the McMillan Plan, similar green spaces were proposed in a host of other settlements such as Philadelphia (in 1902), Cleveland (in 1903), and St. Louis (in 1904). Because municipal administrations at that time were venturing to display civic advancement, such features came to define what modern American city designing was about: “the creation of grandiose architectonic productions, that is, processional sequences of spaces and buildings arranged as orderly units as modelled on the theories and practices of Daniel Burnham” (ibid., 237). Moreover, because in City Beautiful thinking citizenship was purportedly nurtured by urban planning (Burnham and Bennett 1909, 123), to thereby systematically arrange buildings, roads, and urban spaces into an organized form equated to the fabrication of an elevated type of American citizen. As discussed in the following section the notion of “uplifting” people, that is, elevating the condition of society, through the use of urban design was evident not only in North America but also during the early 1900s in the Philippines, the newly acquired territory of the US.

Benevolent Assimilation and the Civilizing of the Philippines

In late 1898 the US signed the Treaty of Paris with Spain and so obtained its first opportunity to govern an Asian society. While in historiographical terms American colonial authority has been examined with regard to changes in the Philippine economy, local politics, law and order, English education, and public health by Klassen (1986, 155), McCoy (2009, 61), Anderson (2006, 7), and Holt (2002, 27), less consideration has been given to city planning even though it was an elemental component of the early colonial state (Sonne 2004, 90).

The value of urban designing to American colonial rule was evident by 1901. In that year Elihu Root, the US Secretary of War, declared that the Senate Park Commission should visit the Philippines “for the purpose of giving advice to the Government as to the treatment of the City of Manila” (Moore 1921, 177). Four years later the place of urban planning within the colonial bureaucracy was confirmed: two grand city plans were put forward.



Fig. 1. The view within the Mall to the Capitol (*top*) and to the Washington Monument (*bottom*), Washington, DC (Photo by Ian Morley)

Composed by Daniel Burnham and Peirce Anderson, the city plan had one scheme intended to transform Manila into a beautiful, modern capital city (*New York Times* 1904, 1). The other scheme consisted of the layout of an entirely new city, Baguio. But, as discussed in this article, the US colonial urban planning narrative did not conclude with these two projects. Between 1905 and 1916, the year the Philippine Autonomy Act was passed, additional comprehensive urban plans were tendered: grand plans were created for the regional capital cities of Cebu and Zamboanga; and fifteen civic centers with reinforced concrete buildings were built throughout the country (Cameron 1914, 4). Such was the volume of urban designing in the Philippines from 1905 to 1916 that the country became, excluding planning activities within the US, the world's greatest test bed for City Beautiful urbanism.

To come to terms with why America's colonial governing council, the Philippine Commission, instigated such a sizeable volume of urban design projects, it is first necessary to comprehend the perceptions Americans had of Filipinos and Philippine society. The colonizers' opinion of the 7.6 million people living in the archipelago circa 1900 (US Bureau of the Census 1905, 15) influenced the nature of US colonial authority and the rationale behind the redesign of Philippine cities. As a case in point, Americans observed Filipinos as lacking advanced culture and political experience (Constantino 1975, 314; *New York Times* 1901, 1; Scott et al. 1916, 240), as possessing no universally spoken language (US Bureau of Insular Affairs 1902, 65–66),³ and as living in ways that acted as impediments to interaction among the country's eighty-four ethnic groups (*ibid.*, 65–66) scattered throughout the country. In light of this assessment the Americans concluded that neither a national culture nor national sentiment existed (Hayden 1942, 11)—an astonishing deduction given that the first modern nationalist movement against a colonial power in Asia occurred in the Philippines in 1896 (Anderson 1983, 153–54; Anderson 1988, 9; Corpuz 1965, 59–64; Agoncillo 1975, 82–99).⁴

Guided by Pres. William McKinley's benevolent assimilation dictum to liberate the local population from their allegedly uncivilized or tribal state of being, to unite them into a single cultural collective, and to convey the role of the US as civilizer of the world (Willis 1905, 18; Preston 2012, 207–8), the Philippine Commission sought to fabricate a civil society that bestowed “progress” and freedoms never before witnessed in the Philippine Islands (Brown 1903, 27). Purporting to act as a fatherly friend rather than an

invader or conqueror (Blount 1913, 148), the US as a moral duty (Hofstadter 1955, 65–66) ventured to “uplift,” “civilize,” and “Christianize” a populace observed as not only different from, and deficient in relation to the colonizers in terms of their race and civilization, but varying too among themselves in race, development, and culture (Coudert 1903, 13). The Americans claimed that in seeking to impose upon Filipinos modern American customs and mores, they would mold the Filipinos into their “little brown brothers” (Smith 1993).

One settlement, Manila, was to play a critical role in this civilization-building process, a course of action that Rafael (2000, 23) recognized as ennobling the colonizers as it liberated the colonized via conjoining love, duty, and discipline. In this context the 1905 plan for Manila was to be an “expression of the destiny of the Filipino people as well as an enduring witness to the efficient services of America in the Philippine Islands” (Burnham and Anderson 1906b, 635). Put succinctly, the scheme was to articulate the imperial mission to “reform” Philippine civil society: it was to help manufacture a modern republican nation-state based on the invented ideal type of “Filipino” citizen.

Manila and the New Urban Design Paradigm

After visiting the Philippines in December 1904 and January 1905, in June 1905 Burnham and Anderson⁵ presented their “Report on Proposed Improvements at Manila” to the US Secretary of War and former governor-general of the Philippines William H. Taft. By October 1905 Burnham and Anderson submitted their “Plan of Baguio, Philippine Islands.” Acting as guides for the future development of the two cities, the reports and the urban plans they contained illustrated the American desire to transform a society thought of as backward (Kramer 2010, 387). Significantly too, the design models put forward in the reports signaled the end of the Spanish colonial urban planning paradigm derived from the 1573 decree of Philip II known as the Law of the Indies.⁶ The implementing of plans in Manila and Baguio, and subsequent schemes elsewhere, rendered the spatial model derived from Spain’s The Law of the Indies redundant. With Burnham and Parsons’s importation of the City Beautiful model of urban design into the Philippines, urban places became organized for the first time along lines other than grid plans with a centrally placed church-lined space: the *plaza mayor*.

To ensure that the local population comprehended the restructuring of Manila and the construction of Baguio in the way that the Philippine Commission intended them, the projects, as expressions of colonial authority, had to merge into the existing local governmental context (Holt 2002, 28). Yet, in actuality, the Americans coveted the fact that their governmental policies were explicitly different from Spanish colonial procedures (LeRoy 1914a, 276; US War Department 1901b, 35) in order to demonstrate that American governance was neither corrupt nor oppressive (US War Department 1901a, 82; LeRoy 1914b, 52–54; Forbes 1928, 443; Brown 1903, 21; Scott et al. 1916, 239–40). In light of this American rule the “uplifting” of the Philippines had an intrinsic paradox: on one hand, it revealed itself to be gradualistic in that it would sanction selected elements from pre-1898 society to be maintained; on the other hand, it was paradigmatic because it possessed dissimilarities (Skirbekk 2011, 7) from what existed during the Spanish colonial era. Michel Foucault (2007, 106) suggested that when public authorities initiate paradigmatic modernity the people could sense chronological discontinuity. For the Americans the need to demonstrate the contrasting political and cultural nature of the Philippines after 1898 was weighty: as self-proclaimed civilizers of the world they aspired to inform Filipinos that their country’s evolution was being redirected as a result of the instigation of benevolent assimilation.

Inheriting insanitary urban environments, outdated and corrupt administrative machinery, and finding disquiet among the local population with regard to the application of law and order, the Philippine Commission initially had few precedents on which to base its policies so that, as it promised, societal development, advanced culture, and education in self-government could transpire (Wheeler-Bennett 1929, 506–8). As an illustration of the Philippine Commission’s use of urban planning to cultivate higher civilization, the 1905 Manila Plan (fig. 2) was intended to expand the local economy, elevate the levels of security and convenience, and provide the Philippine capital city with a fresh visual and spatial character. This makeover, which was a demonstration of the active power of the US within a society formerly held down by the allegedly degenerate influence of Spain (Linderman 1974, 114), envisioned the modern American city within East Asia (Lico 2008, 250) so that Filipinos could detect the superior nature of their country compared with what existed before or in other cities in the region (Elizalde 2012, 155). With its new roads, buildings, and urban

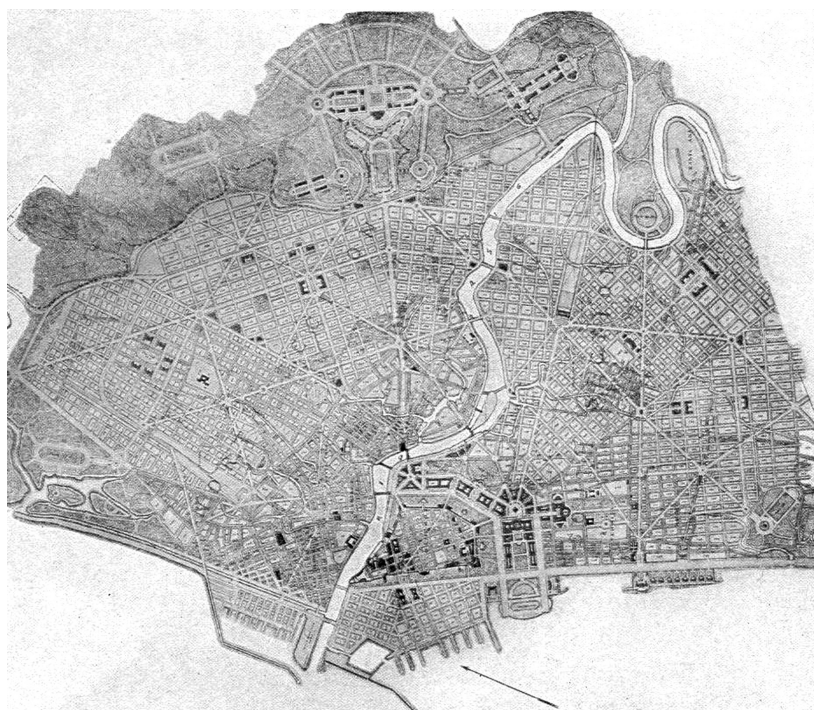


Fig. 2. Burnham and Anderson's 1905 plan for Manila (Source: Parsons 1915, 30)

spaces—some of which were highly symbolic—Manila, after 1905, was to become visually impressive. This striking appearance was intentional and was, states Doeppers (2009, 490), to be a “brand signature” of the US imperial presence in Asia.

The American Manila plan consisted of a number of fundamental architectural and spatial components. The transformation of the city into a model colonial outpost was to be attained through the creation of public parks, the abundant planting of foliage throughout the settlement, the laying down of new streets, the development of the seafront, and the construction of new public buildings. These changes collectively aimed to promote a secular civic vision and at the same time undermine Catholic spatial logic that would augment the settlement's economy, boost the local level of culture, and elevate the quality of the built environment. Manila's controlled expansion would facilitate population growth from about 225,000 in 1905 (Burnham and Anderson 1906b, 631) to a maximum of 2 million people in the future (*Times* 1910, 7).

A primary element of the project was the relocation of the governmental core. Moving it outside of the Spanish walled district known as the Intramuros (meaning “inside the walls”) to an area known as the Extramuros (“outside the walls”) had great symbolism as it accentuated the fact that the Intramuros, the spatial embodiment of Spanish colonization and military might (Miller 1906, 51; Manila Merchants Association 1908, 15), was no longer the cultural and governmental nucleus of the country. Burnham and Anderson additionally promoted the new colonial government's accessibility to the Filipino population via the transformed urban form's arrangement of roadways. Inspired by the street system in Washington, DC, said to be “the best planned of all modern cities” (Burnham and Anderson 1906b, 631), Manila's grid plan was to be punctuated by radial boulevards and “diagonal arteries” (ibid.). These arteries were to be tree-lined thoroughfares laid down to connect the new civic core to the outlying suburban communities.⁷

Along many of these roadways monumental vistas to and from the new government buildings were formed (ibid., 632). Grand views were also to be established for other new prominent public edifices, such as the central train station; significantly the existing rail system for the first time was to be expanded to connect to the port (ibid., 634). With the enlarged harbor facilities and new wharves along the Pasig River, the handling of freight was to be made more convenient for local businesses. In the words of Burnham and Anderson (ibid.), the improvement of freight handling was to “greatly contribute to the prosperity of the city.”

Located in proximity to the Intramuros the new governmental district, known as the “Government Group” (fig. 3), was designed as a symmetrical built mass flanked by two substantially sized urban spaces. Resembling Washington, DC, in both appearance and plan, the open areas were sited in proximity to the Government Group's principal building, the Capitol (or what had been known as the Legislative Building, which at present houses the National Museum), and in accord with its central axis: the semicircular space to the rear/west of the edifice being marked at its center by a national monument (ibid., 632) from which boulevards dispersed to the urban fringe (Brody 2001, 128); to the front/east of the Capitol was a green space, a Mall (a space known today as the Rizal Park), which bestowed a spectacular view of nearby Manila Bay.

In *City Beautiful* Manila people's capacity to see the Government Group through new urban spaces and along new thoroughfares was meaningful.

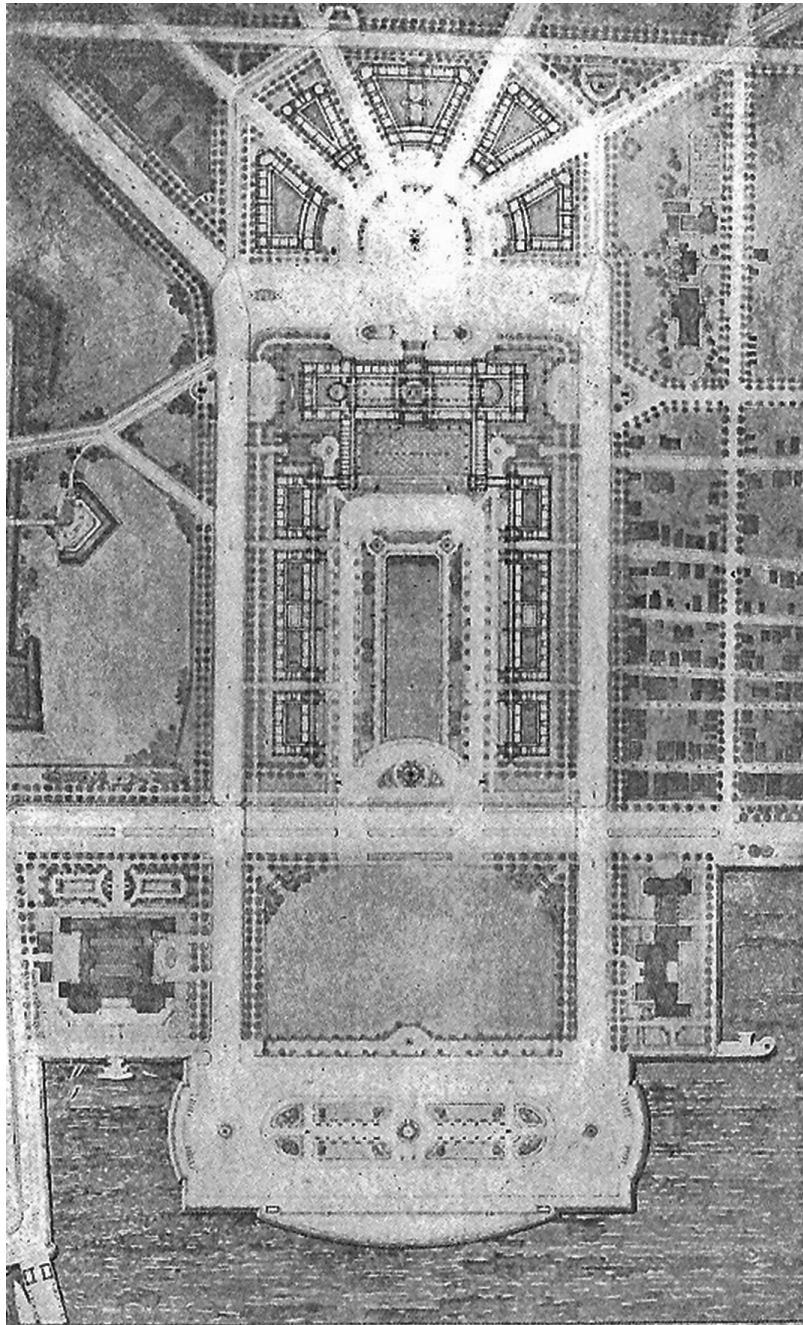


Fig. 3. The plan of the Government Group (Source: Rebori 1917a, 306)

Vistas were to permit the public to look with esteem toward the insignia of American colonial government (Burnham and Anderson 1906b, 632), the dome of the Capitol, and likewise they were to enable the nation's bureaucrats to look out to the city and its people over whom they were to serve. Such a ploy was designed to provoke a number of transitions associated with the “uplifting” and “civilizing” of local society (Best 2009, 25). Yet to comprehend how this raising of civilization was to transpire it is necessary to appreciate, if only briefly, the structure of the colonial government and how it operated.

The nature of the political system established by the Americans was founded on a patron–client alliance between the colonizers and the Filipino elites (Arcilla 2006, 135; Kramer 2006, 208). This alliance, remarked Paredes (1989, 44), functioned at a number of levels: at the national level, for example, by Filipino provincial leaders and national politicians interacting with Americans; in the regions, via dyadic relations between local and provincial leaders and national-level Filipino politicians; and at the municipal level, by local and provincial Filipino leaders interacting with rural and urban residents. With the Americans tying local government offices to regional and national governmental departments (Cullinane 1989, 70), bureaus before 1898 reserved only for the Spanish, ambitious Filipino politicians were provided by their colonial masters with a conduit to “work up the ladder” through networking and practicing democratic governmental principles (Gaerlan 1998, 98–99). At the same time, the Americans, by exploiting public offices as venues in which Filipinos could be socialized in political responsibilities (May 1980, xvii), granted a means to school people in subjects in which they had not been formally trained (Go 2003, 7–8).

In view of this development government offices would temper the capricious and authoritarian behavior hitherto exhibited by Filipinos in civic affairs (Roosevelt and Taft 1902, 94). But crucially the Americans maintained the pre-1898 social hierarchy so that “practical political education” could occur. Without the patronage of the influential *caciques* (local chiefs) and *ilustrados* (learned ones), any attempts the Americans would make to reform Philippine society would at best be subject to impediments (Kramer 2006, 179) or at worst risk ending in failure (Beredo 2013, 8). As powerful families controlled districts, even provinces, American colonization could not survive without the resources and backing of Filipino elites (Ileto 1999, 20). So, by necessity, colonial government was formulated to satisfy the opinions and

aspirations of this powerful social group (Salamanca 1984, 30; Anderson 1988, 11). By instituting the “Philippinization” (Agoncillo 2012, 321) of the civil service the Americans, in the context of their temporary rule in the Philippines (Go 2007, 79), cemented the Filipino upper class to the nation’s evolution as it headed toward independence. New loyalties among Filipinos emerged out of a concerted campaign to wean the population away from Spanish cultural and political mores, a process that incorporated making José Rizal⁸ a national hero. Nationhood was able to develop and urban designing, as shall now be explained, was not taciturn to this process.

The 1905 Manila plan, as already insinuated, was designed to pronounce that a new era had begun in the Philippines. Whereas Intramuros with its grand fortifications and its plazas lined by churches, the houses of nobles, government buildings, and edifices for mercantile activities had dominated Manila’s cityscape until then, the reconfigured built fabric was to proclaim the arrival of “the modern age” (LeRoy 1905, 56). As an articulation of the nation’s progress post-1898 City Beautiful Manila was to underscore to Filipinos the distinction between “Spanish Philippines” and “American Philippines” because, as far as the Americans were concerned, Catholic Spanish rule in its quest for glory, God, and gold (Cruz 1974, 11) had done nothing more than produce a civilization disparate from that founded on the principles of the Enlightenment (Elizalde 2012, 155). Exposing the self-proclaimed superiority of the Anglo-Saxon/Protestant race to Spanish (and of course local indigenous) “races,” the Americans believed that the importation of the “modern city” to the Philippines would help remove shackles that had suppressed the local population, provide social and economic opportunities not possible before 1898, and thereby empower Filipinos to reveal their “true spirit.”

Burnham helped forge a new society for Filipinos through the construction of vistas that were an important element of Manila’s renewed built fabric. The restructured city allowed all social and racial groups to individually *and* collectively observe public institutions operating on their behalf, encouraging people through means of sight to merge into a single, cohesive community. In abstract terms, explains Denis Cosgrove (1998, 26), the tactic of establishing views toward particular urban features permits citizens to own what they see. In addition it emphasizes the fact that what you see is a reality belonging to the now. For the Americans vistas toward new public edifices and urban spaces helped enforce the point that history,

that is, the narrative of Philippine society up to 1898, had been truly arrested. Whereas too before 1898 racial groups were intentionally kept apart, had disdain toward each other (Jagor 1875, 24), and government institutions were kept hidden behind the walls of the Intramuros, after 1905 new roads (especially wide boulevards and promenades) and urban spaces (especially public parks and monuments) enabled all people to see public offices, observe civic rituals, and freely intermingle as equal citizens of a new nation.

Parks and shaded walkways were useful in this regard as they provided settings for people to saunter and mix, for instance in the Luneta (Vernon 2014, 90), along the seafront and Pasig River (to Fort McKinley⁹ at the urban fringe), and in proximity to the Government Group following the in-filling of the Intramuros moat (in 1905)—a maneuver the Americans rationalized on public health grounds but one that conveniently abetted their strategy to diminish built vestiges of Spanish logics of colonialism. All American public planning initiatives—such as developing an English-language education system, sanctioning political campaigning, and instituting public health programs and hospitals (May 1989, 35)—were designed to fulfill the strategic aim of consolidating the union of Filipinos (and inventing the collective subject “Filipino”) by removing perceived social barriers that dated back to the Spanish colonial era. The Americans hoped this change would help convince Filipinos to consider themselves, for the first time, as “one people” (Stanley 1974, 81).

To promote the uniting of Filipinos the role of green spaces, I assert, requires acknowledgement. While it may be noted that the merging of buildings with landscaped spaces was to assist Manila in being visually equal to the greatest cities of the Western world (Burnham and Anderson 1905, 634), green spaces had uses that were supplementary to beautification. In the case of Manila’s Mall (230 meters long, 80 meters wide), its central axis directly corresponded with the Isla del Corregidor (Isle of Correction) over 40 kilometers away at the mouth of Manila Bay. Notably too, to foster awareness of the “Filipino nation,” a monument dedicated to José Rizal¹⁰ marked this alignment. Consequently, through Burnham’s placing of Manila’s version of the Washington Monument (in Washington, DC) within the Philippine capital city’s primary urban space, the open area became interlinked with “Filipinism” (Mojares 2006, 15), namely, the notion of amalgamating the greatest in the Orient with the greatest in the Latin and the Anglo-Saxon worlds (Palma 1974, 57–72).



Fig. 4. The Rizal Monument, Manila, 2012. Designed by Richard Kissling, the 41-foot-high shrine was officially unveiled in 1913 (Photo by Ian Morley)

Renato Constantino (1970, 7) stated that the Philippine Commission strove to identify and honor a Filipino hero for the purpose of channeling local anger against Spain, blunting animosity toward the Americans, and encouraging unity among the people (ibid., 9). Selecting Rizal as that idol, and then erecting a monument to him within the Mall (fig. 4), the Philippine Commission fashioned a rallying point for Filipinos. Such an action had three impacts: it bestowed prestige on Rizal as the “Father of the Filipinos”; it raised the esteem of the *ilustrados*, the social class to which he belonged; and it upheld Rizal’s perspective that Filipinos belonged to a single political-ethnic collective (Delmendo 2004, 22). The Philippine Commission passed laws to consolidate, and indeed validate, the sentiment of belonging to *the Filipino nation*. Act 345, for example, ensured that the anniversary of Rizal’s death, 30 December, was to be a day of national observance (US Philippine Commission 1902). Additionally, so that ceremonies could take place in other parts of the country, the Bureau of Public Works erected statues of Rizal within new urban spaces sited in proximity to new government buildings.

Urban design, as such, was not inert to the colonial governmental procedure of creating, officializing, and propagating national Filipino culture and identity (Mojares 2006, 2) but rather was central to the development of the Filipino nation as an artifact of American modernism—understood as a benign and paternal exercise in republican imperialism (fig. 4).

To further illustrate the assembly of Filipino identity by means of city planning, post-1905 as visitors approached Manila by boat, to be exact on a direct alignment from the Isla del Corregidor to the new central pier, their eyes would be magnetized to the Mall, Capitol, and the memorial to Rizal. Whereas one visitor to Manila before the implementation of the 1905 city plan had observed that when viewed from a distance the settlement lay almost at water level, with the exception of the churches and their bell towers (Williams 1913, 48), after 1905 the cityscape disclosed a divergent appearance due to the dominating presence of the Capitol’s dome. Trees planted in proximity to the shoreline were to play a valuable role in enhancing the new city image. While these trees provided shade along a widened roadway known as the Ocean Boulevard—Dewey Boulevard, but today known as Roxas Boulevard—when viewed from Manila Bay they helped diminish the visual hegemony of the Intramuros’s churches and Fort San Diego¹¹ by steering visitors’ eyes toward the only open area in the city center, that is, the Mall and the pier at its front. Serving as the entrance to the city and country at large, the pier with the Rizal Monument,¹² Capitol, and urban spaces directly to its rear therefore presented an impressive image of Manila to persons disembarking, a vista comprising both an American imperial and native disposition.

The assimilation of American civilization with Philippine nationhood in Manila’s urban form was not restricted to the vicinity of the waterfront and the Mall. It was also apparent in the vistas created along Manila’s “diagonal arteries”: people as they looked from the suburbs along the boulevards to the Government Group could see a monument dedicated to the Philippines and its people. In this framework vistas helped the public grasp that a “constructive partnership” between the Americans and Filipinos was in operation, one in which Filipinism was not only accepted but in fact encouraged. As Resil Mojares (2006, 23) suggested, the assemblage of national culture served an important purpose for both Filipinos and Americans. For the Filipinos, he claimed, it aided their cohesion at a time when they were founding their place within the modern world for the first time.

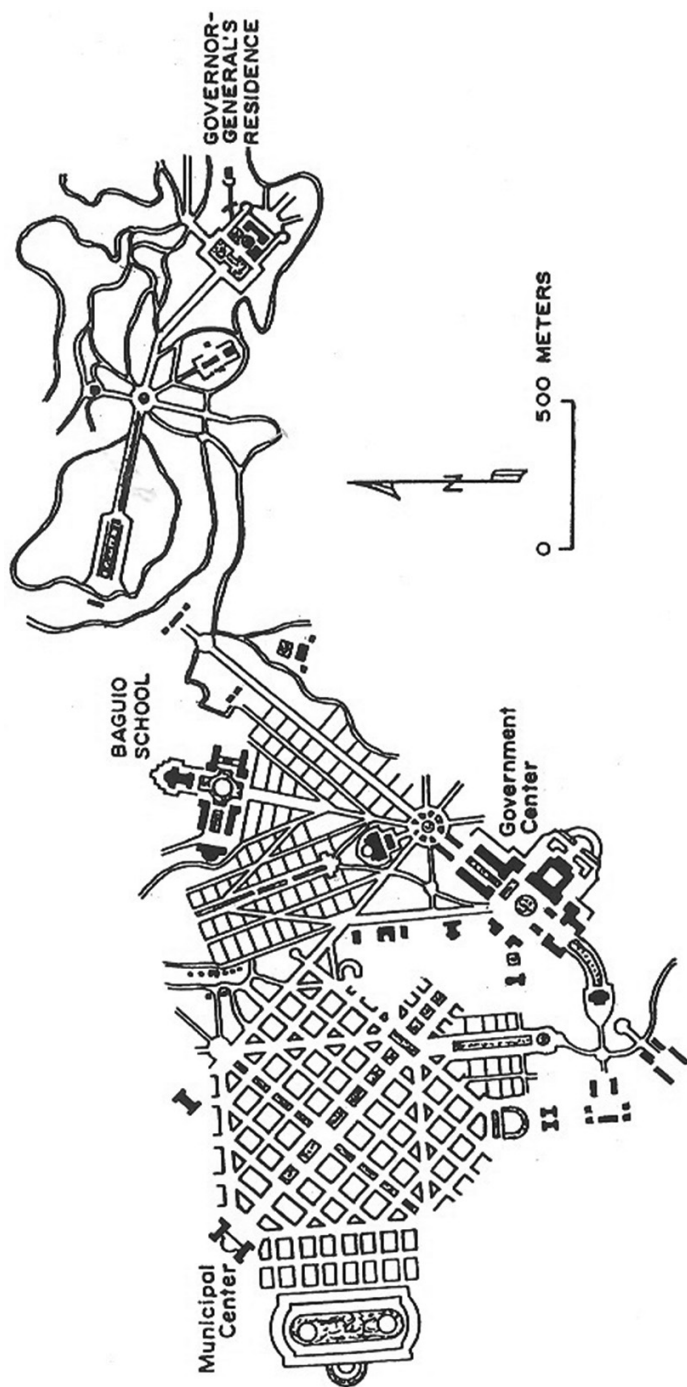


Fig. 5. The 1905 plan for Baguio (Source: Parsons 1915, 30)

However, the execution of the new urban design paradigm was not without its critics. Many local newspapers professed that the cost of reshaping Manila could have been spent in better ways. *La Vanguardia* (1911b) for instance declared, “embellish the city . . . but not at the cost of the health and the lives of the great part of the population.” Likewise *El Ideal* (1912) remarked, “what use will it be to beautify part of the city if not the health and sanitary conditions of the most populous sections are attended to?” *El Comercio* (1912) added, “Let necessary and urgent things be done before superfluous things, and it is urgent to improve the very populous workingmen’s barrios.”

Baguio: The City Beautiful in the Uplands

Burnham and Anderson designed Baguio—situated in the north of Luzon Island on the Western side of the Cordillera mountain ranges, and at an altitude of 1,524 meters above sea level—with a built form that merged roads, urban spaces, and buildings with the natural surroundings. As an outcome of its distinct environmental makeup the settlement, which was designed to accommodate 25,000 people (Burnham and Anderson 1905a, 405), quickly garnered a reputation for possessing park-like beauty (Kane 1930, 7). The *Philippine Magazine* (1931, 737), for instance, stated that “Baguio illustrates the value of city planning.” Yet to fully comprehend Baguio’s plan it is imperative to comprehend why the landscape was much more than a backdrop for the city.¹³ It is vital to appreciate why Burnham and Anderson blended the Philippine landscape into the urban plan (fig. 5). By venturing to grasp this amalgam of the natural landscape with City Beautiful urbanism, the Philippine Commission members understood Baguio as a place that enabled them to acquire control over what was previously barren terrain; to school and bring together uncivilized, heterogeneous people; and as already inferred, to establish a city of unquestionable beauty (*Philippine Review* 1916, 75).

A number of factors governed the nature of Baguio’s urban form. The configuration of streets comprised a grid aligned northwest to southeast/northeast to southwest so that the buildings’ elevation could receive sunlight at different times of the day. The urban plan, which promoted good health (Moore 1921, 199) alongside urban beauty, was formed in this way in order to help “pull in” people previously outside the margins of “civilized society” (Brody 2001, 132). In normalizing people hitherto

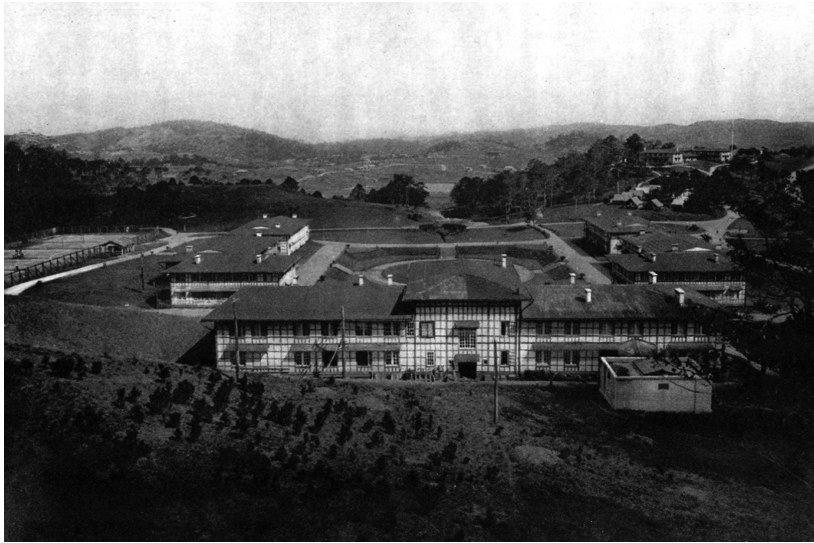


Fig. 6. Government Center at Baguio, photo taken by Dean C. Worcester, ca. 1909, originally published in Worcester 1914, 272 (Source: *The Mentor* 1915, 14)

living beyond the parameters of advanced civilization, urban design in this milieu acted as a social instrument to confront and then resolve existing social and environmental predicaments. As a late 1800s/early 1900s response to what Rabinow (1989, 169–70) called the “modern age’s recasting of the relationship between the individual, State, society, and space,” city planning became recognized—initially by reformers, subsequently by governments—as a tool to impart good environmental and social standards so that cities, be they in Asia, North America, or elsewhere, could be labeled “civilized.”

In implementing a geometric grid pattern in Baguio (Vernon 2014, 92–94), Burnham used architectural rationalization alongside social reasoning to justify the urban form. Referring to cities established on hilly terrains in France, Italy, Japan, and the US, Burnham explained that straight roads on inclines granted unique visual possibilities: hilltops, given their topographical distinction, offered unique sites for buildings of special interest (Moore 1921, 199) and allowed vistas to be created to and from the edifices. Burnham cited the Capitol in Washington, DC, as an exemplar in that Pennsylvania Avenue, Maryland Avenue, and the Mall all carried unbroken

lines of vision to the Capitol, and their steep gradients on Capitol Hill added to the overall quality of the vistas to and from the building (ibid.).

A key constituent in Baguio’s plan was the utilization of local plantings and topography (Vernon 2014, 93). Because it was situated in a mountainous region and so on ground of undulating character, Baguio’s site created urban planning challenges not encountered in either Manila or City Beautiful projects undertaken in the US. Burnham comprehended that hilly land nonetheless offered particular advantages, such as a building constructed on the top of a knoll commanding the view down any street(s) in proximity to it (ibid.). But then again in Baguio the built environment was formed not only to utilize the natural surroundings but, wherever possible, to do so in a manner that enabled the city plan to blend into the “natural” landscape (Reed 1999, 102). Here Burnham reflected the influence of his sometime colleague, the great landscape designer, Olmstead, who in turn represented an American appropriation of the eighteenth-century English landscape gardens and anticipated the rise of the garden city movement. The central core, for example, comprised of two parts—the Municipal Center (of local government buildings) and the Government Center (of national government buildings)—that were located at opposite ends of a valley that measured 1.207 kilometers in length and 0.805 kilometers in width (fig. 6).

Forming the anchor from which the rest of the city configuration was organized (Elliott 2009, 42–43)—including a military base to the south east of the urban core, Camp John Hay, founded in 1906—the government buildings had an alignment between them that not only made them highly visible, but also, in the view of Sonne (2004, 92), permitted the power of the state to be omnipresent. With regard to this topic David Brody (2001, 133) reasoned that the plan of Baguio granted the Americans a scopic capacity to see and control the city. In offering a paradigm of disciplinary sight, Baguio, he argued, was an example of design and power interacting to affect people’s—the Filipinos’—behavior. Brody (ibid.) established a comparison between the city’s spatial arrangement and the panopticon, the institutional building Foucault (1979, 199–200) used to explicate that design was an agent of authority/control, pronouncing the visibility of public edifices in Baguio as expressive of the American colonial desire to control and reshape Filipinos. In his view the city plan, like that of Manila, was formed with grand axes (Brody 2001, 128) so that unobstructed views of public buildings and in turn unhindered visual pathways to power were formed. Baguio’s primary

leisure space, an esplanade (Alcantara 2007, 53) positioned directly on the axis between the Municipal and Government Center, therefore acted as a contact zone (Pratt 1992, 6) to enable people historically, geographically, and culturally separated from each other to come into contact with each other so that the dominant group, the Americans, could coerce the weaker group, the Filipinos, partly to facilitate colonial authority.

The plan for Baguio thereby converted a wild, upland locale (Moore 1921, 198) into a beautiful, organized urban environment, with the removal of the wilderness being central to the instigation of paradigmatic modernity (Bordo 2002, 294). The Americans transformed the local elites in this spatial, cultural, and political context into adjuncts of colonial rule. Such a grasp of Baguio, however, ignored one important fact: the Americans in Baguio, like other urban settlements that were altered due to the practice of modern urban planning, permitted local people to use urban space so as to form their own harmonious civic body. By way of illustration, Baguio's esplanade (today known as Burnham Park) as a site of different leisure activities encouraged not only Americans and Filipino elites to fraternize, but also different Filipino social classes and ethnic groups to come together. By sharing that space citizens would not only have a mutual place of enjoyment and a site to recognize the beauty of their city,¹⁴ but also an environment to come together and share experiences about where they live.

1905 to 1916: Proliferation of Urban Planning in the Provinces

Between 1905 and 1916 much urban design activity took place in the provinces of the Philippines. Impressing onto the Filipino mind the strength and stability of the American colonial government, urban planning schemes were important not only in establishing and sustaining US authority but also in proliferating "Philippine national culture" and cultivating civic liberalism outside of Manila (as an outcome of political cooperation between the colonizers and the local populations).

Earlier in this article I noted the structure of colonial government and the nurturing of political collaboration between Americans and the Filipino elites. To deepen knowledge of how this relationship worked before the passing of the Philippine Autonomy Act in 1916, it is necessary to reiterate that municipal councils functioned as extensions of the central government (Salamanca 1984, 49). Importantly, for the colonial government system of

municipal administrations to be effective, there had to be not only links between Americans and Filipinos but also an alliance between different Filipino groups (Arcilla 2006, 137). Hence, as much as local elites could draw upon the custom of incurring *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) so as to win loyalty from the lower social classes, in return these elites as a rule had to demonstrate that governmental operations in the provinces were "uplifting" local life. In this context the local government system worked so that the masses could have an elevated quality of life, in part by knowing *and* maintaining their civil rights (Lande 2001, 528). With Filipinos in government posts being supervised by Americans, it was inescapable that the elites' capacity for self-rule was being put on trial. "Practical political education" was based upon tutoring that occurred *within* and *outside* government offices.

To fortify the aspiration to "uplift" and "civilize" Philippine society the Philippine Commission needed not only to initiate a government system founded on principles and procedures distinct from those practiced during the Spanish era, but also to warrant buildings in which government, be it in Manila or elsewhere, could be housed. The role of William Parsons, the Beaux Arts-educated consulting architect (from 1906 to 1914), was critical to this end (Hines 1973, 316).¹⁵ Parsons ensured that Burnham and Anderson's plans in Manila and Baguio would be applied in the way they were intended. He was also responsible for composing new city plans and planning civic centers in numerous provincial cities. Helping propagate Burnham's City Beautiful urban design model throughout the Philippines, Parsons worked to ensure that the church-lined plazas (marked at their center by a wooden cross) ceased to be the primary focal public space in Philippine cities. Instead the principal open area was a symmetrically formed landscaped plaza situated in front of a classically designed capitol building or municipal office. By also implanting green urban space into the Philippine built environment so that the public edifices could be "in a position of dignity and retirement" (Cameron 1914, 3), Parsons and his planning officials instituted a visual and spatial transformation of provincial settlements. In a place such as Lingayen in Pangasinan province, the new civic center (established on a 25-hectare site) with its capitol, plaza, and monument at its center, schools and playgrounds, courthouse, prison, storehouse, and residences for the provincial governor and treasurer, radically transformed the physical form of the settlement. As a model for

“civic improvements in the municipalities of this and other provinces” (ibid., 11), this district had a profound impact in redirecting the city away from the plaza and vicinity of the Spanish colonial era.

Parsons is arguably the first modern architect in the Philippines, the designer who introduced reinforced concrete as the standard material for public architecture in the country (Cody 2003, 39; Rebori 1917a, 311). But it is important to look beyond a structuralist perspective of his material innovations in order to appreciate Parsons’s buildings and plans as a facet of the US imperial program writ large (Lico 2009, 67). Although in Philippine architectural historiography much has been made of Parsons’s use of concrete (Perez 1994, 5) and his adaption of classical architecture to tropical conditions, far less attention has been given to his spatial contribution in instigating the modern urban form in the Philippines. While in terms of composition Parsons’s building designs adhered to the modern principle that “form follows function,” in terms of his urban planning principles and practice his work was heavily shaped by the ideas and practices of Burnham (Doeppers 2009, 491). By 1912 his plans for the regional capital cities of Cebu and Zamboanga, for example, drew great inspiration from Burnham’s planning model initially formulated in the US (Hines 1973, 319).

With regard to the planning of Cebu and Zamboanga, Parsons’s schemes were designed to elevate the quality of the built environment, articulate US authority as a promoter of social betterment—“power, when wielded for public good is a mighty weapon” (Rebori 1917b, 433)—and represent the diffusion of modernity into the provinces. Urban planning was part of the Philippine Commission’s broad strategy to forge new infrastructure, a matter that from as early as 1903 incorporated road, bridge, and rail building (Cameron 1915, 19) and steam boat subsidization (Stanley 1966, 286) so as to instigate nationwide prosperity and development. The Philippine Commission designed this process, along with the public school system and the creation of new national institutions (e.g., the National Archives, the National Library, and the University of the Philippines) to enable Filipinos to physically and culturally come together via redefining their public memory and constructing a canon based on the American understanding of what being Filipino was and should be—modern and future-oriented, nation-state building. As part of standardizing and universalizing the notion of a “Filipino” nation, the performance of civic rituals within both public buildings and open urban spaces was valuable. Consequently in schools,

for example, the national flag would be hoisted alongside the American flag each day, pictures of Rizal were hung in classrooms, and texts by renowned Filipinos such as Apolinario Mabini and Andres Bonifacio studied as part of lessons in citizenship. Notably, too, Rizal monuments were erected throughout the country in conjunction with new building types and urban spatial forms.

In forging public space and ensuring that civic edifices were highly visible within “the modern Philippine city,” Parsons, along with Burnham before him, helped enact a metaculture that was to sit above “low regional cultures.” Thus, while the Spanish, according to the Black Legend, had sought to eradicate Philippine traditions, the Americans took a different approach: they endeavored to restyle customs into the form of a new national culture, one allied to the “modern,” so that Filipinos could embrace a higher level of civilization. In light of the American perception that Filipinos possessed cultural shortcomings (Tinio 2009, 202), environmental transformation was one means among many, given American colonial governmental logic, to help fortify Filipinos’ evolution from the “primitive” to “advanced.” With regard to the urban environment, this process was to be manifest by the construction of new buildings and spaces that used materials, technologies, and planning notions evident in the US (Lico 2008, 259).

In Zamboanga (fig. 7), to offer an example, Parsons’s plan drew upon numerous City Beautiful concepts. Parsons, in the city that he envisaged, recommended the construction of public edifices (within a civic center), a commercial quarter and housing district, a new system of roads, and the laying out of public parks. The city was to focus upon the capitol from which “the principal arteries of communication radiate” (*Far Eastern Review* 1906, 384). The central focus of this city building project was political—the construction of a *res publica* by giving material form to the symbols of state and civil society. The central built environment was divided into blocks 76 meters by 90 meters to be partially built on a 125-meter-wide strip of reclaimed land, with a 60-meter-wide green space to be positioned parallel to the shoreline. This space, a public garden, was to provide a site where people could socialize and promenade. It was also to be filled with trees in order to protect the nearby buildings from the glare of the tropical sun (ibid.).

In redesigned Zamboanga a tree-lined boulevard was to be laid down between the capitol and Fort del Pilar, the seventeenth-century Spanish bastion. By linking visually the two most important structures in

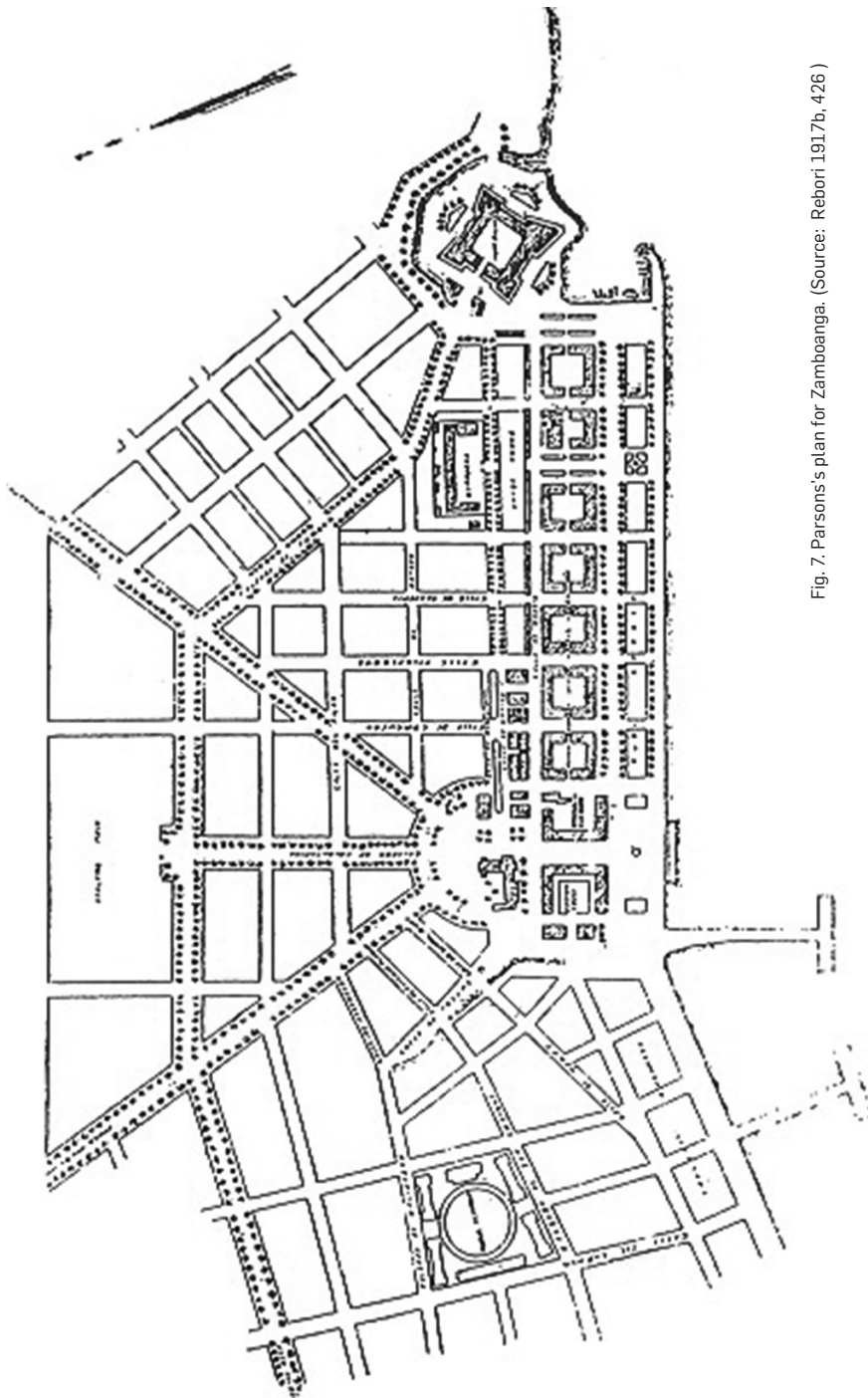


Fig. 7. Parsons's plan for Zamboanga. (Source: Rebori 1917b, 426)

Zamboanga's political history, the boulevard was to also establish from the capitol a grand vista to the fort's grounds, which were to be grassed and planted with trees so that it could be amalgamated into the city's new park system (ibid.). Hence the fort, an icon of Spanish colonial rule, like the Intramuros walls in Manila, was to be relegated to a parade ground for walkers. In visual terms "New Zamboanga" was to be impressive. Whereas nipa huts were once the predominant form of architecture, Parson's scheme proposed new buildings "of a proper construction and character" (ibid.), a severe modern monumentalism to concretize American imperial power, civilization, and enlightenment as aspirational model for Philippine nationhood. Designed in the same aesthetic so as to harmonize with each other, the buildings, tropical foliage of the public gardens, and boulevards were to "give the city an imposing and quite unique appearance" (ibid.) The civic center, as the most important feature in the renewed urban core, was to have its own urban spaces. One space sited between the civic core and the shoreline was to have its center point marked by a statue. The space and the nearby buildings, which offered an unobstructed view of the capitol and surrounding public edifices to passing ships (ibid.), were integral elements in the city's new image.

The implementation of an urban plan in Zamboanga, a settlement in which Muslim Filipinos resided, provided the US with an opportunity to test its capacity to civilize and unify culturally plural subjects (Hawkins 2008, 414). As people who had for more than 300 years rejected Spanish authority, the Moros, with their distinct culture and social structure, offered a unique challenge to the Americans who sought to modernize the territory and population of the whole of "the Philippines." As a matter of course the Americans in Zamboanga promoted schools, an awareness of democratic local politics, and a civic identity to help encourage the Christian colonizers and colonized Muslims to cooperate, in the hope of reducing deep-rooted Christian-Muslim animosities (Majul 1985, 20). Economic policy buoyed this approach.

Given the nature of local culture, one that the Americans saw as "savage" and "backward," it is important to appreciate how the Americans envisaged integrating the Moros into a national society framework and came to terms with this one major point: Moro "backwardness" was not only an upshot of cultural matters but an effect too of ignorance as to the abundant possibilities of modernity (Hawkins 2008, 424). With the Mindanao economy stimulated

by a business district in Zamboanga's renewed environment, and given the nature of American thinking and its positive beliefs about capitalism, the local population would be purged of their primitive character. By substituting "traditional" farming and manufacturing activities with improved agricultural and industrial techniques, methods that would trigger an increase in local people's wealth, the Moros would—it was thought—not only embrace American governance but also the colonial notion of instigating reform for the "public good."¹⁶ Additionally by embracing various matters associated with modernity, just as Filipinos on other islands had done, the Moros would be pulled into the larger Philippine body, that is to say, a politicocultural entity from which they had long been separated. In light of such governmental philosophy it is unsurprising that the economic district in Parsons's plan of Zamboanga was to be found where a Moro village was located, a place where business was already being transacted. Yet to fuel new economic activity a 90-meter-long pier was to be built at the waterfront in proximity to the civic core so that large boats could dock (Cameron 1915, 23). The development of the local economy would allow local people to earn previously unimaginable amounts of money. In this setting the Americans thought that the Protestant, Anglo-American trait of time-work discipline would aid the uplifting and civilizing of the Moros.

As Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000, 47) explained, Western thinking saw capital creation as possessing an ability to unite people; in this conceptual framework, once capitalism encountered a premodern or uncivilized society "a struggle ensues . . . in the course of which capital cancels out or neutralizes the contingent differences between specific histories." In this way, as Hawkins (2008, 424) has revealed, capitalism eradicates archaic and inefficient elements within society, replacing them with a new work ethic, upward mobility, and advancement as part of the commencement of "modernity."

This founding of the modern age in the Philippines has already been noted with regard to the creation of civic centers. Throughout the country such urban features were constructed as part of the colonial government's campaign to build infrastructure that centralized important buildings/institutions and spaces (*Far Eastern Review* 1912, 44). In Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija in Central Luzon, for example, a site of 410 by 400 meters was selected in 1912 to house a capitol and five other public buildings, along with a new public plaza, park, and sports facilities. In Malolos (Bulacan Province,

Luzon) a similar scheme had been implemented by 1912. As reported in summarized form in the *Quarterly Bulletin, Bureau of Public Works* (1914), these two new civic districts were "logical and convenient" (Cameron 1914, 3) and situated away from business districts so that issues of noise and dust could be minimized. As Parsons himself explained, new spaces, buildings, and foliage defined the new Philippine civic center. Buildings, he stressed, had to be dignified in appearance (Parsons cited in Cameron 1914, 3) and had to have open space about them. Such open areas were to comprise of "well-kept lawns with shade trees and blossoming plants" and "ought to set a good example in the way of beautifying the streets and plazas of the municipalities" (*ibid.*).

The concept of surrounding buildings, particularly capitols, with sometimes substantially sized landscaped areas was fundamental in the planning of municipal complexes. By establishing districts of ordered collections of public edifices and green spaces, Parsons was not only facilitating Philippine settlements to take on an urban form different from pre-1898 but through the application of a new urban design system based on that practiced in the US he was also evidently permitting them to be analogous in appearance and plan with other "modern places." Furthermore, by standardizing the design of capitols and municipal offices, in part to maximize resources allotted to infrastructure development (Lico 2008, 262), Parsons would develop cities throughout the Philippines that had spaces, edifices, and statuary of the same or similar form. In other words, built environments following the implementation of the City Beautiful-inspired plan in Manila had synonymous features.

As part of this societal evolution public architecture was constructed not from stone, the key building material of the Spanish colonial age, but from concrete, the quintessential modern-age building material.¹⁷ Significantly too the treatment of concrete was very much in keeping with contemporary fashion: façade design was handled strictly in accord with the classical notion of proportion, and detailing on elevations was to be simple rather than fussy. As an upshot of such an architectural approach, the elevation of public buildings in the Philippines was to present an interplay of the solid (e.g., wall structure) with the void (e.g., window openings and recessed entrances), an architectural composition deemed by the early 1900s in places such as America and Britain (Morley 2008, 14) as pertinent to the enhancement of civic art. As A. N. Rebori (1917b,

434) noted, “the buildings erected by our Government will stand as worthy examples, setting a high standard from which in the coming years native architects can derive abundant inspiration.”

Conclusion

The period from 1898 to 1916 is arguably the most significant in the history of urban design in the Philippines. During this epoch Daniel Burnham composed the first public reports ever dedicated to the planning of Philippine settlements.

This article has emphasized how the modernization of Philippine society after 1898 transpired as a result of the importation of American culture and politics into East Asia. In shifting the nature of life away from what it had been before 1898, early American colonial governance was highly interventionist in character. By the early 1900s it had yielded a revolution in the design and planning of Philippine cities. Thanks to the rise of City Beautiful urbanism in North America in the 1890s, the Philippine Commission was able to espouse a design archetype that it believed could enhance the physical and social condition of society. Because it was believed to elevate public loyalty to the Americans—“Patriotism is openly fostered by art, ceremony, ideal, and symbol” (ibid., 435)—the refashioning of urban space as part of the US attempt to “uplift” Filipinos was ultimately so considerable that, to quote Thomas Hines (1972, 50), the City Beautiful movement attained “its greatest architectural success, not on American, but on foreign colonial soil.”

This article has investigated and explained the contribution of urban design upon the invention and assembly of “Filipino national culture” during the early period of American colonial rule in the Philippines. However, more research is required to comprehensively explicate American urban forms in the country and the nation-making process. Moreover the role of Philippine architects within colonial bureaucracy needs to be more fully explored as well. Presently research on both topics is somewhat lacking. In the case of Filipino designers their activities within the institutional framework of the Bureau of Public Works, a facet of the Philippine Commission, enabled them to receive City Beautiful urban design experience directly. With many Filipino architects also being recipients of the Pensionado Program,¹⁸ a scholarship that offered higher-level education in the US and upon their return to Asia a position within the colonial civil service (Sutherland 1953), these individuals were able to progress from the status of *maestros de obras*

(master builders) into bona fide modern architects. As Alfredo Roces (1978, 2512) observed, such advancement was not only about increased technical competence but social acceptance as well. Significantly, too, after Parson’s departure from the Philippines (in 1914) and the further Filipinization of the colonial government (post-1916), the US-educated Filipinos such as Juan Arellano and Antonio Toledo were those who steered the course of modern Philippine urbanism through holding the renowned Consultant Architect position within the Bureau of Public Works. Their appropriation of neoclassical urbanism, imported into the Philippines by Daniel Burnham and William E. Parsons, was not only monumental in terms of design projects that they created but crucially was about forging cityscapes where people in the run-up to independence “came to belong and felt a sense of country with all the nuances of patriotism” (Lico 2008, 315).

The experiments in civic republic modernist planning of the City Beautiful Movement in the colonies were not a one-way cultural traffic because in fact it flowed back to the metropolitan centers. Following his plans for Manila and Baguio, for example, Daniel Burnham composed the grand plans for San Francisco—a scheme delivered to City Hall a day prior to the devastating 18 April 1906 earthquake there—and Chicago (in 1909). With their geometrically arranged civic centers, tree-lined boulevards, and landscaped spaces, these two city projects bore the imprint of Burnham’s work in the Philippine capital and summer capital city. However this similarity was more than superficial. With their highly ordered urban forms, all four plans demonstrated how City Beautiful urbanism was founded upon the establishing of a spatial order that was subordinated to a dignified whole, a totality that was to center itself literally and symbolically upon the most important public edifice in each settlement, i.e., the capitol or city hall. All four plans also emphasized how spatial organization, aesthetics, environmental behaviorism, and civic politics were entwined within modern American grand urban designing.

Thus the image of the modern city was defined by the spatial regulation and grand vistas established by the urban planner, the keystone in the modern environmental arch, so to speak, being a vertical element: the dome. Indicative of the presence of modern civilization, the marrying of urban design with societal upgrading basically enabled urban planners, and so their plans, to assume a heroic status. As a method to activate public betterment, Burnham’s dictum, “make no little plans, they have no magic to stir men’s

blood,” was more than mere rhetoric: it was a call by a planner to other designers to engage in public service. In this milieu, if those in positions of authority in the US or in the Philippines desired to forge an “uplifted” world (and all it entailed), then the urban plan was, really, a pathway to getting there.

Notes

- 1 Daniel Burnham (1846–1912), by the turn of the twentieth century, was America’s most well-known architect, and as a planner responsible for the grandest and most influential urban design schemes in the US. Born in New York State Burnham’s career took him to various cities in the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Midwest regions of the US. Burnham’s urban plans redefined the nature of American urbanism from the 1890s, and gained him both national and international acclaim. By the early 1900s Burnham’s reputation was global. His 1909 plan for Chicago is considered the peak of his vocational projects, and is even today considered one of the high points in the history of American urban planning.
- 2 The McMillan Plan, formally titled the *Report of the Senate Park Commission, The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia*, was named after Senator James McMillan (of Michigan), who as chair of the Senate Park Commission wrote the report that included the plan for Washington, DC, by Daniel Burnham, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., Charles McKim, and Augustus Saint-Gaudins. McMillan’s report, 171 pages in length, dedicated 71 pages to the design/renewal of the Mall, which was to act as the monumental core of the US capital city. To be established as part of the redevelopment of the city was a park system, one that was based on the park system in Boston (by Olmsted Jr.). Along with Burnham’s plan for Chicago in 1909 the McMillan Plan is considered a high point in the American City Beautiful movement.
- 3 The Spanish language at that time was spoken but its use was limited to the educated/higher social classes who circa 1900 comprised less than 10 percent of the total population.
- 4 The emergence of Philippine nationalism led in 1896 to insurrection in Manila, and subsequently the revolt against Spanish colonial rule spread to the provinces too. By 1899, notwithstanding American colonization of the Philippines in 1898, under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo, a Republic of the Philippines was declared. However the Americans rejected this proclamation of a republic and used military force to suppress opposition to their rule as part of their pacification of the Philippine Archipelago. The armed conflict between Filipinos and Americans, which lasted from 1899 to 1902, is known as the Philippine–American War.
- 5 Daniel Burnham and Peirce Anderson visited the Philippines between 7 Dec. 1904 and 16 Jan. 1905. Burnham left the Philippines in early 1905. Because he was to stay in the Philippines only for a short period of time and that the scheme would take many years to implement given the costs of each scheme, the large spatial territories covered by each scheme, and in relation to Manila, issues such as land rights, he understood that his plans for Manila and Baguio would have to be implemented by another designer. As such Burnham played a role in selecting the first Consultant Architect, William E. Parsons, who with his vocational training and experience would appreciate the form of the plans as originally composed by Burnham. With the remit of planners

typically being to devise and then supervise the implementation of a scheme, in this case for the plans of Manila and Baguio to be implemented along the lines intended by Burnham, it was essential that someone sympathetic to Burnham’s planning ideas and practices was selected. Parsons was that individual.

- 6 The Law of the Indies relates to a set of more than 140 ordinances issued by King Philip II of Spain with regard to the laying out of urban communities within the Spanish Empire. Regulating the form of plots, streets, and urban spaces, the Law of the Indies in effect ensured that all settlements in the Spanish Empire were developed along the same lines, e.g., streets being arranged about a central space (known as the *plaza mayor*, and lined on one side by a church) in a grid pattern. Since from the 1570s city planning followed city founding, the grid plan appeared as the most characteristic imprint of Spanish civilization in the New World.
- 7 The development of the local road system was to aid the circulation of people and goods about the city. Alongside the renewal of Manila’s *estero* or river channels, the port, and wharfs on the Pasig River, new macadam roads were to enable people to move much more quickly between different city districts. The new road system encouraged business activity and therefore created wealth for the local population, a process the Americans called “highway economics.” See West 1916, 34.
- 8 By the end of the nineteenth century the Americans as well as large numbers of the *ilustrados* perceived Spanish culture and politics as belonging to the premodern age. To aid people, particularly local elites, to turn away from Spanish customs the Americans promoted the intellectual and revolutionary José Rizal as a martyr. Notably though, the process of Rizal’s veneration began prior to 1898. Rizal was the central figure in the imagining and mobilizing of Philippine nationalism (in the mid to late 1890s) against the autocratic, clerical colonial government in Manila, and the imperial government in Madrid. Executed by the Spanish colonial authorities in December 1896, Rizal during the American colonial era became known as the “father of the Filipinos.” For further information on the making of Rizal as a national hero, see Anderson 1983 and Corpuz 2006.
- 9 In 1901, on the orders of US Secretary of War Elihu Root, land between Pasay and Taguig was commandeered (from Capitan Juan Gonzales) and developed into a military reservation. Following Philippine independence in July 1946 the area was renamed Fort Bonifacio and turned into the national headquarters of the Philippine Army.
- 10 Act 243 (US Philippine Commission 1901) granted the right to use public land in Central Manila for the purpose of commemorating José Rizal. The act stated that any memorial must include a statue of Rizal.
- 11 Fort San Diego, as part of Fort Santiago, the principal bastion in Manila, in the years after 1898 was the facility that the Americans used as their military headquarters. For public health reasons, and notably too to aid the removal of vestiges of Spanish colonialism, the moat surrounding the Intramuros was drained and filled in with earth dredged from the harbor and Pasig River as part of the 1905 city plan by Daniel Burnham.
- 12 “Two Peoples Before Rizal” (English translation), published on 31 Dec. 1912 in *El Ideal*, stated that the mausoleum fronting Manila Bay was “a monument to the memory of the Apostle of Filipino liberties and the seal and apotheosis of the unbreakable friendship and alliance of two peoples whom Destiny has joined.”

- 13 So that transportation could be improved between central and north Luzon a major new roadway, Benguet Road, was constructed starting 1901 so as to connect the northern railhead near Dagupan (Pangasinan province) to Baguio. In broad terms the construction of roads was elemental to the American strategy of disseminating modern civilization *and* stimulating provincial economic development: "roads make it possible for the produce of the country to reach the markets of the world" (Forbes 1928, 384).
- 14 The American and Filipino media during the early 1900s remarked upon Baguio's beauty. However the Filipino press commonly saw the site's beauty as benefitting only summer vacationists from Manila. *El Ideal* (1911a), for example in the article "Baguio the Sublime," described the cost of making the city as reviving the "golden history of the Louises of France." In the article "The Irony of Baguio" *El Ideal* (1911b) described the cost of building the city as a burden on the nation. Other media outlets shared a similar viewpoint, e.g., *Taliba* (1912), "A Praiseworthy Project," and *La Vanguardia* (1911a), "Benguet Road," in which Baguio was described as a "malediction resting on the country."
- 15 William E. Parsons was an architect-urban designer who arrived in the Philippines at the peak of the City Beautiful movement. Trained at Yale University and the École des Beaux Arts (in Paris), and with work experience in New York City, Parsons was selected by Burnham to enact the 1905 city plans for Manila and Baguio. Parsons designed notable edifices such as the Manila Hotel, Army and Navy Club, and Elks Club. Parsons returned to the US in 1914, but was invited back to the Philippines in the late 1930s, when plans for Quezon City were being drawn. Cf. Dakudao 1994.
- 16 With reference to US imperialism Americans sought to transform cities in Cuba so as to elevate local production and consumption. Significantly in Cuba the transformation of the architectural landscape transpired differently from that in the Philippines: firstly, the Americans sought to instigate disease control or improved sanitation (they did so in the Philippines); secondly, from 1902, American architectural practices moved to Cuba with the implementation of important but uncoordinated plans; thirdly, by the mid-1920s, a more coordinated evolution of planning practice occurred.
- 17 The invention of technologies related to high-rise construction, such as steel frames, plate glass, and elevators, was from Chicago in the 1880s and 1890s. With the emergence of department stores in Manila from 1898, e.g., in Escolta, the city became an early adopter of contemporary American architectural innovations.
- 18 The Pensionado scheme was introduced in August 1903 after the passage of Act 854. It permitted the American colonial state to sponsor Filipinos to receive education and cultural experience in the US.

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