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Hegemonic Tool? Nationalism in Philippine History Textbooks, 1900–2000

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Hegemonic Tool? Nationalism in Philippine History Textbooks, 1900–2000

This study analyzes fifteen history textbooks published from 1905 to 2000 to identify patterns of nationalist discourses relating to: (1) membership in the nation; (2) origins of the people; (3) national self-image; and (4) hero and heroism as exemplified by José Rizal. It finds that, across time and thematically within a given period, the patterns of discourses are generally incoherent, which indicate that the control over official history knowledge production has been less than hegemonic. Apart from weak policy implementation, this study suggests that textbooks embody a plurality of competing social forces and reflect the political dynamics of an era.

KEYWORDS: NATIONALISM · STATE · HISTORY TEXTBOOKS · PHILIPPINES · KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Modern states formulate and implement programmatic nation-building projects (Deutsch and Foltz 2010), in which school systems act as the main mechanism for knowledge transfer as well as for promoting values deemed favorable for creating a cohesive nation (Green 1997). Textbooks play a central role in this process, particularly those used in teaching history, civics, and moral education (Zajda 2015; Zajda et al. 2009). As Philip Altbach (1991, 256) has observed, “Textbooks are without question an element in the struggle for cultural and educational independence for many countries, both in the Third World and in smaller industrialized nations.” Despite the availability of an expanding array of instructional materials, studies indicate that textbooks remain crucial, particularly in less developed countries. In earlier decades, this point was even truer (Baldwin and Baldwin 1992; Sadker et al. 2009).

Given the centrality of textbooks in daily classroom operation, they occupy a focal point in the analysis of the politics of schooling and the democratization of knowledge production. The existence of a specialized, well-established research infrastructure for textbook analysis—such as the Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) and the UNESCO International Textbook Research Network—and the several international declarations or conventions that refer directly or indirectly to textbooks attests to its importance (Pingel 2010). Seen as the most accessible and perhaps the clearest formulation of what Michael Apple (1993) has called “official knowledge” taught in schools and propagated in the rest of society, history and social studies textbooks are a major arena in the culture and history “wars” in countries such as the US, the UK, Germany, Japan, and Australia (Berghahn and Schissler 1987; Clark 2008; Nash et al. 1997; Nozaki and Selden 2009).

In the Philippines until recently there had been no comparable culture or history “wars,” both in scale and intensity, in which debates about textbooks figured prominently.¹ Against the backdrop of the Cold War in the 1970s and 1980s, however, sharp ideological differences set the frame for pointed critiques of the Philippine educational system in general and of textbooks in particular for their being allegedly neocolonial, elitist, and “un-nationalistic.” Renato Constantino’s essay “Miseducation of the Filipinos” and Leticia Constantino’s “World Bank Textbooks: Scenario for Deception” (Constantino and Constantino 1982) constituted forceful articulations of this view. Despite being several decades old, their argument remains widely upheld among liberal and left-leaning intellectuals in the country.

Luisa C. Doronila’s (1989) book, *The Limits of Educational Change: National Identity Formation in a Philippine Public Elementary School*, provides empirical substance to the big claims that the Constantinos put forward. A systematic and thorough study of educational politics, Doronila’s book demonstrates the discontinuity between the official policy of promoting nationalism and the low level of nationalism among Filipino elementary school children; it identifies the procolonial or unnationalistic contents of textbooks as a major culprit. The longer the pupils stay in school, the study shows, the more they exhibit a lack of nationalism. It is relevant to note that the textbooks Doronila analyzed were products of the project funded by the World Bank, an institution that one “can hardly expect to be interested in helping Filipinos acquire education relevant to their own needs,” as Letizia Constantino (1982, 21) wryly observed.

In a number of articles and a book that analyzes textbooks in history, civics, and moral education, Niels Mulder (1990, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2000) builds upon and supplements the line of analysis initiated by the Constantino tandem and Doronila. His examination of textbooks, along with commentaries in newspapers, extrapolates and explains key features of the public sphere and the national self-image. Interestingly, for instance, he highlights “self-flagellation” or “Philippine-bashing” as a common feature of discourses in the public arena, and he looks into parallel tendencies in the textbooks he analyzes (Mulder 1997, 50, 53–60). Like the Constantinos and Doronila, Mulder views textbooks as shaped by dominant forces in society. In contrast to their approaches, however, he takes textbooks as social texts that reflect political dynamics in the Philippines and thus are useful to illustrate and critique the features of such political dynamics. As for the Constantinos and Doronila, textbooks do not merely reflect power relations in society; but are also instruments of control, which must be revised to conform to the critics’ preferred direction of change.

Approaches to Textbook Analysis

As Peter Weinbrenner (1992, 21–22) has observed, a major challenge in textbook analysis is that “there is none yet universally recognized ‘theory of the textbook.’” Despite efforts to advance textbook analysis, his observation seems to remain largely valid, given the persistent emphasis on the practical or procedural aspects of evaluating and analyzing textbooks (Pingel 2010). The absence of such theory results in incongruent views on the nature of the textbook, particularly its place in the interplay of school, society,

and politics. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify several approaches to textbook analysis.

A branch of critical pedagogy sees textbooks as instruments of hegemonic control perpetrated by dominant elites who seek to preserve their privileged status in society. It may be achieved through the use of the elite-dominated state apparatus or through the more subtle elitist influences on cultural products and various media, such as textbooks (Apple 1986, 1995). Unlike many other types of books, school textbooks are usually regulated. They normally follow certain guidelines and undergo monitoring or screening by a committee tasked by the government to oversee whether they conform to the guidelines (Doronila 1989, 2). The government's involvement in setting the guidelines and approving or disapproving textbooks fuels suspicion of state control over knowledge production and transmission (Apple 1979, 1993, 1995; Young 1971).

Doronila's and the Constantinos' approach noted above is in line with the tradition of critical pedagogy promoted by the likes of Paulo Freire (1970), Michael Apple (1979), and Henry Giroux (1987). This critical pedagogy approach has a fairly wide following in the Philippines, particularly among liberal and left-leaning intellectuals.

A second approach treats textbooks as a "consensus document." In this view, textbooks "reflect the concerns, the conventional wisdom, and even the facts of the age that produce them" (FitzGerald 1979, 20). Unlike in the case of other books where authorial specificity is the norm, "authorship" of textbooks can be attributed to a community—curriculum planners, parents, students, publishers, editors, booksellers, teachers—whose various and often conflicting interests are accommodated (ibid.).

A third approach takes textbooks neither as a product of consensus nor as an instrument of hegemonic control. Textbooks are regarded instead as a battleground for competing forces, including economic interests. Carolyn Boyd's (1977) *Historia Patria: Politics, History and National Identity in Spain, 1875–1975*, for example, provides a nuanced treatment of the interplay between society, including the state and elites, on the one hand, and the school system, on the other. By examining history curricula, textbooks, and memoranda from the education ministry covering a hundred years, 1875–1975, she has shown successfully the imperfect correlation between the educational system and sociopolitical and economic forces in society. Boyd (ibid., xvi) finds, for instance, that the curricula reflect contradictory

aims and values, which may indicate "the weight of inertia, tradition and compromise." Rather than a clear mirror of a dominant ideology in society, therefore, schooling is an arena for competing forces.

Mulder's work on textbooks noted earlier represents the fourth approach. He sees textbooks as a mirror or reflection of what is happening in society, particularly the dynamics of political relations. This approach shares with critical pedagogy the assumption that the politically powerful in society shape or influence textbooks (Apple 1986, 81–106). But rather than taking textbooks as instruments of hegemonic control that ought to be reshaped to serve an alternative political end, Mulder's approach allows textbooks to serve as mirror or mine from which critical, evaluative, and analytic insights may be drawn to shed light on a particular subject matter. He aimed at critical examination of the public sphere and national self-images in the Philippines (Mulder 1990, 1994, 1997, 2000).

The fifth and final approach is skeptical of the ideological line of analysis emphasized above and is more predisposed to look for mundane, practical reasons why history textbooks are what they are. In *Lies My Teachers Told Me* James Loewen (1995) argues that the "lies" history teachers tell students may be better explained by the dynamics of textbook production, marketing, and evaluation. He painstakingly examines the role played by publishers, authors, members of textbook boards, teachers, and even parents in creating these problems. He concludes that, contrary to liberal-progressive or promarginalized scholars' suspicion, there is no conspiracy or overarching ideologically driven interests that explain the features or contents of textbooks.

Whether textbooks are indeed a "consensus document," an "instrument of hegemonic control," a "battleground for competing forces," a mirror that reflects sociopolitical dynamics, or simply a random outcome of the textbook production process depends to a great extent on the nature of the distribution of power in a given society. What is noteworthy is that all these views concede that textbooks, especially history textbooks, say more than the facts and the views printed on their pages. They reflect the matrix of forces—dominant, suppressed, or free—that compete for supremacy, or meet and converge for a common purpose, or simply just coexist in a given period of time. In other words, textbooks embody various social processes, rather than merely act as repositories of knowledge.

Scope of the Study and Methodological Limitations

Intrigued as well as inspired by the pioneering works on critical pedagogy in the Philippines, I set out to study textbooks used in Philippine high schools from the early 1900s to 2000 by employing qualitative content analysis. This study seeks to examine longitudinally (across a century) and latitudinally (thematically within a limited time period) the patterns of conception and representation of nationalism in these textbooks. Doing so yields insights on the configuration of power relations that set the parameters for knowledge production, distribution, and consumption in the country. The fundamental assumption is that the level of concentration of political power is inversely proportional to the extent of fluidity or plurality of patterns of portrayal of nationalism in textbooks.

The questions that this study seeks to address are the following: (1) What patterns, if any, of nationalist discourses are discernible in textbooks from 1900 to 2000? (2) Did changes in these patterns occur over time? (3) What do they suggest about the prevailing power relations in the country during this period?

A number of limitations must be noted at the outset. As a study originally carried out in 2001 under a very restricted time and with limited access to sources (Curaming 2001), the primary factor for inclusion of textbooks in this study is availability, not systematic sampling. While most of the decades covered by the study are represented, one or two are not. Representativeness, therefore, is not assumed, and analysis must be understood with this limitation in mind.

This study is limited to history textbooks used mostly at the secondary level. History or civics textbooks written for elementary schools as well as for colleges and universities are excluded. The reason for excluding elementary school texts is that history at those grade levels is usually lumped together with other social science disciplines (geography, sociology, and so on) to form what is known as Social Studies, later known as *Araling Panlipunan*. In this context, Philippine history as an area of study is not as developed as that provided in high school, where a course is devoted to Philippine history.² The reason for excluding college texts is that textbook writing at the collegiate level is far less regulated by the state apparatuses, if at all, than high school textbooks. College texts are thus less valuable as documents in a study like this that examines the state-schooling political interactions.

As a methodological note, this study regards as nationalistic all statements and images that recognize and exalt the existence of a group and an entity called the Filipino nation. By the term “Filipino nation” I do not take to mean a priori the people who now comprise the population of the presently defined state called the Philippines. Attempts by textbook writers to exclude and include certain groups will be underscored. Declarations regarded as nationalistic are those that take pride in the achievements of such an entity, however “achievement” is defined, regardless of whether the standards used or the perspective employed are internalist (that is, local- or Philippine-centered) or internationalist (that is, Euro-American-centric). Finally, also included are those statements that recognize or exalt the positive worth of the Filipino people, favorably evaluating their character, glossing over their “defects,” and highlighting their capabilities both as individuals and as a group. In short, the study considers all statements and patterns expressive of pride and faith in, and respect and sympathy for, the nation as a whole, regardless of methods or modes of expression and regardless of political standpoint.

The need to prevent an ideological trap in conceptualization is the rationale for an open-ended or encompassing conception of what is nationalistic. That is, in the context of the Philippines, perhaps since the 1960s, self-ascribed, vociferous “nationalist historians” have tended to define nationalism as antithetical to colonialism. If one is a nationalist, then he or she has to reject colonialism in all its modes or manifestation. The contested nature of Philippine nationalism, however, demands that analysts avoid privileging a priori one group’s brand of nationalism. Moreover, since this study is longitudinal, covering a relatively long period of a century, the presentist fallacy of taking the conception of nationalism in one era as a yardstick for analyzing expressions in all other eras needs to be avoided. Taken as socially constructed, nationalist discourses may be expected to evolve across time, or competing nationalist discourses may coexist or run parallel to each other in one specific era. A broad conception of nationalism, therefore, allows such fluidity to be explored. It does not mean that such conception is free of preconceived or unconceived biases, but it is hoped that such an approach will be less partial than it may otherwise be.

Due to limited space, only four indicators or aspects of nationalism are examined: (1) membership in the nation; (2) origins of the people; (3) national self-image; and (4) hero and heroism as exemplified by José Rizal.

These four areas are not exhaustive, and a different picture might emerge if other areas of nationalism are explored. Before presenting the content analysis of the textbooks, I clarify the database, the authors, and the broad context of textbook production in the Philippines in the next section.

Texts and Authors, 1905–2000

Fifteen textbooks are covered in this study. Their publication dates range from 1905 to 2000, with at least one text for each decade, except for the 1910s and the 1940s.³ There is one text for the 1900s, one for the 1920s, one for the 1930s, two for the 1950s, two for the 1960s, two for the 1970s, two for the 1980s, three for 1990s, and one for 2000 (see table on pp. 426–27). All these textbooks were fairly widely used. All were allowed to be used in either public or private schools, or in both, as basic text or at least as reference material.⁴

Apart from Zaide (1978), all textbooks in the study follow a chronological type of presentation, with topics arranged in sequence from the prehispanic to the contemporary period. Zaide (*ibid.*) is peculiar in adopting a thematic approach based on specific themes, with the discussion revolving around each theme and cutting across time periods. No reason is given for employing this approach, but one can surmise that it reflected the influence of the movement in social studies and history education in the US that called for a thematic and integrative approach to the teaching of history.

Most of the authors of these textbooks were recognized names in the Philippine academic community, especially those whose texts were published up to 1987. Beyond 1987, the group of authors was dominated by social studies teachers and university professors with specialization in history or social sciences who dabbled in textbook writing.

Excepting David Barrows, all the other authors are Filipinos. Barrows served as the General Superintendent of Public Instruction since 1902 and then as Director of Education up to 1909, when he assumed the presidency of the University of California. He was one of the architects of the public education system the Americans implemented in the Philippines (Clymer 1976).

Leandro Fernandez and Conrado Benitez were among the earliest Filipino academic historians. Both obtained their PhD degrees from the US: Fernandez at Columbia University and Benitez at the University of Chicago. Both likewise occupied important posts in the Department

of History of the University of the Philippines. Benitez, however, moved to the Department of Economics and Sociology in 1917 (Casambre 1993, 36–39).

Eufonio Alip and Gregorio Zaide were homegrown Filipino historians. Both had their academic training at the University of Santo Tomas (UST), but Zaide also studied at the University of the Philippines. Both of them were prolific scholars; among academic historians of their day, they were among those who went beyond the confines of their scholarly setting to influence a great number of people through their widely used textbooks. They dominated the history textbook market in the postwar period. According to Milagros Guerrero (1990), Alip virtually created a textbook industry as most of his volumes were published by his family-owned publishing company Alip and Sons. The popularity of Zaide's and Alip's textbooks has been attributed to their pro-church leanings (Veneracion 1993, 48–49; Evangelista 1996, 80–81).

Sonia Zaide (1999) is Gregorio Zaide's daughter who took over her father's textbook-writing projects upon his death in 1986. Much more than her father, she has espoused a Christian-oriented construction of Philippine history. As will be further discussed below, her approach and interpretations have been blatantly evangelical, exhorting students not only to take pride in Christianity but also to regard Christian-inspired interpretations as incontrovertible historical truth.

Teodoro Agoncillo, like Alip and Zaide, was also a homegrown historian. He was trained at the University of the Philippines. For much of the period from the 1960s up until his death in January 1985, he dominated, along with Renato Constantino, the “radical nationalist stream” in Philippine history. Although he denied it, his approach was tinged with class analysis, as exemplified in his classic work *Revolt of the Masses*. Such an approach clearly separated him from other historians such as Alip and Zaide. However, like Alip and Zaide, Agoncillo wrote high school textbooks that were also widely used, although he was much more prominent for his college texts that up to now, in revised versions, remain the basic texts in many universities throughout the country (Totanes 2010).

Authors of more recent texts such as Eleanor Antonio and Zenaida Reyes are either professors of education or social studies teachers. This cohort of authors is markedly different from those earlier described in that they are not among the “big names” in Philippine history in the league of, say, Zaide and

Textbooks covered in this study

AUTHOR	TITLE	DATE	PUBLISHER	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	NUMBER OF PAGES
Barrows, David	<i>History of the Philippines</i>	1905	American Book Company	New York	332
Benitez, Conrado	<i>History of the Philippines</i>	1926	Ginn and Co.	Boston	472
Fernandez, Leandro	<i>Brief History of the Philippines</i>	1932	Ginn and Co.	Boston	344
Benitez, Conrado	<i>History of the Philippines</i>	1954 (rev. ed)	Ginn and Co.	Boston	522
Zaide, Gregorio	<i>History of the Filipino People</i>	1959	Modern Book Co.	Manila	285
Agoncillo, Teodoro	<i>Philippine History</i>	1962	Inang Wilka	Manila	385
Alip, Eufronio	<i>A Brief History of the Philippines</i>	1963	Alip and Sons	Manila	314
Agoncillo, Teodoro	<i>Introduction to Filipino History</i>	1974	Bookmark	Manila	299
Zaide, Gregorio	<i>The Nation</i>	1978	Social Studies Publications	Parañaque	195

AUTHOR	TITLE	DATE	PUBLISHER	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	NUMBER OF PAGES
Zaide, Gregorio and Sonia Zaide	<i>Philippine History and Government</i>	1987	National Bookstore	Metro Manila	310
DECS	<i>Pagtatag ng Bansang Pilipino</i>	1989	IMC	Quezon City	228
Reyes, Zenaída and Nerissa Tantengco	<i>Daloy ng Kasaysayan at Pamahalaang Pilipino</i>	1997	Dane Publishing	Quezon City	311
Antonio, Eleanor, Evangeline Dallo, Celia Soriano, Ma. Carmelita Samson, and Consuelo Imperial	<i>Pagbabago</i>	1999	Rex Bookstore	Manila	277
Zaide, Sonia	<i>Philippine History and Government</i>	1999	All-Nations Publishing	Quezon City	242
Mateo, Estelita, Ma. Theresa Lazaro, Ruth Fuentes, and Fernando Elesterio	<i>Pilipinas: Noon at Ngayon</i>	2000	Bookman	Quezon City	279

Agoncillo. This shift in the characteristics of authors may be explained partly by referring to a change in textbook policies in the 1980s and 1990s, which is discussed below.

Contexts of Textbook Production

The author of each textbook operated within the parameters defined, sometimes loosely but at other times more strictly, by the state. Since the American period, the appropriate government agency established a committee or board whose function had been to oversee matters related to textbooks. In 1921 the Board of Textbooks was created by law, replacing the series of advisory committees the Director of Public Instruction had formed (Martin 1980, 190–91). From that time till the 1970s, despite occasional changes in specific functions and extent of power, the Board of Textbooks exercised the fundamental role of overseeing textbook approval or selection.

During the American period, when there were few local textbook writers, the board's primary duty was to study and select books from the US that were most appropriate to local conditions and issue approval of their use. Later on, local authors wrote textbooks, sometimes in partnership with an American or two, under the aegis of certain publishers; these works were submitted to the board for evaluation and approval. The procedures did not change much after independence. Curriculum formulators of the Department of Education circulated guidelines to private publishing houses, which then commissioned educators to write textbooks based on those guidelines. These textbook writers then submitted their entries, which competed for selection by the National Board of Textbooks for use in public schools.

An important change happened in 1976 when the Philippine government under Ferdinand Marcos entered into a partnership with the World Bank to implement the Philippine Textbook Project, the single largest publishing project ever undertaken in the Philippines. In 1984 the Textbook Board was abolished to give way to the Instructional Materials Corporation (IMC), the establishment of which constituted a significant change in the hitherto less restrictive environment on textbook evaluation and approval. Under the IMC, textbook production was centralized (Doronila 1989, 119–22). Private publishers' participation was "reduced to the preparation of manuscripts" (Buhain 1998, 82).

In the mid-1990s, the IMC was stripped of its function as the producer of instructional materials, including textbooks. This came in the wake of

the privatization of textbook production through which private publishers would produce textbooks for use in public schools (*ibid.*, 81–82). Apparently lured by the lucrative potential of the textbook business, several publication houses sprouted to meet the demand for textbooks, setting the context for the proliferation of social studies teachers becoming textbook writers.

With the new policy accompanying privatization, public schools could choose from a pool of textbooks approved by the textbook evaluation committee of what was then the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), unlike before when all public schools used the same set of textbooks. However, it did not mean the easing of control. The Philippines in the 1990s and 2000s was identified among those countries with a centralized control of textbook production (Mahmood 2011). Publishers and authors had to meet a set of requirements in order for their textbooks to get approval, the minimum being conformity with the list of specific learning objectives—called Minimum Learning Competencies (MLCs) for the elementary grades and Desired Learning Competencies (DLCs) for high school—that the education department released periodically. In addition, publishers and authors had to conform to the prescribed price and length of the textbook.

We can see from the foregoing discussion that, as in many other countries, textbooks in the Philippines have been produced and distributed within the restrictions defined by the state. We shall see in the next section the extent to which such state-defined parameters were reflected in the patterns of nationalist discourses found in history textbooks.

Membership in the Nation

Nation building involves defining the parameters of membership in the national body. The more inclusive and accommodating such a definition, the less problematic it is deemed for the cause of a nationalist project. Moreover, the attitude exhibited toward minorities indicates existing tensions in the minority–majority relationship, tensions that bespeak of the challenges of establishing the nation.

In the Philippines religion and ethnolinguistic affiliation constitute demarcating lines that define majority–minority relationship. Although many regional linguistic groups exist, the two most numerically dominant being the Cebuano and the Tagalog, the textbooks examined here unanimously emphasize religious division much more than linguistic differences. Thus, the Christian majority is juxtaposed with the non-Christian minorities.

Among the latter, Muslims receive the most extensive coverage, while the people from the Cordillera region follow a distant second. All the rest are hardly mentioned, if at all.

In terms of their regard for Muslims, the early authors, starting from Barrows (1905) well up to Benitez (1954), exhibited a clearly unfavorable attitude. However, this pattern changed as shown in the sharply reduced bias in Benitez's 1954 edition compared with his 1926 edition, as will be shown below. Among the three earliest authors, Fernandez (1932) was the least predisposed to a biased treatment of Muslims. Gregorio Zaide's works, from the 1959 edition up to the most recent (Zaide 1999), generally depicted Muslims in neutral terms, if not also in a respectful or favorable manner. Among the most recent editions, only Sonia Zaide's (1999) still carried at least one unfavorable passage on the Muslims, but even its treatment in general can be characterized as more favorable toward, rather than clearly biased against, Muslims.

The biased assessment or judgment made by early authors may be seen in their use of heavily loaded words to describe Muslims and their activities. Consistently but with varying levels of frequency, Muslims were called "pirates" (Barrows 1905, 146, 153; Fernandez 1932, 180); "enemies" (Benitez 1926, 73); and "fierce sea wolves" (Barrows 1905, 247); they engaged in "Moro piracy" (*ibid.*, 195–96, 228; Fernandez 1932, 143–44, 180) and "piratical incursions" (Benitez 1926, 289); and the period was an "era of Moro piracy" (*ibid.*). Among textbooks published in later years, only Benitez (1954, 50) used a pejorative label, "enemy," to refer to Muslims.

The absence of proper contextualization amplified the impact of the biased phrasing. Without reference to the fact that such Muslim activities were in response, at least partly, to efforts of Spaniards to subdue them, and later to retaliate against natives who became Christians and/or who cooperated with Spaniards, in addition to the broader context of British–Chinese trade relations, it would have been easy for readers to construe these statements as nothing but the senseless, adventurous acts of thieves. Indeed, this dominant image emerged in the accounts of Barrows (1905) and Benitez (1926), which provided clear and relatively lengthy descriptions of "attacks," "depredations," or "customary raids" that looted churches, kidnapped or killed priests, plundered whole towns, and abducted natives (or "Christians," as Zaide [1999] specified) and sold them off to slave markets in Celebes and elsewhere. The whole picture evoked fear, distrust, and hatred of Muslims.

The appeal to emotion was especially heightened when set against the silence in all these textbooks on what Spaniards did when they "sent expeditions" to Muslim areas in Mindanao, concealing details of atrocities that could have presented the Christian–Muslim conflict in a less one-sided and emotional manner. Fernandez (1932) was the earliest textbook that mentioned the religious aspect of the conflict and that it was the Spaniards' early attempts to invade Mindanao that provoked such "piratical" moves by Muslims, a rare admission in textbooks before the 1950s.

Except for Zaide's (1959) allusion to the supposed "war-like" qualities of Muslims, noting the urge to "feel the thrill of battle" as a reason for "Moro raids," in no other text published in later years was there a similarly unfavorable comment. For reasons that cannot be ascertained given the scope of this study, textbooks published since the 1950s considerably toned down, if not eliminated altogether, expressions of anti-Muslim sentiments. Nevertheless, authors from the 1950s onward varied in their attitude toward Muslims, with the spectrum ranging from the still slightly suspicious but largely neutral attitude of Zaide (1999) to the deadpan, fairly level-headed stance of Alip (1963) to the sympathetic treatment by Agoncillo (1962, 1974). From a longitudinal viewpoint, a discernible progression occurred from the unfavorable treatment by Barrows in the 1900s to the less unfavorable one by Benitez in the 1950s. However, beyond the 1950s no steady movement toward sympathetic treatment was noticeable. Agoncillo's sympathetic assessment in the 1962 and 1974 editions was not replicated in textbooks published in the 1980s to 2000. Reyes (1997), for instance, is closer to the dead-pan, level-headed attitude of Alip in 1963 than to Agoncillo's sympathetic stance.

What have all these got to do with nationalist discourse? The anti-Muslim, or conversely pro-Christian, bias characteristic of the first fifty years indicates the religious element in nationalist discourse. It reflects the primacy of the Christian viewpoint in defining its contours. It must be noted that, while the anti-Muslim rhetoric receded since the 1950s, there was no abating in the pro-Christian bias well up to the 1990s as seen in Zaide's (1999) patently evangelical interpretation of Philippine history.

The biased treatment of Muslims and other non-Christian minorities suggests the difficulty authors encountered in coming to terms with people who were different from the Christian majority. Curiously, however, among non-Christian minorities only Muslims received serious, albeit inadequate, attention in textbooks. The people of the Cordilleras, for instance, were

mentioned only in relation to the Banaue Rice Terraces. Other groups were much less fortunate as they figured on the printed page only when there was a need to emphasize their backwardness. They were consigned to the silent pages of history, probably deemed too unimportant to be mentioned at all, in the great majority of these textbooks.

Origins

Another important manifestation of nationalism may be glimpsed from how the origins and culture of people are characterized. There seems to be a directly proportional relationship between the pride one shows in one's national ancestry and character, on the one hand, and the level and type of nationalism one embraces, on the other. On questions of origin of the Filipino people, Barrows (1905) set the pattern, if not also the tone, that authors ranging from Fernandez (1932) to Zaide (1999) followed.⁵ He explained the origin and diversity of the people and languages in the Philippines, as well as the development of early culture, by referring to the migration of different groups: Negritos, Malays, and so on. Each group supposedly brought a set of progressively more advanced cultural influences that formed part of the foundation of contemporary Filipino culture. Barrows's textbook preceded Otley Beyer's migration-waves theory on the peopling of the Philippines, which crystallized in the 1910s, but the basic elements in the theory seemed to have been widely known enough for Barrows to echo broadly similar ideas.⁶ Later authors provided a clearer formulation based on Beyer's studies.

The influence of Beyer's migration-waves theory proved enduring such that even textbooks that came out as late as Antonio et al. (1999) and Mateo et al. (2000) both referred to it despite the fact that since at least the 1960s the theory's validity had been questioned. F. Landa Jocano (1965, 1975), for instance, debunked the migration-waves theory, among other conventions in Philippine prehistory, by pointing to its inadequate empirical grounding, to problems with interpretation, as well as to their disturbing implications. The implications included the comparatively lesser evaluative weight the theory accorded to Filipino culture vis-à-vis that of Indonesians and Malays, the latter being the supposed direct progenitor of the Filipino people and their culture. Jocano argued that the similar ecological environment in the region made it more sensible to talk about a common base-culture from which the cultures of Malays, Indonesians, and Filipinos had evolved. He likewise noted that nation-states such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia

were all artificial creations of colonialism, making it pointless to talk about very early cultures in distinct terms such as Indonesian or Malay cultures as the supposed origins of Filipino culture. In Jocano's formulation, what was known as Filipino culture sat on equal terms with that of Indonesia and Malaysia, having evolved parallel with, not derived from, them.

Among textbooks included in this study, only DECS (1989) captured the essence and importance of Jocano's formulation. All others either completely ignored it (e.g., Agoncillo 1974; Antonio et al. 1999; Reyes and Tantengco 1997) or mentioned it in passing, thus missing its full import (e.g., Mateo et al. 2000) or, worse, distorting it (Zaide 1999). Given the time lag between the dissemination of a new scholarly finding and its inclusion in textbooks, books published in the 1970s (Agoncillo 1974; Zaide 1978) and earlier—and to stretch leniency to the fullest, those from the early 1980s—may be reasonably excused for missing Jocano's critique. However, a similar excuse would not apply to textbooks published later than DECS (1989), such as Reyes and Tantengco (1997), Zaide (1999), Antonio et al. (1999), and Mateo et al (2000). This oversight reflects the authors' lack of academic expertise.

In the case of Zaide (1999), the author's religious bias is very evident. Referring to the four explanations she mentioned about the origin of people and culture in the Philippines—evolutionary, wave migration, mythical, and creationist—she declared: “But because we are Christians, we believe that the story of God's creation of man, as described in the Holy Bible, is the real truth. Any other explanation about how early man came into being is only product of human theory and imagination, and it cannot be the truth” (ibid., 30). The page that followed this statement presented in tabular form the supposed ancestral origin of Filipinos, which she traced back to God through Rodanim, Japheth, Noah, Enoch, Seth, and finally Adam and Eve (ibid., 31).⁷ One might dismiss Sonia Zaide's evangelical zeal and hagiographic tendencies as devoid of relevance to Filipino nationalism, but she configured her brand of nationalism with Christian faith as nationalism's defining element. In her view, Christianity is an inherent good and Filipinos are fortunate and ought to be proud of being Christians.

National Self-Image

Given that almost all the authors seemed comfortable being consigned to the framework provided by Beyer's migration-wave theory, which put Filipinos

in a lower position vis-à-vis Malays and Indonesians, one might think that the overall national self-image presented in textbooks was something Filipino students could not be proud of. But it was not the case. The textbook writers adopted various compensatory methods. Indeed, they succeeded because the lowly position of Filipinos in terms of origins could hardly be noticed, overshadowed by the barrage of exhortatory pronouncements about the worth of the Filipino people.

One method that authors such as Barrows (1905), Benitez (1926), Fernandez (1932), and Zaide (1959) adopted was to cite the works of early European and American authors that contained positive evaluations, sometimes even fulsome praises, for Filipinos and their culture—even though much of the rest of their accounts were in fact biased against the natives. Selected passages painted images of Filipinos as, among others, industrious, hygienic, courteous, highly literate, honest, and enterprising. Barrows (1905, 91), for instance, noted that William von Humboldt “considered the Tagalog to be the richest and most perfect of all the languages of the Malayo-Polynesian family.”

Another approach was to highlight the importance of the Malay world (Indonesia and Malaysia) by pointing to the existence of “empires” such as Srivijaya and Majapahit and to situate the Philippines within that world. Most textbook authors staked the claim that the Philippines was once a part of those “glorious” empires.⁸ The peripheral position of the Philippines in such “empires,” as well as ideas that raised doubts about it, were ignored in order to highlight that such “membership” afforded the Philippines a place in the “civilized” world. Moreover, the Malays as a group were given all the glowing praises such as “the first navigators, discoverers, colonizers and conquerors of the Pacific world” (Zaide and Zaide 1987, 34) and all other positive attributes of being civilized, technologically advanced, cultured, and possessing a long history. In cases when Malays did not have these positive attributes, a sharp distinction was made, as what Barrows (1905, 32–35) did in differentiating the “wild Malayan tribes,” who supposedly came to the Philippines earlier, from the “civilized Malayan people,” who allegedly came later and became the ancestors of present-day Filipinos.⁹ Ostensibly, it was meant to drive home the point about the Filipinos’ noble ancestry that they could be proud of.

Still another way was to emphasize the early trading and cultural relations of the Philippines with Chinese, Indians, Arabs, Japanese, and others in

the region. These interactions supposedly facilitated the transmission of “civilizing” influences. They also indicated the natives’ high level of ingenuity and capacity to produce goods desired by foreigners. In fact, in varying degrees, textbooks exhibited a favorable attitude toward the role of foreign influences on the development of Filipino culture.

The case of Zaide and Zaide (1987) is instructive of the tensions between the “native” and the “foreign” in nationalist discourses. Their textbook juxtaposed Asian civilizations, such as that of China and India, with Western civilization and claimed that these civilizations were, at least in some respects, superior to that of the West. The text then took pride in the influences of these “great” Asian civilizations on Filipino culture (*ibid.*, 51). Although this approach did take on the relationship of Filipino culture vis-à-vis its “Western” counterpart, it ignored the comparative weight of Filipino culture in relation to these “great” Asian cultures. Tacitly it admitted that native culture was not as developed as other Asian cultures. The book stated, for example, that “China improved the culinary art and diet of early Filipinos” and that the contributions of Asian neighbors included cultural artifacts such as dances, food, and other customs (*ibid.*, 53).

Devoid of any hint of how indigenous societies might have modified or localized foreign influences to suit their own culture, the textbook gave an overriding emphasis on natives’ passive role as recipient of foreign influences. Zaide and Zaide (*ibid.*) offered the clearest formulation of this tendency among natives to be passive, which could be applied generally to other textbooks in this study. A notable exception was Agoncillo’s (1974, 81–82) text that claimed that the blending of native and foreign cultural elements resulted in something distinctly Filipino. Even Agoncillo, however, did not assert active appropriation by indigenous people.

Even achievements that were supposedly for Filipinos to savor and be proud of, such as the performances of the world renowned (at least at that time) Bayanihan Dance Troupe, Zaide and Zaide (1987, 55) brimmed with pride that some of the dances they performed were of Arabic origin. No mention was made that the fame of the dance troupe rested primarily on how well they danced native dances. Whatever intention there was to relay this message was overshadowed by the claim that this dance troupe could perform foreign dances very well. Critics (e.g., Salazar 2000) believed such a pronouncement indicated the tendency to prioritize foreign or international standards in measuring one’s performance, which explicitly admitted the

innate superiority of the foreign culture and correspondingly the weaknesses of indigenous cultures.

Most of the textbook authors considered here did not share the critics' interpretation noted above. Not only did the textbook writers see foreign influences as enriching elements in the development of Filipino culture, but they also took the favorable attitude toward these foreign influences as indicative of the Filipinos' innate ability to embrace and satisfy foreign-defined standards. Some, such as Zaide and Zaide (1987, 51–53), even went to the extent of being explicitly celebratory, claiming that the blending of so many foreign influences made Filipinos and their culture unique. What could be seen as a negative trait from one nationalist vantage point was given a twist and presented as advantageous from another nationalist point of view.

The favorable attitude toward foreign influences, including American and Spanish, was pervasive in these textbooks such that even Agoncillo, who arguably was the “most nationalistic” among these authors, was hardly an exception. In his 1974 book, he credited the Americans for “exploiting” the Philippines not just for themselves but for the Filipinos' benefit as well (Agoncillo 1974, 223). In his evaluation of American legacies, he devoted seven long pages, only one of which was allotted to the negative effect while the rest were for the positive (*ibid.*, 223–29).

Excepting Barrows and Fernandez, all other authors agreed that Filipino civilization already existed even before the Spaniards arrived. For Barrows (1905, 14) Philippine history became a part of the history of nations only when the widening “light” of European influence began to touch it about 400 years ago. This view might explain why Barrows paid scant attention to the prehispanic period. In his formulation, the Philippines before the coming of Spaniards was one of those “barbarous” societies characterized by incessant warfare and the exploitation of the weak. Fernandez (1932, 1–13), for his part, did not say that it was barbaric as Barrows did, but he was silent about the proposition that prehispanic culture in the Philippines was civilized. However, starting from its first edition in 1926, Benitez (1954) categorically stated that there was an existing prehispanic civilization; since then all other authors stated that the prehispanic Philippines was civilized, not barbaric.

It would be instructive to see how the authors conceptualized the idea of being civilized. The absence of big, ancient polities like Angkor, Champa,

and Pagan or grandiose monuments such as Borobudur or Angkor Wat in the prehispanic Philippines did not dissuade these authors from claiming that there was already an existing civilization before the Spanish conquest. Despite their propensity to regard the Western-sanctioned (if not Western-defined) standard as *the* standard, they disregarded in certain respects the Western notion of civilization, especially the ideas that focused on city-life, with massive buildings and structures, as found in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa in South Asia or Anyang in China.

However, the idea of material progress was not altogether rejected as seen in the authors' high regard for the advances the natives made in boat building, weaponry, textiles, metallurgy, and so on (e.g., Benitez 1926, 82). But the authors had a tendency to be selective in what they highlighted. To them, being civilized was indicated by the primacy of order in society, which was seen as an outcome of a “system” that was manifested, for instance, in the existence of laws.¹⁰ It also meant having a religion, a set of customs, or in other words, a way of life, never mind if such way of life was so much simpler than that in the Indianized states in neighboring Cambodia or Indonesia. It appeared that in their formulation civilization was almost akin to culture, a way of life in the anthropological sense. The emphasis was on harmony and morality, and occasionally on modest economic or technological gains. Thus authors starting from Benitez (1926) to Mateo et al. (2000), who believed that the prehispanic Philippines was civilized, appropriated the concept of civilization by deemphasizing the material aspect traditionally associated with civilization and capitalizing instead on the moral and social order for which they had evidence.

To sum up, unlike other aspects of nationalism considered in this study, a higher level of unanimity among authors, both from longitudinal and latitudinal viewpoints, is discernible in the aspects of origin and self-image. In terms of origin, the image that prevailed was of a Filipino nation whose people and culture were products of migrations of groups of people such as Indonesians and Malays. Authors did not seem to find problems with being influenced or shaped by foreigners, which was even seen as a blessing. Likewise, for virtually all the authors, the early Filipinos' lack of material and technological achievements did not hinder the claim of a civilized status, which the authors ascribed to their supposedly moral, orderly, and harmonious way of life.

Heroes and Heroism: The Case of Rizal

With heroic acts occurring often in the context of nationalist struggles, heroes and heroism are closely tied to nationalism. One area, therefore, where we can see tensions in the conceptualization of nationalism is in the definition or treatment of heroes and in the conceptualization of heroism. Arguably, it is one of the most contentious aspects of Philippine nationalism, as shown in the intense debates over Rizal versus Andrés Bonifacio, with many Filipino intellectuals, such as Renato Constantino (1969), being cynical about Rizal. While the pantheon of Filipino heroes is characteristically dominated by those who contributed to the anticolonial struggle, there is less agreement on the hierarchy of heroes based on the comparative worth of persons or their contributions. In many instances, observers express ambivalence toward certain figures or acts; disputes on whether they should be considered heroes and heroic often arise. Several Filipino “heroes” deserve scrutiny, but due to space constraints I focus here on Rizal, who is regarded widely as the national hero, and even given divine attributes by certain groups.

Barrows (1905, 281, 285) regarded Rizal as the most famous among the young Filipino patriots, crediting Rizal’s death for “inflaming” the ongoing “insurrection.” Barrows did not go beyond these descriptions, and his treatment of Rizal was that of a disinterested observer, level-headed and dry. In stark contrast was the depiction by Benitez (1926, 351–52), who, by quoting James LeRoy extensively, did not hide his appreciation for Rizal’s genius. Benitez described Rizal as a “great leader,” “brilliant,” and the “greatest man” of the “Malay race.” However, like Barrows, Benitez did not go on to describe Rizal categorically as a hero. Relying again on LeRoy, Benitez seemed to confine Rizal’s contribution by emphasizing that “as poet and patriot combined, [Rizal] fired the enthusiasm of his people and became their idol” (ibid., 352; quoted from LeRoy 1914, 67). One could wonder about his use of the term idol. Fernandez’s (1932, 237) portrayal of Rizal did not differ much from that of Benitez, describing Rizal as the “most noted and the best beloved by Filipinos and one that time has proved to be by far the wisest.” He also described Rizal as “not a traitor to Spain” but a “martyr to the cause of freedom” (ibid.).

Benitez’s 1954 text did not depart from the tenor of its earlier edition. It would take Zaide (1959) to break the trend set by this earlier group of authors. Aside from fulsome praises for the qualities of Rizal being

the “greatest genius ever produced by the Malay race,” Zaide (ibid., 162) stated unequivocally that Rizal was the “greatest national hero of the Philippines.” However, Gregorio Zaide’s (1978) own work and the edition with his daughter (Zaide and Zaide 1987) showed a fundamental change, with Zaide’s coverage of Rizal becoming measly, almost negligible. Rizal was lumped together with the rest of the Propagandists and the entire discussion took barely a page. It was an approach no other author in this study had done, except Reyes and Tantengco (1997). Gone were the generous praises for Rizal that characterized Zaide’s 1959 edition. In the 1999 edition, Sonia Zaide (1999, 112) provided a separate description of Rizal, but the only positive evaluative comment was that he was a “many splendored genius” — indicating a sharp decline in appreciation for Rizal’s heroism.

Alip (1963, 165) followed Zaide’s (1959) earlier lead when he described Rizal as “the greatest and most illustrious Filipino patriot and hero.” For his part, Agoncillo treated Rizal with disinterest. Compared with his treatment of other propagandists such as Marcelo del Pilar and Graciano Lopez Jaena, Agoncillo obviously did not give Rizal primacy of importance. The most exhortatory description Agoncillo (1962; 1974) could give Rizal was that he was the “keenest political analyst” and the “most cultured” among the propagandists, and that he was the “most brilliant of the Filipinos during his time.” Such treatment approximated closely that of Barrows (1905) rather than Benitez’s (1926).

The treatment of Rizal in DECS (1989) and Reyes and Tantengco (1997) was equally unremarkable. It merely offered descriptive, basic facts about Rizal. The only praise, if it may be considered as such, conceded to Rizal was that Retana, Rizal’s and other Filipinos’ once bitterest tormentor, took a dramatic turnaround and became one of Rizal’s ardent admirers (DECS 1989, 70). No mention about heroism was made in both of these texts.

Among the authors covered in this study, only Zaide and Alip categorically considered Rizal a hero. All the rest, while cognizant to varying degrees of Rizal’s qualities and his role in the nationalist movement, seemed reluctant to call him a hero. Thus, from a longitudinal viewpoint, the dominant image of Rizal through time is that of a nonhero. This image existed side-by-side with the hero image promoted by Zaide and Alip that ran through the 1950s till the late 1990s. However, Zaide’s (1978; Zaide and Zaide 1987) later editions, while retaining the hero epithet for Rizal, appeared so much less interested in Rizal. Zaide’s case illustrated the ambivalent attitude toward Rizal that has been fairly common among segments of the Filipino intelligentsia.

Moreover, it should also not be lost that the attitudes of authors who favored the nonhero image of Rizal varied. Some appeared disinterested in Rizal, such as Barrows (1905), DECS (1989), Reyes and Tantengco (1997), and Agoncillo (1962, 1974), while others were appreciative of him, such as Benitez (1926, 1954) and Fernandez (1932). This observation emphasizes the lack of unanimity even among this group that denied Rizal the epithet of hero. From the latitudinal standpoint, there was also no clearly dominant image. In all time frames the hero/nonhero images as well as the appreciative/disinterested portrayals coexisted.

This ambivalent, at times insipid and unfavorable, depiction of Rizal in school textbooks may appear surprising. Common knowledge has it that the Americans had “sponsored” and promoted Rizal as the national hero (Constantino 1969), but textbooks published in the American period proved clearly hesitant to even call him a hero. Since the mid-1950s, the Rizal Law was passed with the avowed aim of promoting Rizal and his ideas, which clearly suggested the official intent to endorse him; however, textbooks published since then were no more coherent nor progressively sanguine in portraying Rizal. If ever the notion of official history or official nationalism can have traction in the Philippine setting, one may argue that the promotion of Rizal as national hero in school textbooks stands as possibly the best test case. The findings here suggest that it has failed the test.

Synthesis and Analysis

The patterns and images of nationalism that may be glimpsed from the fifteen textbooks analyzed in this study are far from coherent or consistent. From the latitudinal viewpoint, only the earlier group of four textbooks (by Barrows, Benitez, and Fernandez) shows an apparent level of unanimity. For the middle group composed of five textbooks (by G. Zaide, Alip, and Agoncillo) and the more recent group of six textbooks (DECS, Reyes and Tantengco, Antonio et al., S. Zaide, and Mateo et al.), divergence more than coherence characterizes their portrayal of the selected themes covered in this study.

The discourses on nationalism in the first four textbooks characterized membership in the nation primarily anchored on affiliation to Christianity. Non-Christians were excluded, and Muslims in particular were singled out as enemies. A sense of pride is often expressed in the Philippines being “the only Christian nation in Asia” and a recipient of foreign, “civilizing” influences

from the Chinese, Indians, Arabs, Malays, Indonesians, and finally Spaniards and Americans. All of these influences made this Christian nation “unique.” In the case of heroes and heroism, Rizal is noted, sometimes grudgingly, for his outstanding qualities, but in none of this group of textbooks was he regarded as a hero, let alone a national hero.

The middle group of textbooks portrays membership in the nation as determined almost exclusively by Christian affiliation, as is the case for the first group of textbooks. Only in one of them are Muslims acknowledged as part of the nation, while one still treats Muslims as enemies. The images that prevail are a mix of sympathy, accommodation, rejection, and disinterested tolerance for Muslims. As for the treatment of Rizal, the patterns in these textbooks are similarly varied or incoherent. The only areas with broad agreement, although still with important differences, are in the sense of pride in the nation and the foreign influences on Filipino culture. In this aspect, they are one with the earlier group, at least in broad terms.

The last group of six textbooks shares many characteristics in the middle group. They maintain the almost exclusive Christian definition of membership in the nation. They are also not generally interested in heroes. Moreover, they continue with the passive-recipient-of-foreign-culture image of Filipinos, although in this group there are two textbooks that discuss, one of them faithfully, the alternative to Beyer’s migration-waves theory. Just like the middle group, the last group is also dominated by confusing or incoherent references to nationalism.

This study is not designed to dig deep into the causes behind the lack of clear patterns or images of nationalism, but it may be useful to speculate on what could account for such a divide between, say, the middle and the more recent groups, on the one hand, and the early group of textbooks, on the other.

The characteristics of the earlier texts may be easily understood within the context of American colonial policies, wherein education was deemed important as a tool for colonization. The designation of advisory committees since 1906 and the subsequent establishment of the Board of Textbooks in 1921 ostensibly pointed to the desire of the colonial government to control matters pertaining to knowledge dissemination, textbooks in particular. Research done for this study did not cover the dynamics, nature, and extent of such control. However, there were rather strict guidelines for textbook evaluation and approval during the American period, which could be glimpsed from the fact that the textbook of Barrows, despite his being a high-

ranking colonial official, was not approved for use in schools as a basic text due to his stubborn refusal to revise certain parts of it.¹¹ We may surmise that the fairly obvious unanimity in the three texts in the early group indicated conformity with a set of guidelines laid down by the Board of Textbooks or the committees that preceded it. In this particular case, the wielder of hegemonic control may be easily identified.

The idea that textbooks are instruments for hegemonic control, which underpins critical pedagogy scholarship in the Philippines (Constantino 1982; Doronila 1989) and elsewhere, posits that the ways in which nationalism is depicted in school textbooks reflect the interests of the most powerful cliques in society. The assumption here is twofold. First, the dominant groups control the state apparatuses, including the school system, and they design and operate them in ways favorable to their interest. This assumption seems warranted as indicated by policies in place during the American colonial period for textbook regulation.

Second, the dominant groups are aware of the shape of the discourse that serve or are compatible with their interests. With the insipid and evasive portrayal of Rizal's heroic role in the American-period textbooks, these texts ran counter to the supposed American initiative to install and promote Rizal as national hero. Oft-cited was the move made in 1901 by the chair of the then Philippine Commission, William Howard Taft, to designate Rizal as the national hero. When Constantino (1969) advanced and popularized the idea that Rizal was an American-sponsored hero, he used this episode as evidence to back his claim, arguing that Rizal's supposedly reformist—as opposed to revolutionary—stance made him useful for the American colonial government's interests. If this was the case, how is it that the textbooks produced in the four decades of American rule did not even call Rizal a hero, let alone a national hero? This disjunction raises a question on the extent to which the state apparatuses had control of knowledge production. Alternatively, the idea that the Americans were keen to promote Rizal as national hero could have been downright false.

The divergent patterns and images found in the textbooks published after the Second World War may be attributed perhaps to the less strict implementation of policies on textbooks since independence, not on the absence of such policies. There was no immediate fundamental change insofar as bodies governing textbooks were concerned. As noted earlier the government maintained, through an agency such as the Board of Textbooks,

and later the IMC, its control of textbook-related matters. Only in 1995 were key changes in textbook publishing effected with the privatization of textbook publishing. Even in this case, the government has retained a mechanism of control through curricular formulation and textbook evaluation, pricing, and approval (Doronila 1989).

What do all these suggest? The dominance of confusing and contrasting images in textbooks points to a number of possibilities. It could mean that the state is not really interested in controlling the process of knowledge production. The fact, however, that government entities, particularly the education department, issue guidelines and agencies or committees are designated to enforce such guidelines seems to belie this suggestion.

Another possibility is the lax enforcement of otherwise strict rules and regulations governing textbook-related matters at the level of rule-enforcing agencies such as the Board of Textbooks, which is plausible in a corruption-stricken country like the Philippines. Textbook publishing in the Department of Education has been identified as corruption-ridden (Reyes 2007). It is known in the textbook publishing business that publishers spend a lot of money to ensure that their textbooks, despite questionable quality, would pass the evaluation process and get approved for sale to government schools, as they constitute the largest captured market for textbooks.¹² Corruption is not directly connected to nationalist discourse, but corruption and widely divergent images in the textbooks may be both functions of loose enforcement of governmental guidelines. The centralized control of knowledge transmission channels as shown in the structure of the education system creates a misleading impression that hides lapses in policy implementation. The result is the transmission of certain types of knowledge not necessarily compatible with what amounts to official knowledge. Because this study does not include examination of curricular guidelines (MLCs and DLCs), it is not possible to determine the difference between the “official” version of nationalism, as indicated in the MLCs, and those found in the published textbooks.

The proliferation of divergent views on many things including nationalism indicates the plurality of forces strong enough to penetrate key channels such as textbooks. The strong Christian elements in the nationalist discourse suggest the hegemonic influence of the church in shaping national identity. Other than Christianity-defined identity, one other area where textbooks exhibit a fairly high level of coherence is the rather comfortable

acceptance, even celebration, of foreign elements in Filipino identity. This confirms Doronila's (1989) finding on the pro-foreigner treatment, taken as proof of the persistence of colonial mentality, in the elementary school textbooks she analyzed in her landmark study.

As earlier noted, this study adopts an open-ended conception of nationalism. It eschews the colonial–nationalistic dichotomy for its ahistorical and essentialist character, removing nationalism from the temporal and spatial context that makes it possible. The colonial experience of the people certainly affected the way they defined and expressed their love and concern for their country. However, Benitez's use of foreigners to validate positive comments about Filipinos or Zaide's celebration of the uniqueness of Filipinos having been influenced by so many foreign cultures cannot be dismissed as simply “colonial.” They might as well indicate the kind of nationalism reflective of their time, experience, and environment. One can call it “colonial nationalism” (Abinales 2002), which foregrounds the appreciation rather than rejection of foreign influences in constituting Filipino identity, but it is nationalism just the same.

The other type of nationalism that is observable in textbooks may be called religious nationalism. It highlights the primacy of Christian elements in Filipino identity to the exclusion of other religious or cultural traditions. What may be called radical or anticolonial nationalism, as exemplified in the works of Constantino and Agoncillo, is also reflected in textbooks, but through the dismally flawed effort by Reyes and Tantengco (1997) and the somewhat subdued approach by Agoncillo (1962, 1974). Interestingly the treatment of nationalism in Agoncillo's two texts are a far cry from that found in his college textbook, *History of the Filipino People* (Agoncillo 1977), in terms of the clarity of anticolonial nationalism. A form of indigenist nationalism, as exemplified by the Pantayong Pananaw, has not in any effective manner influenced these textbooks, although two of them (Reyes and Tantengco 1997; Mateo et al. 2000) boldly claim that they adopted the Pantayo perspective. Analysis reveals that there is hardly any serious trace of the Pantayo approach in their texts. These authors might have mistaken the use of Filipino language as enough to classify their approach as that of Pantayong Pananaw.

Conclusion

The incoherent, ambivalent, and sometimes clashing images of nationalism that we find in textbooks, especially in the period after the Second World

War, may well represent the rather fluid matrix within which various forces in Philippine society competed with, ran parallel to, or coexisted randomly with each other. The limited pattern of increasing level of consistency as well as of clearly dominant images of nationalism favorable to the interests of the ruling or any other class suggests that these history textbooks were more like an arena of an ongoing contestation, or a random output of textbook production processes, rather than a tool for hegemonic control. This does not mean that the state did not intend to establish hegemony, for it certainly tried to, as seen in its policies and the structures in place. But clearly the state had not been effective in such efforts, conformable to the common characterization of the Philippine state as weak or ineffective.

This point must be tempered by a number of considerations. This study is limited to the product, the textbooks, and does not look closely enough into the complicated processes involved in textbook production, evaluation, and the economic aspect of market distribution. It also does not look into the formulation of textbook guidelines and history curricula. All these factors need to be examined to establish the relationship among stakeholders or actors such as the church, civil society, publishers, curriculum designers, textbook writers, publication houses' editors, and sellers or distributors. Seeing the clear relationship among these actors will rule out spurious explanations about the characteristics of history textbooks. As Loewen (1995) suggests, many scholars might be looking at the wrong place. Answers may be found in the mundane, practical, day-to-day activities of the textbook writers and the whole operations of the publishing house—editors, publishers, and marketing strategists—as they try to maximize profit while navigating through ever-volatile market forces. Such formulation may strike one as a form of economic determinism, but it emphasizes the need to look at all angles for possible explanations.

The limited samples covered in this study with only fifteen textbooks, as well as the restricted number of themes included in the content analysis, raise the question of whether similar patterns of incoherent nationalist discourses will emerge if more textbooks from different periods, as well as various other aspects of nationalism, were examined. The findings of the current study, therefore, serve no more than a hypothesis that comprehensive studies in the future may confirm or deny. In addition, since the coverage of this study ends in 2000, it is timely to examine the extent to which Philippine history textbooks have changed in the intervening years, particularly in

portraying nationalism. Given the important changes in the past seventeen years, including the scathing exposés made by textbook “crusader” Antonio Calipjo-Go, the brewing “history wars” on the meaning and assessment of the Marcos years, and the implementation of the K–12 curriculum, an updated look into this subject is necessary.

List of Abbreviations

DECS	Department of Education, Culture, and Sports
DLC	desired learning competencies
IMC	Instructional Materials Corporation
MLC	minimum learning competencies
NSDB	National Science and Development Board
UST	University of Santo Tomas
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Notes

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- 1 The long-standing textbook controversy in the Philippines revolves around the so-called textbook crusade against factual and grammatical errors launched by school administrator-teacher Antonio Calipjo Go (2005; cf. McIndoe 2009). With the upsurge in the popularity of Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. in the 2016 elections and his narrow loss of the vice presidency, critics have focused on the supposed inadequacy of textbooks in discussing martial law and the Marcos years (cf. Mateo 2016).
- 2 With the recent implementation of the K–12 program, Philippine History as a stand-alone subject has been moved to Grades 5 and 6, away from the secondary school level.
- 3 Among the textbooks of the 1910s, we may include Benitez’s 1932 textbook, which is actually just an expanded version of the original 1919 edition. Chapters dealing with the pre-American period in 1919 and 1932 editions are similar. It may be said, therefore, that the 1910s is also represented.
- 4 Barrows’s 1905 text was not really adopted as a basic textbook in public schools as he refused to rewrite a few controversial parts of the book. However, it was used as a reference text. The fact that it had a second edition in 1907 without revisions suggests that it was fairly widely used (cf. Martin 1960, 93–94).
- 5 Among the textbooks produced between 1932 and 1999, which used Barrows’s pattern to explain the origin of the Filipino people and culture, the exception is DECS 1989.

- 6 Barrows’s (1905, 31–36) formulation, which was originally proposed by Ferdinand Blumentritt (Aguilar 2005), did not mention the Indonesian group midway between the Negritos and Malays. Instead he classified Malays as “wild Malayan tribes” to refer to the earlier group and “civilized Malayan people” to refer to the latest migrants. The formulation is that of Blumentritt in the late nineteenth century. See Aguilar 2005, which also explains the exclusion of cultural minorities in the national community.
- 7 It may be interesting to note that in the earlier edition, Zaide and Zaide 1987, wherein her father was still a coauthor, there were no such evangelical pronouncements.
- 8 Srivijaya and Majapahit were mainstays in textbooks from Benitez (1926) to Zaide (1978), with Agoncillo (1962, 1974) being an exception.
- 9 It is pertinent to note here Barrows’s sharp dichotomy in using “tribe” to refer to the earlier “migrants” and “people” to refer to the group that arrived later and allegedly were more civilized.
- 10 Fernandez (1932) and Zaide (1959, 1978) mention the existence of the Code of Kalantiao, dated 1433, allegedly a prehispanic codified law. In the 1960s William Henry Scott (1968) exposed the code as a hoax.
- 11 Unfortunately I have failed to uncover the specific parts that the committee found objectionable in Barrows’s book.
- 12 My sources for this information were phone interviews held between 30 March and 1–2 April 2001 with a history teacher and textbook writer and a publisher who has had extensive experience in publishing in the Philippines.

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