

## **Polity Beyond the State: "Postmodernizing" Political Science in the Philippines**

**Antonio P. Contreras\***

This article does not claim to be the first piece of postmodern scholarship on Philippine society. In fact, many scholars, both Filipino and foreign, consciously or unconsciously, have already inquired into various domains using a postmodern lens, and some of them have focused on political questions. Unfortunately, however, a postmodern agenda is still very much absent or is not mainstreamed in political science in the country. Most of the scholarly works that can be labeled as postmodern are in the fields of the humanities, particularly arts studies and literature, and in history. This article argues for the strengthening of a postmodern perspective within Philippine political science, especially by Filipino political scientists.

I will argue for two main points. First, that there is a need to include a postmodern approach in political science scholarship. Second, that this need stems from the fact that politics and society in the Philippines possess postmodern elements. The need to "postmodernize" political science in the country is made more relevant in the context of the unraveling of the state as the source of political consolidation. While many rejoiced of the outcome of EDSA II, wherein civil society availed of non-state and extra-constitutional processes to effect a political succession, many shuddered at the capacity of "people power" to generate an ugly head, as seen in the May 1, 2001 event that followed it. In fact, the reliance on "people power" mobilization has led to some political analysts to argue that indeed, political institutions in the Philippines are weak, in that citizens have to rely on extra-constitutional means to affect political change. However, while most political analysts have characterized

---

\* The author acknowledges the comments of two anonymous reviewers but assumes full responsibility for the final manuscript.

the Philippine State as weak, and have lamented the weakness of political institutions, I will argue otherwise. This article posits that if at all, one can see the presence of strong and plural political institutions. What it takes to reveal this is to go beyond the State and its attendant epistemological grounding in statist political science, and recognize the postmodern realities that permeate our political life.

At the outset, I will not argue that postmodernism is the only correct way of looking at Philippine society and politics. I will also not argue that postmodernism has a monopoly of the idea about non-state centered Political Science. What I will emphasize in this article is for the inclusion of the postmodern as one of the possible analytical lens to inquire into the political in Philippine society.

### The "Reality" of the Postmodern: Philippine Politics as *Telenovela*

The *telenovela* is one of the most gripping forms of popular culture in the Philippines that has captivated the common *tao* in recent times. The twists and turns in the plot, usually a mixture of romance, sex, scandal, violence and greed, mesmerize the audience that has come to elevate the Latin American soap opera and their actors into becoming Filipino icons. This is as if the ghosts of the Galleon Trade and of Spanish colonization have revisited us. They bring an array of alien dreams and nightmares that eventually became parts of our collective identity. In fact, we soon learned from these imported cultural commodities and have since adapted their fast-paced, cinematic styles to re-invent the "*Flordeluna*" and "*Anna Liza*" of the past into the "*Pangako sa Iyo*" and "*Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin*" of the present.

In other parts of the world, we also have our own stories of embedding our identities into others. The word "Filipino" has become part of popular lexicon in other countries, even as it assumed an unsavory meaning associated with either silent servitude or salient whoring. The Filipino diaspora,

particularly seen in the "Pinoy" hands that rock the cradle in Singapore, the "Pinoy" sweat that makes the oil flow in Saudi Arabia, and the "Pinoy" hips that raises the heat in Ginza, has also enabled us to bring our own brand of dreams and nightmares into the reality of others.

This is a postmodern world, a world wherein the grand theories and totalizing explanations about reality crumble both from the homogenizing effects of globalization and the pluralizing effects of localization. In a complex domain wherein commodities and culture are traded in the world market, a different kind of politics emerged to unsettle what appears to be settled; the idea of epistemological and moral unity has been challenged. Earlier, the Enlightenment project that brought to bear the process of modernity has created this idea of unity, and together with it has installed the Archimedean point of a single scientific truth. This body of totalizing discourse has long governed the production of truth and has infected the production of knowledge about ourselves through an adherence to a scientific endeavor that excludes, more than includes, the voices of those who were seen to be outside the boundaries of the "normal." History, as the field of knowledge that defines our past, was written from the point of view of the victors. Social sciences eventually became avenues for knowledge that do not liberate but instead control. Development, as the child of modernity and Enlightenment, failed to solve the problems of underdevelopment and poverty. It is indeed ironic that the Enlightenment project contradicted the meaning of its name: far from "enlightening," it has become avenues to at best "muddle", at worst "darken" discourses of hope and liberation.

Postmodernism emerges in this context, carrying features that confront the shortcomings of modernity and the Enlightenment project. Postmodernism is critical both of the centrality of reality as an experience, and the totalizing discourse of history, or of ideology, as a grand narrative (Agger, 1998). At this point, it is important for me to

immediately posit that in my appropriation of the postmodern, I will continue to talk about a set of "realities", or of a "history", as experiences lived by Filipino political subjects. This is to thwart the tendency of postmodernism to become lost in disabling relativism, thereby falling into the trap of being too theoretically "chic" but lacking in political relevance, in its valorization of multiple realities. My use of "reality" and of "history" as words for describing prevailing truths is not to reify them, but instead to position them as objects of deconstruction, as reasons for a political project of transformation. This is an admission that while I subscribe to postmodernism, I will neither be a "purist" nor dogmatic.

Some would argue that the "postmodern" is again a Western construct that European or North American academics are inflicting on us to further their tenurial and scholarly fortunes. Others may even argue that the use of the postmodern is another "orientalist" representation of Philippine politics, by forcing a Western construct to become another analytical lens to scrutinize. I argue otherwise. Iletto (2001), in a provocative article in a previous issue of this Journal, has lamented the tendency of Western scholars to look at Philippine politics from a Western perspective of an idealized polity, and their tendencies to pass judgments on it using these "orientalist" lens. I believe that far from being used against postmodernism, Iletto's argument in fact is consistent with a postmodern critique of Western scholarships on Philippine politics, not only by American and non-Filipino writers, but also by Filipino scholars. A postmodern reading of Philippine politics entails both an unveiling of the hidden transcripts that have long been made invisible in the plethora of scholarships about statist politics, as well as an unraveling of statist scholarship. This will inevitably privilege local realities and the experiences of the "othered" subjects displaced by a political science that gave too much emphasis on the state. However, and as I will argue later in this article, I am also aware that the shift in focus away from grand narratives, and the recognition of multiple

political spaces and agents, as well as domains for inquiry, effectively enables, but does not assure, a non-Orientalist lens.

I believe that at the very least, postmodern academics from Europe and North America have only put a name to what has been a familiar Philippine reality. Postmodern elements of Philippine politics was always present, but have been silenced through a scholarship that focused on the State. It is not because literature on postmodernism emerged that politics and society have imbibed certain traits that are now labeled as "postmodern." In fact, it is because of these realities that there is a need to talk about the "postmodern." The following are examples of these realities that we see emerging, or if not, have emerged already.

- The global *diaspora* not only of commodities, but of symbols and of people – We see the results of this, for example, through CNN, or in Jollibee outlets in the U.S. West Coast, or in Overseas Filipino Workers;
- The rise and growing importance of transnational bodies and institutions
- The decline of the State as having a monopoly for governance – This is seen both in privatization and deregulation, and in the adoption of participatory development strategies wherein partnerships with local communities and other civil society organizations are enabled;
- The decline of class as a singular basis for resistance, and the emergence of identity politics based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, among others;
- The growing role of local institutions and processes, including small groups, not only in national but also in global affairs. This is dramatized in the events that rocked the World Trade Organizations meetings in Seattle, or in the capacity of local groups such as the Abu Sayyaf to destabilize the State, or of Al Qaida and Osama Bin Laden to trigger a global war against a faceless enemy;

- The emergence of a politics based on style and not on content, causing a decline on the role of ideology – This is seen in the absence of ideology among political parties in the Philippines;
- The rise of the media in the production of politicians and of politics, and the emergence of politics as “theater” or “reality TV” – This is evident in the electoral supremacy of celebrities; or in the manner televised news becomes a powerful venue for the shaping of political agenda.

It is important to cite as example the role of mass media, particularly the *telenovela* as a manifestation of “simulated reality,” in the behavior of citizens in the Philippines, if only to add empirical evidence to my claim of a postmodern Philippine society. When Abu Sabaya, the spokesperson of the Abu Sayyaf, was reportedly killed during an encounter, speculations about his having survived were fueled by the absence of a body to prove that, indeed, he was dead. When I asked some ordinary people the basis of their doubt, they pointed out to the fact that it is very possible that he is alive, in the same manner that some characters, mostly villains, in the *telenovelas* appear killed in various forms, but eventually survive to continue sowing their brand of evil to the good characters. It is remarkable how television, in its “simulation of reality,” has become no longer just a source of entertainment, but also has emerged as a new standard for public opinion.

The power of the *telenovela* in the consciousness of the Filipino is therefore not a discontinuous or irrelevant event, and it could not be dismissed as a non-political issue. In fact, the Filipino has always treated politics more as almost like a gripping *telenovela*, and less as a process where politicians are busy crafting laws, or where interest groups are deeply involved in pressuring the actors and the processes of public policy. With the aid of telecommunications and information technology, the Filipino becomes an active audience of a televised political drama – replete with sex, scandal, violence, intrigue, and greed. Here,

one can argue that it is not because of Baudrillard, Lyotard, Derrida and Foucault, the all-white male authors of postmodern theory, that there are postmodern elements in Philippine society. Public opinion is now galvanized, enabling citizens to immediately express their take on an issue through teletext or "debatext," not because someone is reading literature on postmodern theory, but because the public is watching television and is using cellular phones. Furthermore, it is not because of postmodern literature that globalization, localization, and the decline of the State happen. In fact, it is because of these phenomena that postmodern theory becomes an accurate description of Philippine political reality – a continuing "telenovela" with numerous subplots and cliffhangers captured by television in the context of what would otherwise have been considered as simple news.

Contradiction in Philippine Political Analysis:  
Statism in the Context of a Weak Center  
and a Fuzzy Grand Narrative

An inquiry on the political in Philippine society has been traditionally carried out through a "statist" notion of politics. Political science, particularly the practice of political inquiry and analysis in the Philippines, is dominated by a State-centric discourse. Furthermore, and as Iletto (2001) laments, most of these scholarships are limited by a tendency to weigh and judge Philippine politics using Western ideal types.

Although civil society has been mainstreamed as a valid object of political inquiry, seen in the development of the discourse on "governance" as separate from the discourse of "government", the theoretical underpinnings that support such explorations are still largely influenced by a neo-liberal conceptualization of civil society. Here, and as influenced by Locke and de Tocqueville, civil society is seen only in the context of its function as a necessary limit to the State, acting as a "brake fluid", if not a "safety net" that insulates the citizen from State excess. Civil society is seen not in its own

right. In fact, it is usually defined not on its own terms, but as an ontological "other" of the State, as the institution that it seeks to restrain but is the source of its legitimacy. Some even are so bold enough to declare that the State is the domain of the political, while civil society is the domain of the cultural, thereby suggesting, albeit flawed, that the cultural is not at all political. Furthermore, some even unproblematically posit the "emergence" of civil society, as if civil society is an after-thought, a historical predicate of the State.

This neo-liberal notion of State-civil society relations necessitates a critical look if only to reveal a problematic "truth" upon which political practices and scholarships are so deeply based. Philippine politics, as both an object of scholarship as well as a practical domain, rests on the assumption that a Philippine State exists, and that such a State is a reality that permeates political behavior. However, while this is true, there is a need for us to have a quick reality check on the nature of the Philippine State. In the Philippines, the colonial State, from the very start, used colonial civil society institutions of religion and education as legitimizing tools, even as traditional civil society institutions, which prevailed in local and regional pre-colonial social formations, were either co-opted or deligitimized. Thus, it is clear that organic civil society institutions preceded the development of the State, and in fact, the emergence of the latter led to the disarticulation of the former. However, it is also a historical fact that prior to the colonial process, there was no unitary Filipino nation, nor was there a unitary set of institutions which defined collective consciousness across the archipelago. The absence of kingship, dynastic histories, and royal court tradition, and the absence of a collective notion of nationhood, together with the archipelagic nature of the country, was later expressed in the proliferation of centers of power that the colonial State had to contend with. The State became an external necessity for the elites to govern; but structures of tradition (kinship, communities, patron-client relationships, mutual reciprocal relations)



flourished as sources of social capital. At the local level, elites mediated the relationships between the community (civil society) and the State. This was assisted by a colonial project which subsisted on Machiavellian techniques of "divide and conquer" to deny the colony a unitary sense of nationhood. The revolution which erupted in resistance to Spanish colonizers was successful in creating a centralized base upon which a polity may be defined and a nation can be imagined for later construction, but it failed to completely cement a strong and solid ground for nationhood. The development of the sense of a nation in Philippine consciousness was, therefore, an articulation of being an act of resistance from below, as well as an elitist act of creating a base upon which power can be attained.

Hence, even after formal independence was achieved, the process of nation-building continued, where elements of "otherness," such as the indigenous peoples, were assaulted and became targets of either benign or brutal annexation. What happened in the Philippines was a complex process of simultaneous State-building and nation-building activities. This led to a more dynamic terrain from where civil society institutions, particularly at local levels, were able to offer localized sense of identities, even as collective consciousness as a Filipino nation was also institutionalized through Western and colonial educational and religious institutions. Collective consciousness and social capital flourished both as outcomes of legitimation projects from the top and from below. Structures of power, both dominant as well as that in opposition, engaged in a national level construction of the discourse of the nation. The social forces that propelled the Philippine revolution, its war of independence against the United States, and the protracted rebellion from Leftist adherents all existed in the context of a grand narrative of a national scale. However, local struggles and millenarian movements that were more particularistic in orientation constantly erupted to punctuate these national political projects.

The fact that there is a weak center, and a pluralism of partial power loci makes the Philippine civil society a complex terrain to govern. In this context, national politics is merely a theater, albeit an important one, which is the site for the expression of a national agenda. However, the pluralism of civil society centers enable people to go on with their ordinary lives despite the tumultuous and corrupt State, by providing safety nets and coping mechanisms outside the ambit of statist politics. The process of state-building has not displaced civil society from local people's lives. This is a result of the fact that the development of the State was a colonial and, later, an elitist, project which was a separate sphere for political representation, even as it has relied on local civil society institutions for legitimacy and survival. The political fortunes of powerful personalities in the center relied on the dynastic patron-client structures that operated at the regions and local communities. Hence, the State, being a colonial creation, became an external overlay that has reshaped to some extent, but never actually obliterated the power of local institutions. In fact, and contrary to the neo-liberal notion of civil society, the State derived its legitimacy from civil society and not the other way. In this context, the State became a "necessary evil", even as for most Filipinos, it is only relevant when it begins to threaten their security and survival. Organic civil society institutions which inhabit local social realities provide the mechanisms which both insulate the community from the corruption and neglect of the State, and if required, mediate processes that would foster political representation, and even resistance. The tragedy is that the dispersal of local politics, and the presence of autonomous political behavior at the local level, unmindful of national political events, has also contributed to the propagation of disempowering politics at the national level. Politics, being a theater, is played as a contest of popularity and style, a spectator sports, and not of substance. National leaders emerge in the context of a discourse of appearances, and not of agenda. It is therefore not surprising that we have an electorate that cheerfully elects actors, sports and media personalities, and beautiful men and women over seasoned and well-prepared politicians.

The tragic consequence of a political culture that rests on "appearance politics," one that is played like a "reality TV show," is just one level of tragedy. However, the more fundamental tragedy is when political analysis and scholarship, most of which as Iletto (2001) pointed out rely on "Orientalist" lens, continue to see these as aberrations that can be cured only through more policies, laws, and political will, all of which remain as projects the success of which rests on a strong State. Confronted with the tragic consequences of a weak center and the absence of a cohesive national identity to provide a "grand narrative" upon which State projects can derive their legitimacy, political inquiry and analysis remain predominantly anchored on "statist" epistemological groundings. We continue to lament the "weakness" and the "softness" of the State, without counting these as both a historical legacy as well as a blessing upon which alternative ways of governing ourselves can be re-designed, not necessarily anchored on a strong State, but on strong, if not, radically plural and functional civil societies. Furthermore, another tragedy is when political scientists continue to view "politics" in the context of the public, and in the context of overt acts and visible institutions involved in either or both acts of state building and of resistance to it. In this view, the private domain remains muted in the gaze of the political scientist.

#### The Need to Transform Politics: Expanding the Domain of the "Political"

It is important to reiterate the argument that the emergence of the State, as a central apparatus for consolidating power, became a historical milestone that marginalized civil society and the individual in the private sphere, not only in the domain of political practice but also, and more importantly, in the domain of political theory. Much of the theorizing in political science has focused on the State. The "political" was defined within the context of public processes which are involved in State-building and

maintenance. Civil society, the "othered" domain was denied the theoretical attention it deserved, even as its existence prior to the development of the State was submerged in the hegemonic centrality of statist and "Orientalist" scholarship. The recent focus on civil society, while attempting to locate this powerful domain in the analysis, nevertheless willingly propagates the view that civil society is a later "other", a recent development that resulted from the breakdown or inability of the State to govern. I am critical of this position, not only for its historical inaccuracy, but also for its acquiescence to dominant Western political theory.

This article strongly argues that civil society is community, and communities have existed prior to the State. The discourse of the Western liberal democratic theorists, which conflates civil society with civic mindedness, is a product of their historical tragedies of being consumed by individualistic pursuits that led to the diminishing of the community. One has to "volunteer" to become a citizen in this cultural context, something that is dramatized by people who shut their doors and windows and refuse to intrude into the business of their neighbors in the name of privacy and individual liberties. However, this is not the reality of the Filipino. To hoist a discourse of conjured communities and volunteered citizenship on social formations that have strong community institutions, such as the Philippines, and for civil society activists and scholars in these countries to buy such argument is a tragic acquiescence to a Western imposition. The use of adjectives such as "emerging" and "voluntary" when referring to civil societies is within the contextual reality of people who have suddenly seen the need to go beyond the discourse of rights and into the discourse of civic-mindedness to pursue collective goals. This is again another type of "Orientalism", wherein local realities are scrutinized and classified according to Western parameters.

In the Philippines, the discourse of citizenship has long been forced into, through the ruthless process of state-building, ably aided by ideological institutions in civil society

itself. The process of nation building necessitated the building of a central identity, the "Filipino" through educational and cultural institutions. Thus, the discourse of citizenship is an outcome of the desire to establish order, even as it created a condition that constricted the spaces for individual freedom and liberty. The political struggle, therefore, in the Philippines, as in many other countries similarly situated, is not in terms of cultivating the ethic of citizenship, but the ethic of participation and liberation. In fact, James Scott (1998) argued that in Southeast Asia, in general, the concept of freedom is found not in association with the State, but in the form of being free from its power. The discourse of rights, and not the discourse of civic-mindedness, becomes the battering ram for assaulting the State. It is in this context that civil societies "re-emerge."

The processes of state-building and maintenance, as the locus of the political in the context of the dominant and statist practice of Political Science, remain as a valid area to launch academic inquiries and interpellations. However, there is a need to redefine the manner by which such inquiries and interpellations are made. Post-structuralist theorists, most notable of which is Michel Foucault, has long challenged the totalizing image of a central locus of power that needs to be assaulted. The explanatory power of "grand narratives" and "grand theories" has also been subjected to critical interrogation in postmodern theory. It is in this context that there is a need to re-imagine the "political." A civil society that gains validity only in the sense that it is able to restrain State power, which is the dominant theme of most of the definitions of civil society from Hegel to de Tocqueville to United Nations Development Programme, is a captured civil society. In this view, the mode of engaging the State rests on the assumption that civil society, as the "other" of the State, must be able to match the structures of the latter. As most activists point out, the goal of civil society is to nationalize its struggle, even internationalize it, in a common front. Federations, alliances and coalitions become organizational necessities for them to succeed in providing the State its

headaches and its challenges. While there is indeed value in building a central movement to counter the discourse of the State, the question that needs to be asked is: What happens after the fact that forces in "civil society" win the battle? Would the structures and institutions of governance be different, or would they merely be just another kind of State?

What I am trying to dramatize in the above discussion is the fact that political struggles which are waged in the domain of statist assumptions of marginalization engender modes of resistance that are just inversions of the centralizing structure of power that they merely want to replace, but not deconstruct. Civil society activism at present, not only in the Philippines, but elsewhere, is increasingly taking up a centralized organizational mode for consolidating its forces. Here, the danger of bureaucratization and cooption is all too real. Progressive NGOs, for example, that have been engendered by the community ethic which resides in organic civil society, are experiencing an erosion of such ethic whenever they attempt to expand and scale up their operations. There are also cases wherein the communitarian spirit that prevails in grassroots organizations is eroded when operations become subject of external funding.

Despite the above critique, we should not totally abandon political actions that seek to nationalize the advocacy by scaling up and expanding the domain of operations. Nor is it a practical agenda to do away with the State. Instead, in order to achieve a transformation of the modes by which we are governed, we should change the manner we govern ourselves. While I argue for the de-centering of the state and the focusing on the autonomy of civil society, it is important to clarify that I am not subscribing to a romanticized notion of civil society. My emphasis on autonomy simply calls for a privileging of civil society as a different sphere for politics, with its own unique logic and its reliance on community norms and cultures of reciprocity. I am not in any way arguing for civil society as separate and

independent from the State. In fact, there is a need to locate the analysis in the complex relationships between the State and civil society. This opens up the possibility for a multi-faceted and dynamic interface, wherein States can either undermine or enable civil society, as civil society can either undermine or enable the State. What I posit as problematic is the Statist orientation of the liberal and western notion of civil society as merely an appendage of, and whose logic is derived from the State.

The expansion of legitimate civil society movement to include localized struggles is an important dimension of the transformation of politics. This will require the recognition of organic processes as valid conduits for politics. Organic civil society institutions, such as those that reside in the sense of community, and the collective identification of people with their community, should be distinguished from the "organized" civil society groups. I enclose "organized" in quotations if only to show my discomfort with the adjective, since it is valid to argue that even organic civil society institutions are organized systems of relationships, following certain logic. They are not random or chaotic. Mulder (1996) raised a scathing critique of the transformative power of organic civil societies, and instead gave preference to the necessity for organized movements to effectively challenge the State in the context of democratization. He labeled organic institutions to be parochial, and that they create political indifference. While I agree with Mulder up to the extent of submitting to the reality that, indeed, local coping mechanisms may provide ideological masks that tend to favor the reproduction of the status quo, I strongly disagree with the total rejection of organic institutions as potential sources for political transformation. The problem with Mulder's analysis is that the domain of transformation remains to be captured on a grand scale, that somewhat the barometer of success is when local communities are able to participate in national transformative projects aimed at structures of governance, through massive democratization movements. This stems from the continued

reliance on the State as the focus and locus of transformative politics. I argue that it is insufficient for social movements to aim at merely transforming States and civil societies. What is more important are to transform modes of governance, that is, how do we create and maintain order in our lives in all their levels and facets. This entails not only a movement to change institutions that are external to us, but also to change institutions near us and within us. It even entails changing ourselves as well as the means by which we produce knowledge and truth about ourselves.

### Postmodernism and the Possibilities for Philippine Politics

I argue that Philippine politics and society are already undeniably postmodern in their orientation. The absence of a strong center, and the fuzziness of the sense of a "nation" and of collective identities, coupled with a pluralism of power centers in civil society are postmodern traits. Furthermore, and more visible at present, politics is played as a "simulated" domain of representation, wherein modes of information through the mass media, particularly television, has become powerful key players. The structures that historical events shaped have enabled present forms of subjective consciousness that define the political behavior of the Filipino. While these may have tragic consequences, such tragedy can only be heightened if such phenomena continue to be misunderstood.

Most of the key political crises right now in the country occur in the form of a breakdown of the State and its institutions. The legitimacy of the Executive and the Legislature, of the police and the Armed Forces, of the Judiciary, and of constitutional bodies, are being eroded. On the other hand, dysfunctional civil society forces remain as threats to the system, even to a point of holding some institutions hostage. These include gambling and drug syndicates, the Abu Sayyaf, and even morally righteous elements coming from different political persuasions that



tend to exceed the limits of restraint and deploy "People Power" no longer as a strategy for principled struggle but as an expression of political tantrum and a tool for political blackmail.

While policy-based interventions remain as one of the valid arena upon which solutions can be imagined and realized, it is important to consider the fact that the root causes of these crises rest not only in the absence of law, or policy. Such roots deeply extend into the discursive premises within which truth and falsity are produced, and wherein Filipino identities are defined. The weakness of the State is definitely a cause of the problem. Strengthening the State is therefore a key element in solving the crises. It is important to note that the problem of a weak State is not a monopoly of the Philippines, as it is a phenomenon that besets even countries in the North. Offe (1996) talked about the experience of European States in terms of an emerging crisis of "crisis management", wherein the ability of the State to govern is threatened by the increasing complexities of modernity, leaving it with no choice but to "surrender" some of its powers to civil society. The Philippines has, in fact, deployed policy initiatives that seek to devolve power to local levels of governance, enabling not only local government units, but also civil society actors, to participate effectively in decision-making and policy implementation.

The challenge, however, is to go beyond the recruitment of civil society as agents of the State in recapturing its legitimacy, or as partners in effective governance. One should view civil society as not a mere appendage of the State, but as a collective of institutions that possess some autonomy from the state, and have become politically powerful, yet are not fully understood and appreciated as political institutions in themselves. While civil society has become a focus for scholarship, inquiries are mostly done in the context of an instrumentalist logic that seeks to increase the utility of organizations, such as NGOs and POs, and other civil society institutions, to the State. While there

are already scholarly inquiries, mostly in the field of the humanities and in history, of postmodern elements of Philippine society, what is lacking is a postmodern understanding within the discipline of political science of a postmodern reality that the Philippine polity has long been experiencing. This refers to the multiplicity of power centers that operate autonomously from the State and have the power to shape the political identities of the Filipino. This exists in coping mechanisms and in networks of trust – or sense of community, that abound in local communities, which could not be reduced to mere manifestations of patron-client relationships, or whose logic can be derived merely from the State. This also exists in popular culture – in the various symbols and practices that have been the objects of sociological and anthropological inquiries, but never of political inquiries made by political scientists. All of these can only be discovered if civil society is studied not only as a collection of institutions that enable or constrain the operations of the State, but as a sometimes autonomous domain for acts that are not traditionally considered political but have enormous implications for the production and reproduction of power in society.

### Implications on “Doing” Political Science

Sociology, anthropology, history and other fields in the humanities have already opened their doors to the study of the “political”, some of which could be considered as postmodern inquiries. These attempts by some scholars to study Philippine society from a postmodern perspective have already opened spaces to talk about the “postmodern” as an academic subject of inquiry. However, political science, particularly as taught and practiced in the Philippines, is still very much statist in its orientation. It is also important to point out the fact that very few courses, if at all, are offered in non-statist political science. The discipline is still very much fixated on the study of the state. While the discourse of governance has recognized the role of civil society, the latter remains seen as an appendage of the state.

What would it take to establish a postmodern understanding within Political science? What would be its implications on the practice of political science and of politics? I offer two mechanisms: a) intensifying the inquiries on the postmodern elements of Philippine politics; and b) mainstreaming of postmodern inquiries in the field of political science.

### Inquiring into the Postmodern

The postmodern reality of Philippine politics needs to be understood through a concerted effort to develop a critical mass of inquiries on the phenomenon, particularly on the symbolic and discursive production of truth and meaning in ordinary everyday lives.

One domain for inquiry is the manner by which civil societies could exist as organic and sometimes autonomous political entities outside of and despite the State. This domain is enabled by a weakening State that allows civil society institutions to prosper and thrive, even as strong civil societies enable the State to be secure despite its weakness. A corollary arena of inquiry is to inquire into the dynamics of civil societies in the context of providing alternative development and policy models, and to inquire into the conditions within which such models become successful in providing safety nets, if not in allowing local communities to become autonomous institutions from the State. The key challenge to this type of research lies in effecting an epistemological shift away from State-centered inquiry, and into an exploration of civil society in its own right, and on its own terms, and not as mere adjuncts of the State. Another challenge is to avoid producing a grand theory about local empirical realities, and to rest contented on the specificity of experiences as ends by themselves, and not as raw materials for the production of "policy proposals" or for hypothesis testing.

Already, the works of scholars in the social sciences, humanities and in history have made some significant

inroads. It is noteworthy to mention the edited volume by Alfred McCoy (2000), *Lives at the Margin: Biography of Filipinos Obscure, Ordinary and Heroic*, as a good example of locating the political not only in the grand structures of the state, but in the local lives of ordinary people, who in themselves are political subjects. However, while I appreciate the privileging of the local, I am still conscious of the possibility that such can still be done in the context of statist, and perhaps Western, interpretations. For example, most of the authors in the edited volume by McCoy (2000) look at "local" and "obscure" individuals mostly in the context of them as active participants in the political process—as revolutionaries and local political leaders. In fact, only the chapters written by Sidel and Mojares dealt with characters that are traditionally not seen as "political". In studying two "gangsters," Sidel almost achieved a postmodern agenda of making visible the "non-traditional" acts of political actors. However, Sidel again used as basis the "usual" parameter to dismiss such acts as "non-politics", as just another form of banditry. Sidel argued that any act motivated by concerns of personal economic accumulation is not at all "social" in character. Here, and using Iletto's (2001) argument, I am uncomfortable with the use of neo-liberal parameters in measuring the degree of "politics" in a political action.

Thus, it is obvious that beyond studying the "local" and the "obscure", there is still much to be done to deepen our understanding of the "postmodern" in Philippine reality. The critique of Iletto (2001) of foreign (American) scholarships on Philippine politics, and the reactions by Sidel and Lande (this volume) clearly illustrates the core of this issue, as their debate misses the point. Another debate that misses the point is the disagreement over the emphasis given to society and to the State. I argue that contending emphasis on socio-cultural variables, characteristic of studies influenced by Migdal's (1988) work, or on institutional variables with focus on the role of the State, as illustrated by the studies of Sidel (1999) and Abinales (2000), fail to reveal the politics inherent in every day "local" and "personal" politics. Both

approaches unfailingly anchor the analysis on the centrality of political behavior seen on how the traditional political institutions and processes, such as local governments, political dynasties, patron-client relationships, and electoral contests, operate. While socio-cultural studies have privileged cultural and society-centered variables as explaining political structure, their inherent positivism limits the core of the argument to mere causality, wherein social structure causes political patterns. The analytical shift to the role of the State and institutions, as illustrated by Sidel (1999) and Abinales (2000), is a step that further closes the openings for the emergence of the "postmodern" in the political science agenda. This is because the explanatory variable goes back to the structures of a grand narrative – that of the state and the economy, even if the object of the inquiry is local politics. For example, Sidel (1999) in his study of local political warlords focused on the explanatory role of the state that came out of the American colonial experience and the economy that was shaped by primitive accumulation. Abinales (2000) dismisses the explanatory role of identity politics and of economic transformation in Southern Mindanao politics. Instead, he considers these as mere outcomes of state formation and political institutions.

While I do not dismiss the importance of these debates, nor the validity of the claims of each of the scholars, I would argue that what is needed to enrich scholarship in the field is to privilege a postmodern reading of Philippine politics and go beyond the usual studies on class, patron-client relationships, and elites within Philippine-styled democracy. A shift in the independent variable may alter the focus of the analysis, but not the over-all structure of inquiry, in that it remains statist. Differences on whether the State is a cause or an effect do not displace its centrality from the argument. What is required is that beyond the privileging of the "other" and the local in political analysis, and beyond arguing whether society or the State are separate or integrated, and which better explains political transformation, the political scientist has to inquire into the non-traditional domains of the political.

One important aspect of this postmodern scholarship is to inquire into the manner by which social institutions, such as the media and popular culture, are involved in the simulation of reality that enables a particular reading of an event by an individual. For example, television programs, both as entertainment, as well as news and public affairs, are powerful conduits for the production of images upon which political behavior can emanate. Another domain for political inquiry is popular culture. Forms of this, seen in texting, "mallings," organized sports, children's games, gambling and other forms of leisure, songs and dances, and rituals have to be considered as legitimate and valid domains for political inquiry, not only by people in the humanities but also in political science. It is in understanding these domains of social production and reproduction that one can have a grasp of the inner mindset of the electorate and the political audience. Their silences can thus be understood in contrast to their political articulations. Both are political texts that warrant political analysis. These kinds of inquiry are very much absent in political science, even as they are already beginning to take root in the humanities and in subaltern and post-colonial historical studies.

### Conducting a Postmodern Inquiry

Political science can be enriched through an adoption of postmodern approaches, such as deconstruction and intuitive interpretation, both of which are heavily based on anti-positivistic and anti-objectivist research traditions. Political scientists can learn much from the literary and historical illustrations of postmodern inquiries, such as those done by Iletto (1998) and Rafael (2000). If one adopts these traditions, concepts such as the State, or policy, or legitimacy will be subjected to critical readings and interpretations, as texts that are socially produced in a particular political context. In the Philippines, for example, there is a need to deconstruct the notion of the State, as a unitary entity that exists. There is also a need to deconstruct the notion of civil

society, particularly made important by the blinding effect of a romantic discourse which sees it only in its positive light, and not in its dark excesses. Furthermore, with postmodern methodology heavily relying on the use of textual narratives, we could treat public policy as a text and subject it to deconstruction to tease out its objectifying and liberating aspects. There is a need to extend the domain of policy and political analysis, to include textual interpretive readings of policy texts, as discourses that are implicated in the production of social meaning, and to treat political events and practices in the context of social production and reproduction of meanings.

However, even as postmodern approaches have to be adopted, we should also be wary of their pitfalls, particularly their tendency towards relativism, their use of esoteric and alienating language, and their tendency to too much reading into symbols, signs and unarticulated reflections of human subjects. Veneracion (2001), in his review of Rafael's book *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (2000), effectively made this point as he contrasted Glenn May (1997) and Rafael Iletto's approaches. Veneracion pointed out the tendency of the latter to hypothesize the state of mind of the writer or to rely on a detailed examination of the reaction of a crowd to a historical actor's speech. I hold no grudge against Iletto's and Rafael's styles, as I view these as a different set of voices in a polyvocal world where Veneracion and May provide other voices. However, I would argue that the bottom-line in any political inquiry is that it must enable political action that would favor liberation over oppression. Hence, relying on postmodern language should not be a license to confuse by casting the argument in words that could not be accessed and only academics could understand, but instead should enable local spaces for resistance, and should be grounded on people's experiences. This is precisely why I refuse to totally debunk the presence of "reality" and of "history", even as they may be considered as forms of grand narrative. Nor I totally abandon the empirical-positivist approaches in research,

even if I am critical of their limitations, as I consider them still useful in their own ways. You could not simply deconstruct without an understanding of the "other" you are deconstructing or unmasking. Furthermore, postmodernism could not dismiss empirical positivism as invalid without contradicting itself. With its adherence on polyvocality, what is opposed is the tendency of the latter to project itself as the absolute and only mediator of truth and knowledge, and not the fact that empirical positivism is just one way of producing a truth claim. Definitely, in a polyvocal world—the use of opinion polls by SWS and Pulse Asia are as legitimate source of political texts as the *teledramas* on television or the postmodern inquiries of Ito or Rafael.

### Challenges to and Opportunities for Postmodernism in the Philippines

There is still a lingering positivism among political scientists, in their emphasis on causality and not on historicity. Elaborate studies describe the political dynamics both at the local and national levels. However, these are done in the context of theory building, wherein empirical data is gathered to validate or reject existing theories and approaches. For example, Sidel (1999) and Abinales (2000) used empirical cases to propose a statist and institutionalist approach to the study of local politics, in opposition to the social-structural studies that have until then dominated the literature. However, beyond understanding politics, one has to be confronted with the challenge of political action. A political scientist is both a scholar and a citizen. While it is incumbent upon us to study empirical realities and dig deep into their causes, we have to face the burden of making our analysis politically relevant. Positivism has the tendency to be apolitical and academic, in being too descriptive and analytical. Thus, beyond positivist statist scholarship is the challenge of political action.

The adoption of a postmodern approach in inquiring into, and its associated task of inquiring into the postmodern



elements of, Philippine politics will be likewise confronted by this challenge. This puts to task the inability, if not total discomfort, of postmodernism to provide a policy prescription to political problems. This limitation emanates from its valorization of polyvocality, and its debunking of grand narratives. As such, postmodern inquiries are further accused of leading to a form of disabling relativism that tends to "depoliticize" by denying the role of grand ideologies in, and the importance of, national struggles. That is, they become too academic, and worse, have the tendency to use alienating language.

It is in this regard that a type of postmodernism that subscribes to critical social theory has better capacity towards political commitment. The use of deconstruction enables postmodern analysis to be critical of "reality" and to foster a transformative agenda. Positivist political science could not simply take on this agenda without compromising its appeal to scientific legitimacy. Hence, its adherents offer themselves as experts that play the role of policy analysts or consultants, to remain within the ambit of the "scientific" and the "professional." On the other hand, the critical postmodern scholar, who does not possess any pretensions of being "scientific" and does not even consider it a liability, may not become a consultant (In fact, she may not even wish to become one) but can easily become a social activist.

While being a postmodernist in the Philippines at this time may be academically fashionable, it is not politically and financially attractive. A postmodern approach to political analysis faces critique coming from all fronts: from conservatives, neo-liberals, social democrats, and the radical left. Conservatives have always been suspicious of political approaches that espouse radical critique of modernity. Neo-liberalism still anchors much of its politics on the role of public policy to provide the enabling conditions for civil society and the market to thrive. In this context, the inability or refusal of postmodernism to produce a policy prescription is seen as irrelevant, and in fact can be considered as a

mere academic exercise that has no bearing on development or governance. On the other hand, the social democrats that also believe in the inherent role of legislative and electoral politics will likewise see postmodernism as a useless exercise. To the radical left, the rejection of postmodernism of class-based resistance as the only basis for struggle, and of the importance of grand ideologies of struggle, is at best, a reactionary Western bourgeois diversionary tactic that protects the growth of elite capitalism and its attendant process of globalization.

Financially, postmodern endeavors do not sit well with funding institutions, particularly those that put privilege on policy relevance and expect policy prescriptions as one of the key result areas. It is therefore understandable why postmodernists thrive in the humanities, where knowledge is pursued in a "liberal" and not a "utilitarian" fashion.

However, I argue that it is about time to use another lens in political science inquiry. It is apparent that the "old" and "usual" lenses that we have used, while necessary in shedding light into political phenomena and have aided us in discovering some partial solutions to our problems, are not sufficient in capturing and transforming political reality. It is important for us to reflect on the fact that much of the political problems that we have at present are questions of legitimacy, the solution to which escapes legislation or policy prescription, or formal State-induced acts. Legitimacy, as a subjective embodiment of political orientation, is a function of social institutions that have lives of their own and could not be captured by mere State sanctions. All the EDSA events, from the first to the third episodes, are manifestations of legitimacy crises, wherein significant sectors of Philippine society acted to question the right of a sitting President. It is almost laughable to argue that a law can be passed to ban "people power." No single piece of legislation or state act can ever cure the complex web of conditions that led to the past and will lead to any future people power mobilizations. Similarly, the credibility problem of the Philippine State could

not be easily solved by legislation. Furthermore, the problems in Mindanao could not be solved simply by autonomy or changing to federalism. Thus, while Abinales (2000) dismisses the use of identity politics as an explanatory variable in Mindanao, as he gives emphasis on the explanatory power of state-local elite "accommodations", it will be foolish, if not too academic, to simply do away with the issue of religion or of ideology in addressing the problem.

At the global arena, the conflict in the Middle East will not go away even if diplomatic agreements will be forged. The war against terrorism will not be won through a conventional manner wherein States collide, but will have to be fought in the domains where agents of terror thrive—in the invisible, in the faceless. The creeping threat of narcopolitics, illegal gambling and crime syndicates, even of the Abu Sayyaf, thrive in the Philippines supported by a vast network that draws its sustenance from the dark side of civil society, nourished by a strong social capital. Such problems are deeply embedded in the discursive terrain within which policy is just one form of, if not irrelevant, textual practice.

Also significant is the fact that many solutions to political problems are based not on concerted efforts driven by a grand ideology, or by policy-inducement, but by the articulation of agents and structures acting as free subjects in the social production and reproduction of political texts. For example, the EDSA II "people power" event was a creation not of revolutionary ideology, but of collective outrage over the brazen acts of individuals colliding with the heroism of others, enabled by modern information technology. The same could be said about the war against the Abu Sayyaf and narcopolitics, wherein state policies will only amount to unleashing the "dogs of war", but will have to rely on civil society mechanisms beyond the state, both at the national and the local levels, to neutralize the social structures that support, if not tolerate "terrorism" and organized crime.

The Philippines, as shaped by our history, has been bequeathed with a weak center and a fuzzy grand narrative. Instead of considering this as a curse that has to be cured by strengthening the State through political modernization and State-building activities aided by policy and legislative instruments, it is about time that we look at this as a blessing. A weak center and a fuzzy grand narrative enable us to create more spaces for civil society to thrive; they enable us to imagine a different mode of institutionalizing power in society. In fact, it is no small feat that despite the heavy dosage of political crises that we have been getting, the Philippine polity has survived. We may have a weak State, but we do not have weak political institutions. This, itself, is a fertile venue for postmodern explorations, as it undeniably suggests the fact that our polity goes beyond the State, and that our political life thrives despite of, and outside the bounds of, the State. The sooner political scientists realize this, the more will politics become "liberated" and "liberating."

#### Final Comments: My Personal "Take"

To the lamentations of Iletto (2001) about an "Orientalism" in political science scholarship in the Philippines, I am adding my own lament about the "Modernist" and "Statist" standards that abound among scholars. It is predictable that these scholars should expect from someone like me – one who argues for the postmodern, to adhere to "modernist" standards such as clarity in prose, avoidance of repetitiveness, and the centrality of rigor and precision in making arguments. I, on the contrary, argue that it is precisely the manner that I conjure my texts and I structure my narrative that I begin to deconstruct the homogenizing and totalizing tendencies of modernist scholarship. This is why I am using the first person, and have deployed some literary elements in my text, to reflect that "I am my text," and that I am not just writing about something so distant and academic. It is also important to point out that the emphasis on theoretical rigor, presented

as logical scientific arguments, becomes just one subterfuge for "group thinking" and loss of individuality. This paper may have not satisfied the expectations of modernist and statist scholars that demand linear argumentation and clear dichotomies and taxonomies. However, it is my modest attempt to become postmodern, and to be "playful" even as I problematize and offer another way of looking at the political. Obviously, it will appear flawed to the scrutinizing eyes of scholars reared and bred in modernist-statist social science, as it can also fall short of the expectations of the "pure" postmodernist. Yet, and as I have pointed out, I am not a "purist" in that I am still cognizant of the disabling elements of postmodernism. I will also not be a dogmatic defender of postmodernism nor will I systematically discredit other modes of inquiry as inferior, just because their modes are different from mine, even if I disagree with them.

Some scholars see the postmodern in its "pure" form, as one wherein politics becomes "impossible" and "irresponsible." To these scholars, I could be seen as a contradiction, in the sense that I espouse a politics of participation and liberation even as I argue for a postmodern approach in doing political science. I do not subscribe to this reading of postmodernism, and argue that these scholars remain trapped in their positivist orientation, in how they let concepts and discourses govern their "labels." I argue that what the postmodern enables is a constant problematization of constructs, a "playfulness" that allows us to deconstruct even the "pure" concepts of the postmodern. It also allows us to use concepts, even as we are also allowed to appropriate and redefine them, even if this means opposing the very tenets that the "purist" among postmodern scholars would espouse.

Some may also criticize my argument that "civil society" pre-dates the State as anachronistic, and have run contrary to how civil society was used by the "great" and "grand" theorists such as Hegel and Gramsci. However, my response to this is short: "I simply don't care." The beauty of

postmodernism and of deconstruction is that they enable us to appropriate terms and snatch them from their theoretical and conceptual security, and make them insecure by exposing them to re-interpretations. This is also the argument of many feminist and post-colonial subaltern studies as they engage patriarchal and colonial discourses. The power to name, re-name, and appropriate what is already named is not the prerogative of the "dead white men" who dominated political theory and philosophy, and history. Conceptual taxonomies are not to be just determined by the colonial and the great scholar. Civil society is not the property of Hegel; and to arrest its meaning and imply that its definition is already cast in stone is a practice that is oppressive, not to mention uncreative. Furthermore, my use of civil society to refer to community is not even novel, since others before me have made the same argument. What I have added is to divorce civil society from its statist anchor, and use it to "re-name" communities that existed prior, outside or unconscious of, the State. In doing so, we will "empower" these institutions and grant them conceptual legitimacy more powerful than the taxonomic labels we have used to classify them – as nascent, pre-historic, or worse, primitive.

As proof of my willingness to depart from a "purist" interpretation, I uphold the view that deconstruction is a method of inquiry. This argument runs contrary to Derrida himself, as one who equated "method" with "domestication" and therefore erosion of radical potential. While I agree with Derrida on the notion that some discourses, particularly those that are anchored on positivist science, indeed domesticate and de-radicalize, I will disagree with him on the notion that "words" and "concepts" are so static that in labeling a liberating word such as "deconstruction" as a "method" would instantly overturn its radical power. Human subjects create our own stories of liberation; it is in the manner we appropriate concepts, and not in the fact that these concepts are labeled as such, that we could either be free or be enslaved. After all, "deconstruction" is a radical process enabled by conscious and empowered human

subjects. Calling it a "method" would not automatically assimilate these "free-thinking" subjects into mindless "drones" working for a single "collective." A deconstructionist would not simply allow to be sucked into the rigors of a methodology, even if such method is "deconstruction" itself. After all, the beauty of deconstruction is that it enables its own self-problematization, what I call as "self-deconstruction."

As further proof of my departure from dogma, I am not making a case for the rejection of the necessity of State-centered political analysis, nor the importance of policy as well as grand theory, nor the validity of empirical-positivist research. I am also not arguing that we throw out the State as an institution. Nor I am making an argument about the infallibility and the ideal nature of civil society, for I am cognizant of its dark excesses. What I have, and "repetitively," argued is for us to go beyond these and to re-imagine "politics" and the "political" using a postmodern lens. I am not even arguing that it is only through the postmodern approach that one can depose the centrality of the State in political inquiry. I am cognizant of the many works done by others before me, who are not postmodern yet have conducted political inquiries beyond the State. What I am arguing is the point that postmodernism could offer us another perspective; maybe not a better, but still a different, way of inquiring into the political in Philippine society.

Academic scholarships and political activism are not merely vocations which one takes. They are also domains for governance, wherein certain types of power arrangements and modes of legitimation operate. The choice of strategies for mobilization is as political as the choice of theoretical perspectives to govern our inquiries into the problems confronting society. There is a need to relocate the political to make it defined not only in the context in which we fight to transform the State, but also in how we produce our own discourses of resistance, and how we produce our truth and identities. This will necessarily lead to

a relocation of the political away from totalizing grand narratives to what Laclau and Mouffe (1985) referred to as "radical pluralism." This transformation will allow us to wage collective action against the policies of the State in all fronts. We can wage it as organized national struggles carried by federations and alliances, or as a movement to establish a regional civil society. We can also wage it as local and everyday modes of coping and resistance through organic communities using ideological institutions nurtured and bred in their own local contexts. We can also wage it in our struggles with our own personal ghosts – a true reflection of the fact that the political is not only seen in the public and the visible, but also in the private and the personal. ❖

#### References:

- Abinales, Patricio N. *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000.
- Agger, Ben. *Critical Social Theories: An Introduction*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998.
- Allen, Robert C. (Ed.). *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulations*. New York: Semiotext (e), 1983.
- Cohen, J.L. and Arato, A. *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1992.
- Dreyfus, Hubert and Paul Rabinow. *Michel Foucault, Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. 2nd. Ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Habermas, Jurgens. *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. I*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Reply" in *Habermas: Critical Debates*, edited by David Held and James Thompson. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "New Social Movements," *Telos*, No. 49, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Legitimation Crisis*. London: Heinemann, 1976.



- \_\_\_\_\_. *Toward a Rational Society*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1972.
- Hall, Stuart. *Policing the Crisis: Muggers, the State and Law and Order*. London: Macmillan, 1978.
- Haynes, Jeffrey. *Democracy and Civil Society in the Third World: Politics and New Political Movements*. Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 1997.
- Hollinger, Robert. *Postmodernism and the Social Sciences: A Thematic Approach*. California: Sage Publications, 1994.
- Ileto, Reynaldo C. "Orientalism and the Study of Philippine Politics." *Philippine Political Science Journal*. Vol. 22, No. 45 (2001), pp. 1-32.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The 'Unfinished Revolution' in Philippine Political Discourse," in *Filipinos and their Revolution: Event, Discourse and Historiography*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998.
- Jessop, Bob. *State Theory: Putting the Capitalist in Its Place*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.
- Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. Translated by Winston Moore and Paul Cammack. London: Theftord Press, 1985.
- Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Explained*. Sidney: Power Publications, 1992.
- May, Glenn A. *Inventing a Hero: The Posthumous Re-creation of Andres Bonifacio*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1997.
- McCoy, Alfred W (ed.). *Lives at the Margin: Biography of Filipinos Obscure, Ordinary and Heroic*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000.
- Migdal, Joel S. *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Mulder, Niels. *Inside Southeast Asia: Religion, Everyday Life and Cultural Change*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Press, 1996.
- Offe, Claus. *Modernity and the State: East and West*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996.

Rafael, Vicente L. *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History*.  
Quezon City: Ateneo De Manila University Press, 2000.

Sarup, Madan. *An Introductory Guide to Post-Structuralism and  
Postmodernism*. Atlanta: University of Georgia Press, 1993.

Schecter, Darrow. *Sovereign States or Political Communities? Civil  
Society and Contemporary Politics*. Manchester and New York:  
Manchester University Press, 2000.

Scott, James C. "Freedom and Freehold: space, People and State  
Simplification in Southeast Asia" in David Kelly and Anthony Reid  
(eds.). *Asian Freedoms: The Idea of Freedom in East and  
Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Sidel, John T. *Capital, Coercion, and Crime: Bossism in the  
Philippines*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.

Veneracion, Jaime B. Review Article of Vicente L. Rafael's *White Love  
and Other Events in Filipino History* (Quezon City: Ateneo de  
Manila University Press, 2000). *Philippine Political Science  
Journal*. Vol. 22, No. 45 (2001), pp. 160-163.