A Tale of Two Democracies: Scenes from Bilateral Philippine-U.S. History of Electoral Democracy

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1. Introduction

In November 1953, the Philippines held its third presidential election since the end of World War II, in which the opposition Nationalista Party candidate and the former Secretary of Defense, Ramon Magsaysay, defeated ruling Liberal Party President Elpidio Quirino by a large margin. Having shown that "democracy works," or that free elections can change regimes that are corrupt and lose the confidence of their constituencies, the 1953 election was praised by the U.S. government as exemplar of Asia's liberal democracy. The suppression of the Huk rebellion, a communist-led insurgency in the rice growing provinces of central Luzon, was also praised as triumph of the Philippine anti-Communist crusade.

As has been time and again shown in Cold War history, the Philippine Election of 1953 had an aspect of political maneuvering engineered by U.S. agencies including the CIA, Military, and the U.S. Embassy to replace Quirino's administration, which was discredited by them as unpopular, corrupt, difficult (hard to handle), and above all, incapable of solving the serious crisis facing the country. It is also well known that Edward G. Lansdale, after his legendary success in the Philippines, was dispatched to South Vietnam in the hope of duplicating this triumph, which would end up in fiasco. The story is thus referred to by Cold War historians as an episode preceding the gravest failure of America's Cold Wars, in which the U.S. government was euphoric at victory in the Philippines without understanding such "realities" as peasant causes, which actually were remote from communist ideology, or the harm of elitist politics which scholars of Philippine politics would soon find as the root evil of Filipino society.[1]

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Here I would like to reverse the question and ask why the Americans could make such a remarkable "success" despite what they did and did not know about "realities" of Philippine society. To answer this question, this paper will scan the experiences of American "Cold Warriors" in the Philippines, especially Gabriel Kaplan (1901-1968), a New York republican politician who came to the Philippines without any particular background knowledge of the country. By asking why a person like Kaplan could be so successfully involved in the Philippine politics during the 1950s, this paper portrays such experiences as not so much a Cold War episode, but as one chapter in the Tale of Two Democracies, the Philippines and the United States, entangled with each other through both colonial and postcolonial eras.

This approach reflects the author's response to the recent postcolonial debate among scholars of Philippine-U.S relations ignited by Filipino historian Reynaldo C. Ileto. In his lectures at the University of Hawaii, which were published in 1999, Ileto uncovered 1) how persistently Philippine politics have been portrayed by political scientists, predominantly Americans, as representing "lack and failure" for which evils of indigenous political culture dominated by "traditional political elites" are primarily responsible; and 2) how deeply these assertions rely on an accumulation of texts dating back to the very beginning of the U.S. occupation of the Philippines, which reflect the desires and fears of American colonial officials who had reasons to portray Filipino indigenous culture as troublesome and the Filipino people as a "juvenile race" to be put under American tutelage.[2] Ileto's way of presenting his case could be a subject of

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comments and corrections regarding Mr. Kaplan's career and his personalities, which would be a great help to finalize this paper as well as for the author's further studies on this important aspect of the Philippine-U.S. history.

[1] Benedict J. Kerkvliet, The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Nick Cullather, Illusions of Influence (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1994).

[2] Reynaldo C. Ileto, "Orientalism and the Study of Philippine Politics," Knowing America's Colony: A Hundred Years from the Philippine War (University of Hawaii Center for Philippine Studies, 1999), 41-65. In this article Ileto gave critical reviews on the works of American political scientists including the following: Benedict R. O'G Anderson, "Cacique Democracy in the Philippines" New Left Review 169 (May-June 1988): 3-33; Stanley Karnow, In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines (New York: Random House, 1989); Carl H. Lande, Leaders, Factions, and Parties: The Structure of Philippine Politics (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asian Studies, monograph Series no.6, 1965); Glenn A. May, "Private Presher and Sergeant Vergara: The Underside of the Philippine-American War," in Reappraising an Empire: New Perspective on Philippine-American History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press,

counter-argument as purposely selective among current writings of American political scientists; however, it is nevertheless difficult to refute his points that there have been tendencies among scholars to give a picture of Philippine politics 1) as "derogation" with "bossism, patrimonialism, and cacique democracy," on the one hand, and 2) "passivity and powerlessness of the broad mass" on the other, as one of the American political scientists targeted by Ileto admitted in a recent book.[3]

Among the possible ways to avoid as well as go beyond the dualist bias in the study of Philippine-U.S. relations, the author is particularly attracted to the institutional/state approach, which stresses a "peculiar American nature" of the Philippine state institutional structure rather than traditional political culture or Spanish influences as determinant on the course of Philippine history.[4] The author also finds it necessary to re-read and re-interpret American texts on the colonial and postcolonial Philippines in their own terms, which may reveal an abundance of experiences showing a mixture of interactions between self and the colonial "other." In the latter's respect recent research in British history aiming to illustrate the interwoven texture of nations, both insular and overseas, may be a good guide.[5] It is equally

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1984), 35-37; Alfred W. McCoy, ed., An Anarchy of Families: State and Society in the Philippines (Madison: University of Wisconsin Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1993); Norman G. Owen and Michael Cullinane, eds., Compadre Colonialism: Philippine-American Relations, 1898-1941 (Ann Arbor: Michigan Papers on South and Southeast Asia no.3, 1971).

[3] Eva-Lotta E. Hedman and John T. Sidel, Philippine Politics and Society in the Twentieth Century: Colonial Legacies, Post-colonial trajectories (London: Routledge, 2000), 4-5. The author also raised questions about soundness of "political culture" theory as determinant of the course of Philippine history in his book published in 1997: Nakano Satoshi, Firipin Dokuritsu Mondaishi (A History of Philippine Independence Problem) (Tokyo: Ryukei Shosha, 1997), 5-6. See also his following articles in English on colonial relations between Filipino political elites and the U.S. government in the light of economic development and security issues, especially of the 1930s: "US Philippine Policy and the Interpretation of National Interest: The FDR Administration and the Philippine Question, 1935-42," The Journal of American Studies [The American Studies Association of Korea], Vol.28, Number 2 (1996 Winter): 475-502; "The 'Windfall' Revenue Controversy (1937-1941): A Perspective on Philippine Commonwealth History," Pilipinas 28 (Spring 1997): 31-60.

[4] Hedman and Sidel, p.6.

[5] Linda Colley, "What is Imperial History Now?" in What is History Now? ed. David Cannadine, (London: Palgrave, 2002); Philip D. Morgan, "Encounters between British and 'Indigenous' People," in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850.* eds. Martin Daunton and Pick Halpern (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

important, however, to distinguish peculiarities of American imperial experiences from the British. In the latter's experiences, overseas imperial expansion might have considerably restructured domestic notions of the nation state, while the American notions of race, color, citizenship, liberal democracy, and nation state had been basically conceived domestically through continental expansion as well as its late 19th century major transformation as a nation state, so they were not as much affected by imperial encounters as they affected the ways of imperial encounters.[6]

In the following pages, I would like to narrate a story of colonial and postcolonial encounters between the two peoples, keeping the above points of discussion in mind. The major part of the argument will be devoted to a bilateral history of two electoral democracies, which brought the Cold Warriors' campaign "success" during the 1950s (Section 2 & 3). The discussion will then be directed to notions of Filipino "traditional political elites" in the eyes of American officials who chose to carry out their projects through the cooperation of "emerging new elites," while constantly disappointed with former "new elites" who turned out to be "traditional political elites" in their eyes (Section 4).

2. Cold Warriors in the Philippines

Personnel Discontinuity in Postcolonial Philippine-U.S. relations

One of the noticeable features of postcolonial Philippine-U.S. relations is a lack of significant continuity, or insignificance of slight continuity, if any, in American personnel dealing with the Philippines, while remarkable continuity prevails in the whole structure of bilateral relations, as evident in the preferential trade relations which ceased only in 1974 with the termination of the Laurel-Langley Agreement, as well as a protracted presence of U.S. military bases, which ended in 1992 only after they were paralyzed by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo.

The lack of personnel continuity in contrast to structural continuity was more or less a result of U.S. colonial policy of swift "Filipinization" (i.e., transferring authority

[6] I have elaborated on this aspect of American imperial experiences in a recent article in Japanese, entitled Nakano Satoshi, "Amerika Teikoku to Firipiino" (The U.S. Empire and the Filipinos), Rekishigaku Kenkyu (Journal of Historical Studies) 777 (July 2003): 12-22. Its summary in English is found on *ibid.*: 62-63.

to Filipinos) in the colonial government, while the Americanization of norms was secured through installing political and judiciary institutions notably similar to those of the United States. By 1921, over 96 percent of the personnel in the civil service of the Philippine government had been "Filipinized."[7] After the Philippine Commonwealth was established in 1935 with Manuel Quezon as its president elected by a nation-wide election, the U.S. government maintained the Office of the U.S. High Commissioner as the only residential agency staffed by Americans, but did not even have any outposts in Cebu or Davao, where the Japanese Consulate had had ones. Compared to European and Japanese colonies, the American residential population in the prewar Philippines was quite small, numbering only 8,739 in the 1939 census, being far outnumbered by Chinese (117,461) and Japanese (29,262).[8] There were not any institutions for training Philippine specialists in universities or government agencies including State Department.

None of the "Cold Warriors" who came to the Philippines had any significant prewar experience there. One of them, Edward G. Lansdale, set foot on the islands for the first time during the last days of the Second World War, stayed there as an intelligence officer until 1946. This wartime experience might have lead him to a Philippine assignment after joining the OPC (Office of Policy Coordination), the CIA's branch for clandestine operations.[9] Frank H. Golay (1915-90), not a warrior but a scholar joining the Cold War, used to tell about his first glimpse of the Philippine islands being "through the periscope" of his submarine during the War. After being awarded a Ph.D. in international commodity trading in 1951, Golay turned to the Philippines as his subject, possibly when the CIA hired him in 1952. Later he became an influential professor of Philippine political economy at Cornell University.[10] On the other extreme, William J. Pomeroy (1916-) was a "Cold Warrior"-turned-Scholar who joined the Huk rebellion as an American communist. He had never been to the

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[7] Joseph R. Hayden, The Philippines: a Study of National Development (New York: MacMillan Co., 1942, reprit, New York: MacMillan Co., 1955), 96-97.

[8] Commission of Census, Census of the Philippine Islands (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1940).

[9] Cecil B. Currey, Edward Lansdale: the Unquiet American (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), 31-55.

[10] Frank Golay was the dean of Department of Economics during 1963-1967 and Director of the Southeast Asia Program from 1970 to 1976. See "Security Investigation Data for Sensitive Position," October 1967. Frank Golay Papers, Rare and Manuscript Collection, Carl A. Kroch Library, Cornell University (hereinafter Frank Golay Papers); and Frank H. Golay, Face of Empire: United States-Philippine relations, 1898-1946 (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1998), xii.

Philippines before the War, either. He was an active member of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. (CPUSA) local chapter in Rochester, New York and was drafted and sent to the Philippines as a G.I. in 1944, coming to know and sympathize with the Hukbalahap (Peoples Army against Japan), one of the most powerful anti-Japanese guerrilla forces, which originated in the leftist peasant movement in central Luzon. Demanding agrarian reform as well as justice for wartime collaborators including many landlords of their land, Hukbalahap's political body Democratic Alliance won several congressional seats in the first postwar election in 1946, only to be deprived of their seats on the pretext of election violence and irregularities. Central Luzon planes were dragged into a state of civil war after August 1946. After being discharged from military service in 1947, William Pomeroy returned "to write a book" on the Huk, join them, and marry a comrade among them.[11]

Gabriel Kaplan, New York Politician in the Philippines

How did Gabriel Kaplan come to the Philippines then? The National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (available on internet) notes that Kaplan was "an active New York City republican politician," who served as "legal counsel to the Citizens Union and the League of Women Voters in the 1940's, and sought voter reform through support of such issues as permanent voter registration and proportional representation." The Gabriel Kaplan Papers at Cornell University Library tell us how Kaplan, as a New York City progressive republican, became an undisputed election expert in the crafty, old foxy electoral politics of New York City and State through a series of repeated defeats from the late 1920s on, some of which involved himself as a candidate.

During the 1930s, New York City progressive republicans supported the New Deal and Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia's reform platform, struggling to expand their strength by even aligning themselves with the American Labor Party. In contrast, the main basis of support for conservative republicans was in upper New York State rural communities. The progressive leader was Kenneth Simpson, the republican leader of New York County who was elected to the Congress in 1940, but met with an untimely death the following year.[12] Kaplan was Simpson's right-hand man. After his death, Kaplan continued to work for the progressives, except during World War II, when he enlisted in the Army Air Force as chief of staff at Replacement Depot and was awarded

[11] "William J. Pomeroy," Entry 134B: Investigative Records Repository, RG319; National Archives at College Park (hereinafter NACP). William J. Pomeroy, The Forest: a Personal Record of the Huk Guerrilla Struggle in the Philippines (New York: International Publishers, 1963).

[12] Judith Stein, "The Impact of the New Deal on New York Politics: Kenneth Simpson and the Republican Party" The New York Historical Society Quarterly LVI-1 (January 1972): 29-53.

the Legion of Merit for his contribution as a skilled organizer in reorganizing its personnel division and the Air Force replacement system in the Southwest Pacific Areas.[13]

In September 1951, however, Kaplan suddenly resigned as legal counsel to Stanley M. Issacs, Kaplan's long time colleague and the New York City Council's minority leader (of only one member, though).[14] He then flew to the Philippines in October as "a political analyst for the Committee for a Free Asia, Inc.," which was in fact a cover for CIA. He seldom returned to the New York political scene after that, and ended up as the president of the Community Development Counseling Service, Inc. in Arlington, Washington DC, which was an agency for training overseas allies for the U.S. campaign against communism. Being a heavy smoker, Kaplan died of kidney cancer in 1969. Latter half of his papers are mostly related to his experiences in the Philippines and community development projects, which nevertheless are not mentioned in the National Union Catalogue.

It was the Committee of Five Million, a civic campaign Kaplan joined as a chief organizer in 1949 against the re-election of Democratic New York City mayor William O'Dwyer that led him to the Philippine assignment. To expose evils of the city's corrupt government, the committee made a survey of conditions in slum areas of the city and attacked the breakdown of city inspection services as permitting spreading "rat infestation." The campaign itself was not successful and O'Dwyer was re-elected in 1950, though he was to resign in the thick of corruption charges after less than one year. Kaplan worked in this unsuccessful civic campaign with Desmond Fitzgerald, the chairman of the Committee of Five Million who would soon join the CIA and invite Kaplan to join Lansdale's projects in the Philippines.[15]

By the time Kaplan was assigned to the Philippines, the U.S. government had already labeled President Quirino as hopeless behind closed doors, while Lansdale and other agents were setting up a political maneuver to elect Ramon Magsaysay the president in the 1953 general elections. Making the 1951 midyear election a "free and honest" one was the first step in the plot. Since Election Day was set for November 13, National Movement for Free Election (NAMFREL) was inaugurated in August as a civic

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[13] "Citation for Legion of Merit"; *New York World Telegram* (December 18, 1945). Gabriel Kaplan Papers, Rare and Manuscript Collection, Carl A. Kroch Library, Cornell University (hereinafter Gabriel Kaplan Papers).

[14] Stanley M. Issacs to Gabriel Kaplan, September 10, 1951. Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

[15] Evan Thomas, The Very Best Men: Four Who Dared: The Early Years of the CIA (New York: Simon & Schuster Inc., 1995), 49-50, 58.

organization headed by Jaime Ferrer, then the 35-year-old National Commander of the Philippine Veterans Legion. The organization was secretly financed by the CIA.

Kaplan's official assignment commissioned by Committee for a Free Asia, Inc. was "to observe and report upon the registration, voting and general election procedures as evidenced in the forthcoming Philippine elections."[16] On His arrival in the Philippines on October 26, though, the Manila Times reported that he "[w]ill work with NAMFREL for clean elections."[17] With only two weeks left until Election Day, Kaplan toured around the Philippines with Jaime Ferrer visiting local NAMFREL chapters and giving lectures to election watchers about how to find and guard against election fraud. Meanwhile, Defense Secretary Magsaysay ordered Armed Forces to provide security for "any candidates" who appealed to him for protection, sending regular troops to provinces in order to ensure due process and prevent fraudulent practices in voter registration, voting, and ballot counting at the request of Commission of Election (COMELEC).[18] The ruling Liberal Party's capacity to perform election fraud was thus effectively neutralized by the armed forces and civic vigilance organized by NAMFREL so that opposition Nationalista Party could win a landslide victory in the election.

This tour, though short, made Kaplan *de facto* chief executive of NAMFREL, because his knowledge and experience were sorely needed to build up the movement and other various civic organizations for the coming 1953 election. So Kaplan returned to the Philippines in April 1952 as a representative of the Catherwood Foundation, another cover for the CIA, together with his wife and a daughter "to work with the Philippine government in pointing the way to install the democratic processes."[19] It was an open secret, however, that Kaplan would not work "with" Quirino, but Magsaysay, who still was defense secretary under Quirino but was seen as the U.S.-favored No. 1 presidential hopeful. The Philippine government once seriously considered deporting of Kaplan as "persona non grata" but finally decided to tolerate him, fearing confrontation with the U.S. government could escalate to the point of no return.

In April 1953, Magsaysay resigned as defense secretary, declaring that he had switched to the opposition Nationalista Party and would run in the coming presidential election. The Magsaysay for President Movement (MPM) started under the Kaplan's supervision with financial support from the United States and its campaign song,

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[16] George H. Greens, Jr. to Gabriel Kaplan, October 8, 1951. Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

[17] Manila Times October 27, 1951. Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

[18] Jose V. Abueva, Ramon Magsaysay: A Political Biography (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1971) 197.

[19] Manila Times April 19, 1952. Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

"Mambo Magsaysay," composed by Raul Manglapus became a big hit. Though it was only natural and even justifiable for Quirino and the Liberal Party to claim "U.S. intervention" in the election, pointing to Lansdale and Kaplan by name, they finally realized that it was useless and that the only way left to them was to play good looser in November 1953. Magsaysay got about 2.9 million votes, more than double the Quirino count (1.3 million).[20]

3. Elections as a Meeting Point of Two Democracies

Election Fraud in Two Democracies

It was indeed a rare victory for Gabriel Kaplan, who had seen defeat after defeat during more than two decades of electoral politics in New York. Asking why he could be so successful and useful in the Philippines of the 1950s should lead one to Philippine elections as a meeting point between two democracies, with seemingly no borders between them.

Scholars of Philippine politics have long depicted elections as an arena exposing Filipino political culture, in which the liberal democratic institutions that Americans installed have been systematically manipulated and exploited by "traditional political elites." They are generally seen as descendants of *principalia,* the landed intermediary class in Christian Filipino society during the Spanish colonial period, who were entrusted with various administrative positions by the Spanish colonial government at the parish level and endowed with such hereditary privileges as tax exemptions. Glenn May argues that this class of people "had learned not how to serve government, but rather how to use it... as a means to the end of promoting particular interests" under the Spanish regime. His findings show that fraudulent practices had already been rampant in *gobernadorcillo* (municipal mayoral) elections, so he concludes that modern day Philippine election fraud is a product of an encounter of American democracy with the "old realities" of Filipino politics, in which the election is

[20] Joseph B. Smith, Portrait of a Cold Warrior (New York: Putnam, 1976, Quezon City: Plaridel Books, 1976), 258; Currey, pp.105-106; Jorge R. Coquia, The Philippine Presidential Election of 1953 (Manila: University Publishing Co., 1955), 121-135, 291.

"not a ritual worthy of respect but rather a charade, silly and laughable."[21] A well-known textbook of Philippine politics authored by David Steinberg also refers to vote buying, "cemetery residents on registration lists," and political violence as the characteristic features of post-World War II Philippine democracy.[22]

The presidential election of 1949 has been cited as a good example of this aspect, showing the extent of fraud by which the ruling Liberal Party mobilized every possible means including the police and private armies to secure victory. Newspapers reported numerous cases of registration list padding, multiple voting, ballot and ballot box tampering, and acts of intimidation and violence, with more than 100 killed as the result of the latter. Even the COMELEC report claiming the election was "peaceful and orderly," attached an appendix detailing province-by-province accounts of irregularities and violence, which contradicts the main text of the report.[23] A survey conducted in 1951 revealed that registration list padding amounted to at least 404,525 voters out of the total 5,156,972 registered. The number of voters was nearly doubled by padding in Lanao, a Muslim populated province of Mindanao, an incident that would become an object of ridicule in "Mambo Magsaysay:" "Birds they voted in Lanao!"[24]

What scholars of Philippine politics have often overlooked or purposely excluded from their accounts, however, is the fact that all of these instances of election fraud could simply be explained as an outgrowth of the Americanization of political institutions rather than stemming from indigenous culture or Spanish influences. Neither should it go unheeded that election fraud was still, not to say rampant, but a tangible reality in American political life during the late 1940s to early 1950s. If one is to ridicule Lanao, where even the birds had voted for Quirino in 1949, one must also ridicule Texas, where "Manuel's dead father" voted for Lyndon B. Johnson in the 1948 Democratic state primary for the U.S. Senate. In this election, 200 ballots were padded into the "Ballot Box 13" from Jim Wells County under the direction of George Pearl, a local "boss" controlling the Hispanic population in the county. Johnson won the primary

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[21] Glenn A. May, "Civic Ritual and Political Reality: Municipal Elections in the Late Nineteenth Century," in Philippine Colonial Democracy (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1989), 35-36.

[22] David Joel Steinberg, Philippines: a Singular and a Plural Place (Colorado: Westview Press, 3d edition, 1994), 110.

[23] Ma. Aurora Carbonell-Catilo, et.al, Manipulated Elections (Manila: M.A.A.C. Catilo, 1985), 13-17.

[24] Jorge R. Coquia, The Philippine Presidential Election of 1953 (Manila: University Publishing Co., 1955), 111; Raul Manglapus, "Mambo Magsaysay," 1953.

by a narrow margin of 87.[25]

New York (city as well as state) was another "heartland" of American election fraud all the way since the 19th century. In the address before the Republican School of Politics Hamilton College in July 1950, Gabriel Kaplan told the audience an episode that happened shortly before the 1938 midyear election, in which his office sent letters to 1,908 male voters whose names and addresses were on the voter registration list in four Albany River wards and found 31 percent of these letters were returned as undeliverable. The Election Frauds Bureau of the New York State was still busy in the fall of 1948 tracking registration and voting fraud, finding some forty names had been registered from the single address of a Manhattan building.[26]

Making of Twins: Australian Ballots and the Two Electoral Democracies

These resemblances in election fraud can by no means be dismissed as either coincidental or superficial, but stem from the institutional similarities between the two electoral democracies dating back to the turn of the previous century, when the brand-new electoral system known as the "Australian Ballot" was introduced to the both societies more or less simultaneously. Moreover, it was not only similarities in institutions and the simultaneity of their introduction, but also the likeness of political notions as well as political configuration of contests that lead to the introduction of the new system, a move that would eventually make the two democracies remarkable twins. To explore these points, it is necessary to look back along the path of installing electoral democracy in the Philippines during the early American colonial period.

When the U.S. government declared to stay on the islands in 1898 as its new sovereign power, America's mission was declared as "benevolent assimilation substituting the mild sway of justice and right for arbitrary rule."[27] This means they wanted to substitute themselves for the government that Filipino revolutionaries, largely composed by *principalias,* believed to have established as a legitimate one, even though it was only a neonate and had nothing but bleak prospects of survival in the age of relentless imperialism. No matter what the Filipino revolutionaries professed, the

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[25] "Manuel's dead father" was a favorite story told by Johnson himself. See Mark Kahl, Ballot Box 13: How Lyndon Johnson Won His 1948 Senate Race by 87 Contested Votes (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1983), xi; Robert A. Caro, Means of Ascent: The Years of Lyndon Johnson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 209-350.

[26] "Address on Permanent Personal Registration by Gabriel L. Kaplan before the Republican School of Politics Hamilton College", July 24, 1950, Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

[27] James A. Blount, American Occupation of the Philippines 1898/1912 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons; 1913; reprint, Manila: Solar Publishing Co., 1986), 149.

U.S. government was determined to replace them; and the war followed. Filipinos were defeated, but the war was a fierce one, killing more than 4,000 U.S. and 20,000 Filipino troops between 1899 and 1902, bringing about a demographic catastrophe in some parts of the islands, largely due to outbreaks of cholera, other epidemics and famine, for which the U.S. policy of "re-concentration" was at least partly responsible.[28]

An electoral system was introduced into the Philippines under these circumstances at an unprecedented pace of offering enfranchisement to a colonial people. As early as August 1899, a military order was issued to hold elections in "pacified" municipalities for the purpose of choosing town mayors pro tempore by "viva voce vote of residents."[29] Another military order issued next year provided the basic codes of elections including suffrage and secret balloting, though skeletal.[30] Then in January 1901, the Philippine Commission enacted the General Act for the Organization of Municipal Government, providing full details to the election codes.[31] This velocity suggests how essential it was for the U.S. government to hold elections as proof of desirability and the "consent of the governed" for them to replace Filipino "arbitrary rule," since they had to persuade dissident Filipinos and anti-imperialist Americans who opposed the U.S. annexation of the Philippines. The policy proved to be a great success. As elected public offices were extended from municipal mayor and board members in 1901 to provincial governors and councilors in 1905, national assemblymen in 1907, senators in 1916, and finally, the president and vice president in 1935, American officials became confident in asserting that the majority of Filipinos not only accepted but also appreciated U.S. colonial rule. Such a claim was endorsed when the Japanese invaded and occupied the Philippines during World War II, only to find that "pro-American views prevail among every class of people. They are firm and irremovable."[32]

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[28] Alan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, For the Common Defense (New York: Free Press, 1984), 296-297.

[29] General Orders No.43, Headquarters Department of the Pacific and Eighth Army Corps (Manila, P.I., August 8, 1899), E5/10265-1, RG350, NACP; Eldon Cobb Evans, A History of the Australian Ballot System in the United States (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1917), 4-6.

[30] General Orders No.40, Office of the U.S. Military Governor in the Philippine Islands (March 29, 1900). E5/10265-2, RG350, NACP.

[31] General Orders No.82, A General Act for the Organization of Municipal Governments in the Philippine Islands (February 13, 1901). E5/10265-4, RG350, NACP.

[32] Imperial General Headquarters, Army Section, "Recent conditions in the Philippines," [Daihon'ei Rikugunbu, "Saikin Ni Okeru Hitô Jijô,"] 31 March 1944, in Defense Agency National Institute for

In addition to the aspect of swiftness, one other remarkable feature of the election codes of 1901 was their graphically specific directions on how to conduct the secret ballot,[33] known as "Australian ballot," which was named after the country that introduced the system for the first time in 1856. By and large the same instruction as issued by the Philippine Commission could be found in the New York Ballot Reform Law of 1890.[34] Australian ballot was first introduced into the United States in 1888 after years of election reform movements, being rapidly spread to 32 states and 2 territories by the 1892 election, seven more by 1896, despite the fact that every state continued to determine their own forms of voter registration, balloting, voting and vote counting.[35] These facts show U.S. colonial officials introduced Filipinos to a very new brand of electoral system, which had not even taken a firm hold in the United States.

In order to understand the significance of introducing the Australian ballot to

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Defense Studies, Southern Territories Military Administration Archives [Bôei Kenkyûsho Shozô Nanpô Gunsei Shiryô], Philippines General [Hitô Zenpan], #122. The author discussed how the Japanese Military dealt with these "pro-American" political elites during the war in the following: NAKANO Satoshi, "Appeasement and Coercion" in The Philippines Under Japan: Occupation Policy and Reaction eds., IKEHATA Setsuho & Ricardo Torota Jose (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999).

[33] (a) A portion of the room shall be cut off by a railing and gate. Within the space thus enclosed the Board of Judges shall sit, and tables, together with blank ballots and writing materials, shall be placed for the convenience of voters. Screens shall separate the tables from each other. (b) Blank ballots, with the names of the several offices to be filled printed thereon and with suitable spaces for the insertion of the names of the persons voted for, shall be provided in sufficient numbers by the Provincial Governor before every general or especial election. (c) Each elector shall fill out his ballot at one of the tables by writing in the names he desires to vote, then fold his ballot and deposit it in the ballot box, stating to the Board of Judges his name and the barrio in which he resides. (d) The Board of Judges shall exclude the ballot of anyone whose name is found not to be included in the official list. (e) The number of electors admitted to the enclosed space shall never exceed the number of tables. (f) Any elector who cannot read and write shall be assisted by the two tellers, one of whom in the presence of the other shall fill out a ballot in accordance with the dictation of the elector. (g) The Board of Judges shall provide a suitable ballot box with a slit in the top; they shall see that the box is empty and shall lock the same immediately before the voting begins. While an election is in progress, the ballot box shall be kept locked. Article 11, General Orders No.82, 7-9.

[34] How to Vote: Complete Text of the Ballot Reform Law of the State of New York and Other Valuable Information for Voters (New York: Bulletin Printing Company, 1890).

[35] Evans, pp.17-28.

the Philippines, one may have to take into account the sociopolitical context of its introduction into the United States. Though ballots had been widely used in American elections since the early 19th century, they basically were in principle to be provided by the voters themselves and, in practice, were distributed by political machines as "party tickets." There was no secrecy in voting because "party tickets" could be distinguished from a distance by color, size and design. Vote buying was rampant, and people were willing to vote in public to ensure reciprocity with their bosses or unions. In this way, election was a ritual demonstrating the power of the bosses or a spirited contest between them.[36] The Australian Ballot was primarily considered as a measure to introduce "law and order" into the anarchy of the election, which was becoming more and more of a circus in the midst of swelling populations of urban immigrants.[37] Reformers also desired to cut off ties between the masses and the bosses, who stood in the way of their efforts for good government. As Theodore Roosevelt lamented:

> [R]eformers have more than once discovered when the mass of the voters stolidly voted against them, and in favor of a gang of familiar scoundrels, chiefly because they had no sense of fellow-feeling with their would-be benefactor.[38]

It was the *principalias* (i.e., "traditional political elites") who fought or were fighting against Americans as revelers or revolutionaries and whom the U.S. government identified as enemies of the "good government" it had formed in the Philippines as expressed in the following words of William H. Taft:

> [W]e are the trustees and guardians of the whole Filipino people, and peculiarly of the ignorant masses, and that our trust is not discharged until those masses are given education sufficient to know their civil rights and maintain them against a more powerful class and safely to exercise

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[36] Peter H. Argersinger, "New Perspective on Election Fraud in the Gilded Age," Political Science Quarterly 100 (1985-1986): 669-687.

[37] L.E. Fredman, The Australian Ballot: the Story of an American Reform (Ann Arbor: Michigan State University Press, 1968), 99-118.

[38] Theodore Roosevelt, "Fellow Feelings as a Political Factor," The Strenuous Life: essays and addresses (New York: The Century Co., 1900, reprint, Bartleby.com, 1998, www.bartleby.com/58/)

the political franchise.[39]

The binary of "powerful" elites and helpless "ignorant masses" could certainly be read as representing desires on the part of colonial officials to see peculiarities and darkness in colonized people. The same texts, however, could be interestingly re-read, if one takes into account the notions of Gilded Age elections being conceptualized by reformers, especially progressive republicans like Theodore Roosevelt, who were to form the nucleus of American policymaking over the occupation of the Philippines. In describing the society they encountered, they might have overlapped the images of foreign (i.e., the Philippines) and of domestic in the common terms available to them----"bosses" as enemies and "masses" to be rescued at home and abroad. Desire for reducing political and social domination of "bosses" over "masses" might have echoed a similar chord among reformers in the United States and American colonial officials in the Philippines.

During the initial elections, however, the Philippine Commission limited enfranchisement largely to the *principalia* class by specifying voter qualifications.[40] As a result, registered voters in the initial elections constituted only two percent of the "civilized" population (i.e., Christian Filipinos) and actual voters accounted for only 1.5 percent. Even after popular male suffrage was established in the Philippines in 1916 with literacy as the only requirement, the voter registration rate was still as low as 15 percent of the total male population in the 1935 election, while the literacy rate had reached 48 percent of the over ten-year old population according to the 1939 census. Women's suffrage was established in 1937, but voters occupied only 13 percent of the total population in 1946 and only 18 percent in the notorious 1949 election.[41]

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[39] William H. Taft to Theodore Roosevelt, January 23, 1908. quoted in Patric J. Hurley, "Second tentative draft transmitting Report of the Secretary of War to the President: Appendix 1," October 1931. RG350, NACP.

[40] Initially the 1901 election codes provided the electors shall be male, twenty-three years of age and over, who are comprised within one of the following three classes: (a) Those who held the public offices in Spanish colonial administrations such as Municipal Captain, Gobernadorcillo, Alcalde, Lieutenant, Cabeza de Barangay or member of Ayuntamiento; (b) those who own real property to the value of 500 pesos or who annually pay thirty pesos or more of the established taxes; (c) those who speak, read and write English or Spanish. General Order No. 82 4-5.

[41] Annual Report of the U.S. High Commissioner to the Philippine Islands Vol.1 (1937), 88; Ibid 7 (1947), 80; TANIGAWA Hidehiko and KIMURA Yoshitsune, Gendai Firipin no Seiji Kozo (Structure of Modern Philippine Politics) (Tokyo: Ajia Keizai Kenkyusho, 1997), 78.

These facts seemingly contradict the claim that the United States was protecting "the masses" from elite domination. Restricted suffrage nevertheless was adopted 1) as a policy of accommodation to the *principalia* class, which was inevitable after all despite the creed of "benevolent assimilation," so that the United States could conquer the islands at the minimum sacrifice of American lives and resources, and 2) as a reflection of social ideas widely shared by colonial officials and republican progressives that "the masses," Filipino or American, should be denied suffrage as long as they were "ignorant" (i.e., illiterate or not intelligent enough to "exercise their political franchise"). Here again, the Philippine Commission's election law overlapped with the New York Ballot Reform Law of 1890, which had significantly decreased the reported turnout in elections during the 1890s.[42]

In this respect, Mark Twain's well-known anti-imperialist essay against the Philippine-American War, titled "To the Person Sitting in the Darkness," is intriguing since it begins with lengthy quotes from New York newspapers exposing "offenses against humanity" committed in some of the notorious East Side districts under Tammany Hall boss Richard Croker, under whose regime "murder, rape, robbery and theft go unpunished."[43] Twain might have wanted to say that there were people "sitting in the darkness" at the very heart of America, in New York slum districts, which could even be "darker" than the Philippines. On the other hand, the colonial officials accused by Twain might just have been knowingly uttering to themselves about the "darkness" of the colony, but also looking at it through the prism of "darkness" and "bossism" that they were fully aware of going on in New York and other places in the United States.

Not Feeling Like Twins: Fraud after Reform in the Two Democracies

History shows, however, that an extremely complicated secret ballot system could not eradicate election fraud, bossism, nor *caciquism* in either country, all of which were to be only modernized with a flavor of secrecy. New York City continued to be notorious for rampant election fraud, at least until Fiorello LaGuardia became mayor in 1933. Another infamous city was Philadelphia, where one investigation revealed that as much as 25,000 registrations were padded to the voter registration list in the mid-year election of 1926. Election fraud in the city was so rampant during the same election that

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[42] "Institutionalist" scholars argued over changes in election laws, which damped corruption and brought about a decline in voter turnout in the northern United States around the turn of the century. Philip E. Converse, "Comment" The American Political Science Review Volume 68 Issue 3 (Sep., 1974): 1024-1027; Jerrold G. Rusk, "Comment" Ibid. 1028-1049.

[43] Zim Zwick, ed., Mark Twain's Weapons of Satire: Anti-Imperial Writings on the Philippine-American War (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1992), 24-25.

ghost and flying (repeating) voters, padding and ballot tampering produce the probability that any legitimate ballot would have counted only one eighth of the normal. In the same election, 44 percent of the ballots cast in Chicago was found to be fake.[44]

Meanwhile, in the Philippines, instances of chaos and fraud began to be reported as early as the 1902 municipal elections, which would soon made the colonial officials uneasy about the enthusiasm Filipinos showed for elections.[45] Within less than three years after the first National Assembly election of 1907, 764 people were prosecuted on charges of violating election codes, mostly obtaining false oaths regarding voter qualifications.[46] In the 1912 election, the number of registered voters suddenly increased due to registration fraud. Irregularities committed by election inspectors also surfaced in such cases as recording names different from those stated by illiterate voters.[47] The colonial government was forced to make it a rule to circulate directions and warnings to provincial governments to prevent such irregularities, with appendices illustrating fraudulent practices and related court decisions, which became more and more voluminous after each series of elections.[48]

These visible similarities in election fraud make one wonder if there was not some sort of "personal technical transfer" from Americans to Filipinos during the early colonial era, an interesting hypothesis but difficult to prove. Perhaps a more persuasive theory would be that similar institutions are likely to bring about similar kinds of illegal behavior.[49] That is to say, first, periodical voter registration requiring the electorate to register over and over again was highly vulnerable to manipulation both in padding and disenfranchisement. Padding (inflating voters) might have been more frequent in the early 20th century Philippines because the registration rate was so low, while disenfranchisement (deflating voters) might have been occurred as frequently as

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[44] Norman Thomas and Paul Blanshard, What's the Matter with New York (New York, The Macmillan Co., 1932), 79; Peter McCaffery, When Bosses Ruled Philadelphia (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press), 1993, 138-139; Fredman, 120.

[45] Manuscript Reports of the Philippine Commission (1902). E91, RG350. NACP.

[46] Philippine Commission, Official Gazette Vol.X, No.17 (April 24, 1912), 1.

[47] Bureau of Justice, Circular 158 (January 17, 1913), E5/10265-60; Philippine Constabulary, "Confidential Report," Manila, June 7, 1912. E5/10265-51, RG350, NACP.

[48] "Elections- Fraudulent and corrupt practices in" (January 11, 1919); "Election Inspectors, Appointment of" (May 8, 1919); "1922 Elections – General information and instructions re-" (March 10, 1922). E5/10265-97, RG350. NACP.

[49] Argersinger, 686-687.

padding in the United States where the registration rate was much higher.[50] In the United States, a variety of permanent personal registration systems spread to the majority of states in the 1930s in hope of reducing fraud involved in periodic registration, but neither padding nor disfranchisement could be completely eradicated.

Secondly, lengthy and complex forms of ballots with plural entries have given room for irregularities both in ballot casting and counting. In American elections, dozens of public offices all the way from the president to county officials are chosen at one time, in addition to number of local referendums, all of which are usually printed on a single ballot which sometimes looks more like a newspaper.[51] In such elections, a "write-in" ballot is considered impractical. In the 1910s, 17 states adopted "Office Group" ballot, on which printed names of candidates were sorted according to the offices, while 26 states adopted the "Party Column" ballot, in which the names of candidates were sorted according to the parties. Most "Party Column" ballots were in the form of "straight tickets," on which voters have to check the space besides the name of the party only once to indicate they would vote all the candidates of the party for each public office.[52] The call for a "shorter" and more "simple" ballot was a constant cry of the electoral reform movement in the United States before World War II. Machine voting was adopted in many states after the War, but continues to be troublesome.[53] In the Philippines, the "write-in" ballot form was adopted from the beginning and official ballots have been provided by the government nationwide to this day, in spite of having to choose numerous public officers at one time on a single ballot, from municipal board members to the president, among whom municipal board members, provincial councilors, and senators are elected with plural entries. There are case in which the

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[50] Cox and Kousser suggest the introduction of the Australian ballot may have increased "deflationary" corruption in rural New York elections. Gary W. Cox and J. Morgan Kousser, "Turnout and Rural Corruption: New York as a Test Case" The American Journal of Political Science Volume 25 Issue 4 (Nov. 1981): 646-663.

[51] The following photograph shows how the way it was in the 1940s: John Vachon, "Farm couple reading over ballots. Election day, November 1940. McIntosh County, North Dakota," 1940 Nov. Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/fsowhome.html] [fsa 8c18131] (July 2, 2003).

[52] Evans, 36-47.

[53] Richard S. Childs, The Short Ballot: A Movement to Simplify Politics (New York: The Short Ballot Organization, 1910); Arthur Ludington, "Ballot Reform Toward, in New York and Pennsylvania" The American Political Science Review Volume 4, Issue 2 (May, 1910): 207-212; Carl O. Smith A Book of Ballots (Detroit: Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., 1938).

number of names written on one single ballot can total as much as a couple of dozen. This made it necessary to provide "sample ballots" with names of candidates for voters to transcribe them, while parties distribute millions of "sample ballots" to voters, often with money or small gifts.[54] Though considered an important source of fraud and vote buying, little has changed in the ballot form in the Philippines to this day. Children playing with confetti of "sample ballots" after Election Day have been familiar scenes in Philippine electoral democracy, then and now.

In sum, similar complexities in electoral systems both the nations shared during the first half of the 20th century may well be said to have encouraged both peoples to invent similar kinds of maneuvers in their pursuit for election victories, though in a different social context and to a different extent. It does not seem, however, that both peoples felt like twins borne from the same womb as far as the elections were concerned. However, as described above, they were to meet again in the years of Cold War, when even the birds voted for Quirino in Lanao and the dead voted for LBJ in Texas. Then came Gabriel Kaplan, who had been chasing after phantom voters and rats in New York. It was the needs of the time that brought Kaplan to the Philippines as one of the top experts in election fraud within the American system. Due to his repeated defeats in that system, however, he was an enthusiastic supporter of permanent personal registration and proportional representation in New York City and State elections. Ironically enough, it was his familiarity with the very institution he wanted to change so desperately that made him so successful and useful in the Philippines of the 1950s.

4. Filipino Elites in the Eyes of Americans

"New Elites" as Cold War Collaborators

One more reason for the Cold Warriors' success, in spite of their "innocence," was the availability of collaborators who so satisfactorily met their expectations. Ramon Magsaysay (1907-1957) was definitely the classic model. Although belonging to a family of local traditional political elites (*principalias*), Magsaysay grew up in Zambales, a

[54] See Sample Ballots used in the Philippine 1959 election in Carl H. Lande Southern Tagalog Voting, 1946-1963: Political Behavior in a Philippine Region (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1973), 12.

rural province to the extreme northwest of Manila. He joined the anti-guerrilla movement under U.S. military command and was appointed military governor of Zambales by the U.S. army after liberation. Then he was elected to the House of Representatives in the first postwar election of 1946. His relatively humble socioeconomic background and World War II record made him the perfect the America's boy, and his likable, yet masculine appearance,[55] got American observers exited about him as "the guy" who could be an epoch-making leader in the new age of popular democracy in Asia. In 1950 he visited the United States as chairman of the Military Affairs Committee and met Lansdale for the first time. Instantly fascinated with each other, they decided to work side by side toward a victory in the 1953 presidential election.[56]

U.S. operations in the Philippines during these years were largely carried out through cooperation by the "new elites," like Magsaysay and his younger supporters. They overlapped with "traditional political elites" in their social backgrounds; nevertheless they were "new" because they were relatively young; more often technocrats and businessmen with no experience in electoral politics or, if any, had only a fragile foothold among their constituencies. Many of them belonged to a group born in the mid-1910s, which included NAMFREL chief Jaime Ferrer (1915-1987), Raul Manglapus (1918-1999), the composer of "Mambo Magsaysay," who would be a senator and foreign affairs secretary, and Emanuel Pelaez (1915-) who would become vice president and ambassador to the United States. A much younger Ramon Binamira (1927-) was "discovered" by Kaplan and became President Magsaysay's aide for community development.

Differing from the generation of Quirino and Laurel, who were born in the early 1890s and maintained a strong affiliation with Spanish culture, this generation represented the most Americanized one in Philippine history in terms of their extensive usage of English and wartime allegiance to the United States in their resistance activities against the Japanese occupation, while many of the senior generation of politicians played the roll of collaborator with the Japanese, whether they liked or not. Though most of the wartime "political and economic" collaborators managed to survive postwar interrogation and Peoples Court trials and were able to return to the national/local political scene under the amnesty issued in 1948, there remained displeasure among American officials concerning their past. This displeasure went as

[55] Ramon Magsaysay was tall for a Filipino and looked neither like the Spanish- or Chinese mestizo-looking Philippine presidents of the past.

[56] Currey, 70-71.

far as to bring the U.S. government to tolerate the reelection of Quirino in spite of his unpopularity and massive election fraud, because the opposition Nationalista Party candidate Jose P. Laurel had been the wartime President of the Philippine Republic set up by the Japanese, otherwise he would have been welcomed as the most statesmanlike candidate available among that generation of political elites.

With the help of the "new elites" Gabriel Kaplan was able to make the most of his previous experience in New York organizing such civic movements professing "non-partisanship" as the Citizens Union, League of Women Voters and Committee of Five Million, rallying together like-minded people regardless of their party and other affiliations. This scheme had been necessary for New York City Republicans, who were a hopeless minority with no prospect of beating the Democrats single-handedly. These experiences were definitely helpful in organizing NAMFREL, the Magsaysay for President campaign, and other civic organizations claiming "non-partisanship," while demanding a change of government.

Dreaming of Community Development

It was rural community development programs, however, that Kaplan was most enthusiastic about among his pet projects in the Philippines. After securing funds from CARE (Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere) for grass-root reform movements in rural society to meet the menace of communism, Kaplan made full use of NAMFREL's national organization. In February 1953 two NAMFREL Community Centers were installed in Marbel, Cotabato Province, Mindanao and Mabarakat, Pampanga Province, Central Luzon, to be followed by eight more by 1956. These centers were expected to function as facilities not only for elections, but also for local meetings and various educational programs, offering agricultural and sanitation training programs for building toilets, making cement blocks, and creating backyard compost piles. Kaplan defined them as bases for "barrio democracy," where local residents can discuss community issues, find solutions to them, state their cases before the government and achieve their goals.

Interestingly enough, Kaplan targeted "rat infestation" just as he did in New York only a few years before in his demonstration for "barrio democracy." What Kaplan did in "the dramatic rat-extermination campaign of 1953 and 1954" was described by one newspaper in the following way:

> (Kaplan) made several excursions into the far-flung villages of the affected areas, took with him tape-recording instruments, and induced the villagers to talk, to reveal what they needed in the fight against the rats, and to say what they thought the outcome would be if nothing was done to

stop the infestation.[57]

This was exactly the same things that the Committee of Five Million did in "Manhattan's Lower East Side, Chelsea, Hell's Kitchen, and Harlem" and other sections of the city, reporting findings of "rat bitten babies and adults, limbs broken by falling ceilings and disintegrated floors" ignored by the city government.[58] Later he found an even more localized issue in trawl fishing, which was ruining the livelihood of fishermen in San Miguel Bay, Camarines Sulu, Southern Luzon Province. In March 1954, the NAMFREL community center at Calabanga launched a petition signing campaign calling for a ban on trawl-fishing, which "moved" president Magsaysay to sign a presidential decree to that effect. Kaplan, of course, directed this media event to show that "democracy works."[59]

It is no wonder that the "Cold Warriors" focused on barrio or rural society, for that was what they considered to be the major battlefield for their anti-communist crusade. It nonetheless may seem rather strange for an urban politician like Kaplan to have been devoting himself to "barrio democracy," but he had good reason to get excited about it. After all, he was born and raised in Callicoon, Sullivan County, located 240 km northwest of New York City, facing the scenic Delaware River but an infertile, not very prosperous, and isolated remote village, "a world apart" in his words. According to the rhetoric in Kaplan's addresses, his father was "a progressive farmer," who was able to treble his herds by introducing new methods in the midst of pastureland scarcity. He led his neighbors in a campaign to raise land taxes to improve schools and secure more talented teachers. He organized the joint purchase of agricultural machinery. After all, he was a good community leader.[60] Though Kaplan naturally might have idealized his father, we can read this narrative as representing the American agricultural extension movement during the first half of the 20th century, which aimed at closing the income

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[57] Jose V. Abueva, Focus on the Barrio; The Story behind the Birth of the Philippine Community Development Program under President Ramon Magsaysay (Manila: University of the Philippines Institute of Public Administration, 1959), 110-111.

[58] James Hagerty, "Council Inquiry Into Slums Asked," New York Times (May 5, 1949), Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

[59] Abueva, Focus on the Barrio 120-121.

[60] Gabriel Kaplan, Address at the graduation from the elementary school of his daughter Nikki Kaplan (Manila, March 31, 1958); How Can the Private Sector Protect Itself Against the Risks of the Cold War (Address to the Executive Committee of the Inter-American Cattlemen's Confederation in Dallas, Texas) (October 13, 1965), Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

gap between urban and rural society by raising agricultural productivity through the introduction of scientific methods and the optimization of agricultural management, which Kaplan more or less tried to duplicate in the Philippines.[61]

By the time Kaplan returned home in 1958, community development projects being conducted by the Philippine government had offered basic training programs to as many as 250,000 local leaders from roughly one-third of all the barrios in the country.[62] This was an opportunity for Kaplan to cultivate "new elites" on a more grass-roots level. In later years, Kaplan would insist that community development exists neither to provide social services nor is "an opportunity for public philanthropy," but rather to nurture "democratically oriented civic and political leaders" through such measures as building "a two way channel of communication" between local communities and the government.[63] Kaplan argued that the threat of communism in rural society resided in the ignorance of the central government and the media about what mattered there, and that the fundamental solution lay in the establishment of communication channels through local leaders.

Gabriel Kaplan's Cold War projects in the Philippines were warmly recalled by another CIA agent, Joseph Smith in his memoir entitled *Portrait of a Cold Warrior*. Smith had been sent to the Philippines by the director, who was not impressed by "Gabe's dream," to see "how we could reduce our expenditures" for the projects initiated by Kaplan. Smith's later experiences in the Philippines show, in spite of his "resolve to imitate Gabe's method," that the CIA turned to more "conventional" clandestine operations such as backdoor maneuvers in favor of more pro-American politicians and negative campaigns against those disfavored by the U.S. government. In all cases, operations were to be carried out at the lowest cost available for the Philippines, which had been downgraded in CIA operations due to the passing of the imminent crisis during the early 1950s.[64]

In retrospect, Kaplan's Cold War projects may be recalled in terms of both commendable legacy and failure. His projects produced such assets as community centers, libraries, and fairly well-trained personnel, which would contribute to the build up of physical and institutional infrastructure for later development projects in

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[61] The Philippine government's bureau of Agricultural Extension was established in 1952.Abueva, Focus on the Barrio 77-83.

[62] Gabriel Kaplan, Societal Change in Developing Countries: Alternatives to Revolution (February 1967), Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

[63] Gabriel Kaplan, The Art of Community Development (June 10, 1965), 7. Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

[64] Smith, Portrait of a Cold Warrior 265-321.

Philippine agrarian society. On the other hand, almost all the resources for community development came and would continue to come from the outside, despite the fact that capital accumulation within the community was desirable for making it more sustainable and self-sufficient. Such community leaders as the "new elites" of barrio democracy were thus absorbed into the politics, where they became just another agent at the terminal in the chain of dependency.

Whether or not he was aware of the limitations to his projects, Gabriel Kaplan was filled with the optimism and idealism typical of passionate civic organizers, while his chants of anti-communism were rare, and when made, only platitudinous. After all, he was a New York Republican progressive working with Stanley M. Isaacs, known for "his passion for civil rights and social justice and fought to build decent housing for families living in the squalor of tenements,"[65] who had even appointed Simon Gerson, a CPUSA's member, to his staff in 1939 when he was the Manhattan Borough President.[66] Available records and secondary sources show that Gabriel Kaplan might have been not so much a secret agent as a civic organizer who used the CIA as a cover for his aspirations to organize civic movements, which would otherwise have come under suspicion during the McCarthy era.

Disillusionment and Call for Withdrawal

In March 1957, Ramon Magsaysay died in an airplane crash in the mountains of Cebu. The accident marked the end of euphoria and the beginning of a "quagmire" in America's Cold Wars throughout Asia. American disillusionment was deepening with Philippine democracy, gradually yet steadily, to the point of desperation by the time Ferdinand Marcos declared Martial Law in 1972, which was nevertheless generally tolerated, and even endorsed, by American officials.

During the same years, American scholars began to express criticism in chorus concerning Philippine politics, or more precisely, Filipino politics. The fact that Magsaysay and the "new elites" could not achieve the socioeconomic reform (above all land reform) the United States desired so much and that the "new elites" were seemingly being absorbed into traditional elite politics led many American specialists to the conclusion that the domination of those elites and the helplessness of the masses in the Philippines was something politically unalterable, and because they were unalterable, in spite of changing personalities, it was nothing but the Filipino culture

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[65] Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center, "Frequently Asked Questions," [http://www.isaacscenter.org/faq.html] (July 2, 2003).

[66] See the following web resources with respect to history of proportional representation system in New York. [http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/history/public_history/PR/] (July 2, 2003).

inherent in their social lives that permitted this class of people to survive through the 20th century. Then these same specialists would strive to describe the peculiarities of Filipino political culture using such notions as patron-client ties, reciprocity, utang-na-loob (inner debt), and walang-hiya (shamelessness).

Many scholars also believed that one of the graver errors committed by the United States in the Philippines was its own historical alliance with traditional political elites. In spite of the war which the United States waged against this class of people, or perhaps more because of it, American colonial and postcolonial policy accommodated the desires of the Filipino elites through such measures as restrictive suffrage in the early elections, reciprocal free trade and other economic measure promoting agribusiness (which was dominated by the elites), not rightfully punishing wartime collaborators, providing postcolonial arrangements giving generous aid to agribusiness and the government, which otherwise would have gone bankrupt, and helping them survive once again through the Cold War years.

Unanimity in this regard extends even to those with opposite political orientations, all the way from a socialist scholar William Pomeroy, an American advisor for the Huk movement who was arrested in 1952 and jailed for ten years,[67] to conservative scholar Frank Golay, who worked for the CIA and USAID while studying the Philippine political economy. Asked what to do with the Philippines after the "Fall of Saigon" in 1975, Golay drafted a memorandum to his old friend Henry Kissinger, then Secretary of State, saying in part, “[p]olitical power in the Philippines is monopolized by an elite which shrewdly perfected a system of government – American in form but Filipino in substance – which serves the narrow interests of those wielding political power.” Golay further ventured to propose a U.S. withdrawal from the Philippines as “shock therapy,” because “[s]o long as the Philippines remains a client/protectorate of the U.S., the present political elite will recognize no compelling pressures” to change, while “the United States has no interest in the Philippines of sufficient importance” to postpone “independence for this country from the Philippines,” concluding “[t]he strategy of ‘shock therapy’ is a policy of desperation, but we have little to risk by throwing that society on its own resources.”[68]

In spite of Golay’s call for withdrawal, the two nations would not be “independent from” one other and the two democracies would be entangle together for years to come, because the United States was more or less committed to maintain the

[67] Pomeroy and his wife Celia were sentenced to life imprisonment but later pardoned in 1961. Pomeroy, Forest 219.

[68] Frank Golay to Philip Habib, “Draft paper,” June 2, 1975. Frank Golay Papers.

Philippines as a pro-American country, leaving only the question of how much resources it were determined to invest (most probably the bare minimum). It may well be said, however, that the frustration Golay expressed was being widely shared among American officials and affected the Philippine-U.S. military base negotiations in the early 1990s. The U.S. officials in those negotiations obviously dared to risk a breakdown by failing to make enough concessions to the Philippine government's demand for higher "rent," even though it was, after all, not the United States but the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo and the Philippine Senate's rejection of the bases treaty that terminated U.S. military presence.[69]

"New Elites" and the Restoration of Filipino Electoral Democracy

It has been two decades now since Benigno Aquino Jr. was assassinated in August 1983, an incident that rang the death knell to the Marcos dictatorship. Philippine electoral democracy was restored and has stayed alive since the People Power revolution ousted Marcos in 1986, through the narrow survival of Cory Aquino's presidency, the "happy" years of Fidel Ramos' presidency, Joseph Estrada's gangland presidency, and People Power 2's ousting of Estrada in January 2001. These two decades of Philippine democracy may indeed be interpreted in many ways. Poor economic performance has been just too obvious for anyone to dismiss. It is now a favorite theme for Philippine presidents to talk about their country as once the second wealthiest country in Asia (next to Japan) during the 1960s, but since then had been left surpassed by it neighbors one after the other. Most Filipinos, however, still identify themselves deeply with the institutions of the liberal democracy they restored two decades ago, which functions as the core of their "imagined communities" conceived of as differentiating them from their neighbors much more than such notions as cultural traits, history, or tradition do.

Throughout these years, the former "new elites" have not at all vanished but have been instrumental in the restoration and maintenance of Filipino electoral democracy. Though their initial responses to the Marcos declaration of martial law varied, partly because Marcos promised radical social reform to end the reign of "oligarchy," they became the nucleus of the non-leftist anti-Marcos movement during the late years of his regime. NAMFREL was restored. The lyrics of "Mambo Magsaysay" were revised as a new protest song used by the Anti-Marcos Catholic Radio Station, Veritas, as its theme song with the implications that it would be sung for ousting a

[69] The 1990-1991 bases negotiation were recollected by the Filipino officials in the following: Alfredo R. A. Bengzon with Raul A. Rodrigo, Matter of Honor: The Story of the 1990-91 RP-US Base Talks (Pasig City: Anvil Publisher, 1997); Maria Castro-Guevara, ed., The Base Talks Reader: Key Documents of the 1990-91 Philippine American Cooperation Talks (Pasig City: Anvil Publisher., 1997).

president who hailed from the same Ilocano province as Quirino.[70]

After the fall of the Marcos regime, Jaime Ferrer assumed the dirty job in the new government of minister of local government, working with the U.S. military to nurture local "vigilantes" as an anticommunist force whose white-terror drew severe criticism from human rights NGOs and the UN. Ferrer was assassinated by a squad of the New Peoples Army in 1987.[71] Manglapus was appointed foreign affairs secretary and Pelaez ambassador to the United States, the both playing key rolls in avoiding the termination of the bases agreement from turning into the termination of "amicable" bilateral relations. Ramon Binamira, Kaplan's "son," continued to work for community development projects in his home province Bohol with financial assistance from USAID, UNICEF and other organizations. He was designated as the spokesperson of the "Silent Protest Movement" against Joseph Estrada's attempts to profess that he was "non-partisan and non-violent."[72] In this way the "new elites" continued to play roles as "substitutes for" Marcos and as elders in a series of presidencies that kept the country as a favorable ally of the United States.

"Mirage" of "New Elites" in the Eyes of Americans

In spite of the fact that the former America's boys have been active as old soldiers who never even fade away, or possibly all the more because of that fact, American critics have shown impatience with Filipino democracy. They were not easily pleased by "the twin brother returning" with the People Power revolution in 1986, continuing to portray Philippine politics in terms of "lack" and "failure." As mentioned in the introduction to this paper, this sort of narrative is now under critical review in the postcolonial debate, a subject that is beyond the scope of this paper, but will be discussed in a different conference dealing with Philippine studies rather than American. Suffice to say here that the extent of unanimity and repetition has been so glaring in the American discourse on Philippine society throughout the 20th century makes at least this author wonder whether it should be considered subject matter for American studies.

Criticism of "the present political elites" and hope for the new ones have been expressed since the very beginning of the American Occupation, like in the writing of James A. Le Roy, a young intelligent colonial officer who was one of the earliest to

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[70] June Keithley Castro, an announcer from Veritas, began clandestine broadcast with this tune after radio Veritas was bombed off the air during the midst of crisis in February 1986. Though in a different frequency band, the listeners knew it was "resurrected" Veritas because of the tune. Patricio R. Mamot, People Power: Profile of Filipino Heroism (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1986), 90-91.

[71] "Philippine Minister Shot Dead" Washington Post (August 3, 1987), A1.

[72] "Silent Protest Now Vocal on Erap Habits" Philippine Daily Inquirer (April 4, 2000).

deploy the elite/masses binary as characterizing Filipino society.

> The chief obstacle to social and political progress in the Philippines is "caciquism," the term by which "bossism" is known in those regions…[while] some old men, and more of the young [among "the cacique class"] may be rated as patriotic and as desirous of seeing political progress that shall include the masses.[73]

In response to this kind of hope, a group of young *caciques* at the time emerged as collaborating "new elites," including Manuel Quezon (1878-1944) from Tayabas Province, the first president of the Philippine Commonwealth, and Sergio Osmena (1878-1961) from Cebu, the second president. However, by the time war clouds began gathering over the Philippines during the late 1930s, Quezon had become suspect about his allegiance to the United States for being surrounded by Spanish Falangists, which was not true, and out of fear that he would strike a deal with the Japanese government at the outbreak of the impending war.

This time it was a generation including the first graduates of the University of the Philippines, which had been established by the colonial government, that attracted Americans as bright young "new elites" who were educated in a thoroughly Americanized institution. Jose Laurel (1891-1959), the president under the Japanese Occupation, Manuel Roxas (1892-1948), the first president of the Republic, as well as Elpidio Quirino (1890-1956), the second president, were all U.P. graduate lawyers, and Laurel went on to study at Yale. Then came the Wars, the Second and Cold, when these cohorts were downgraded to "present traditional political elites" or "oligarchs," while the Americans found more "new elites" in Magsaysay's camp.

Does this repetition in the American narratives, where "new elites" come and go like mirages, where the aspirations of Filipino youth are always replaced by opportunism, and where a perfect America's boy is relentlessly revealed as desperately *Filipino*, represent only continuity and resilience on the part of the Filipino elite politics and political culture? Or is there possibly another aspect to be imagined in such repetitiveness, like the colonist's desire to differentiate "self" from the colonial "other," because Filipinos were so successful in adapting themselves to American institutions? Isn't it a reflection of an essential American attachment to the American version of liberal democratic institutions, in which cultures and people can fail but institutions

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[73] James A. Le Roy, Philippine Life in Town and Country (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), 172, 196-197.

cannot? What is it that has made Americans so impatient about what they have encountered in the Philippines? The quest for the answer to these questions may possibly lead one to an odyssey of American "self" with Filipino "other," which became entangled with each other throughout the 20th century. Such a quest is beyond scope of this small paper, but definitely needs to be embarked upon as some point.

5. Conclusion

Gabriel Kaplan continued to work for Cold War projects because of his success in the Philippines after two decades of repeated defeats in New York City and State politics. When he died, however, *New York Time*'s obituary did not mention his most recent career, but rather portrayed him as one who "championed permanent voter registration and proportional representation in New York" in the 1940s and 50s and quoted him as saying that the proportional representation system is "as American as the hot dog, as native as baseball on a Sunday afternoon."[74] For the *New York Times,* Kaplan was the guy who lived American politics to the end.

In this paper, the author has tried to point out that the "success" of Kaplan and the other Cold Warriors' was, in spite of their so-called "innocence," was made possible through 1) their ability to convert experiences gained in electoral politics due to the Americanization of Philippine political institutions (so much for innocence!) and 2) the availability of "new elites" as the most Americanized collaborators in Philippine history at the time. And so, if their "success" was the result of similarity and closeness like "twins", why were later developments viewed as "lamentable failures" by American observers stressing difference and remoteness? The author's findings and their implications do not support such a presumption.

Investigation into the historical development of the secret "Australian Ballot" system in the United States and the Philippines reveals that the two democracies have shared not only similarities in electoral institutions, especially the simultaneity of its introduction, but also in political notions that led to the introduction of the new system: that is, the bosses (elites)/ masses binary and the desire for ending reciprocity between the two via the secret ballot. In other words, these two electoral democracies were born as remarkable twins. U.S. intervention in the Philippine electoral process during the

[74] "Gabriel L. Kaplan, Served G.O.P. Here" New York Times (September 18, 1968). Gabriel Kaplan Papers.

1950s was so successful because of familiarity about various shortcomings shared by similar electoral systems—they were twins. The entanglement of two democracies in electoral politics to this extent suggests that one needs to take caution when trying to indicate flaws in another's political practices and attribute them to peculiarities of its culture, despite the fact that those same flaws actually arose from similar institutions on both sides.

The author has also confirmed here that there has been remarkable continuity/repetition in the American criticism of "Filipino traditional political elites" dating back to the very beginning of the American occupation of the Philippines. This continuum began as a military confrontation with Filipino revolutionaries, which brought about notions of *principalia/cacique* as villainous. This was followed by frustration on the part of American officials and scholars concerning U.S. policy over accommodating Filipino elites, resulting in the construct that Filipino elite politics has been the major source of Filipino "failures." Because this continuity has been historically tied up with bilateral relations not "independent from" each other, one should be careful not to be trapped in the psychological contest waged between the colonizer and the colonized. One may even doubt if the "success"/ "failure" binary itself is the product of colonial and postcolonial mindsets.

It would be ridiculous, of course, to evaluate the abundance of factual as well as normative findings that American political scientists have accumulated in their Philippine studies as just another cliché of "Orientalism," passing over all the complexities of vibrant Filipino political life as if nothing particular had happened. I think, however, that these same scholars need to be aware of their own prejudice and peculiarities, especially when they are so oddly unanimous in their findings that no one is aware how odd that is, just like the initial sequences of Sydney Lumet's movie *Twelve Angry Men* (1957), in which jurors who were initially willing to convict an accused Puerto Rican boy would later become aware of the inner prejudice, weakness, anger, ignorance and fears had led them to their misjudgment.[75]

In this respect the author was impressed by the absence of derogatory remarks about Filipino politics in Kaplan's comments. It may partly be because of his "innocence," which could be a Philippine specialist's conclusion, or perhaps because of his optimism, which was so typical of never-give-up civil activists in the United States. It may also be because as a field organizer he worked side by side with his Filipino colleagues to obtain funds and other resources from the government and private corporations, while American colonial and postcolonial officials were in the positions to

[75] Tim Dirks, "12 Angry Men (1957)," [http:// www.filmsite.org/twelve.html] (July 2, 2003).

provide resources for Filipinos and such power relations naturally led them to view Filipinos as dependent subordinates. Finally, the author also suspect that it could be because of Kaplan's field familiarity with earthy American politics in the boroughs and counties of New York that prevented him from becoming all that annoyed with *Filipino things* occurring around him. After all it may not have been significantly far from business as usual on the American political scene. Crooks and rascals certainly infested both the City of New York and the Philippines, like the rats that Kaplan so passionately tried to eradicate on the shores of the both the Atlantic and the Pacific in the interest of local communities.