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"WE DON'T THINK ABOUT IT, WE FOCUS ON LIVING"

AMERICAN INFLUENCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to analyze and discuss the influence of the American colonization in the Philippines. The perspective meant to be portrayed is the Filipino perspective regarding the change in their culture and minds. Although the main focus is the society nowadays, this paper includes a brief explanation of the historical background of the country. Postcolonial theory and, specifically, the contributions of three important postcolonial intellectuals as Frantz Fanon, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Homi Bhabha, are used as a frame to understand the colonial mind after the political independence. Apart from being analyzed from the outside, this paper includes a study of the perception of the influence of the US in young Filipino people that were interviewed. The results show how the Filipino society is not very aware of the real role of the United States and the fact that the Philippines is a neocolony.

Keywords: Postcolonial theory, Philippines, Neocolonialism, Qualitative Research.

Resumen:

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar y poner en cuestión la influencia de la colonización norte-americana en Filipinas. La perspectiva que se pretende mostrar es la perspectiva filipina con respecto al cambio en su cultura y su mentalidad. Aunque el enfoque principal es la sociedad hoy en día, este trabajo incluye una breve explicación de los antecedentes históricos del país. La teoría poscolonial y, específicamente, las contribuciones de tres importantes intelectuales poscoloniales como son Frantz Fanon, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o y Homi Bhabha, se utilizan como un marco para comprender la mente colonial después de la independencia política. Además de ser analizado desde el exterior, este escrito incluye un estudio de la percepción de la influencia de los Estados Unidos en jóvenes filipinos que fueron entrevistados. Los resultados muestran como la sociedad filipina no es muy consciente del papel real de los Estados Unidos y el hecho de que Filipinas es una neocolonia.

Palabras clave: Teoría poscolonial, Filipinas, Neocolonialismo, Investigación cualitativa.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Thesis and Research questions

Nowadays, the Philippines is still dependent on the United States. The so-considered “Independence of the Philippines” was a marketing move to make the Philippines agree to the imposition of the American system and language, and it worked. Filipinos are not aware that the United States has still power over the Philippines. This project, based on the view of the Filipinos, searches to answer these questions: What is the perception Filipinos have about the United States? How did the colonization affect them? Why is the United States still having so much influence over the Philippines?

The idea for this paper came from hearing some Filipinos’ admiration of foreigners. While learning the culture of the Philippines and talking with Filipinos, I noticed that the society has a very weird conception of western foreigners, especially Americans. In all ways, when they referred to foreigners, it was clear the sense of inferiority and the identification with the “colonized” label still nowadays. The Philippines is not a colony because it became independent in 1946, but it could be a neocolony. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, “Neocolonialism is the control of less-developed countries by developed countries through indirect means.” Through capitalism and their big influence in the economic market, powerful countries and corporations dominate countries in development. Those in power help the ones in need by investing in their economy but making sure they stay dependent, and in that way be able to get products from those countries, especially cheap labor and raw materials. Therefore, taking this into account, the Philippines can be considered to be a neocolony because of its status as a developing country and its big dependency on economic and social terms.

1.2. Methodology

Before actually searching for information about my specific topic, I started reading about the history of the Philippines. The first book I read was *The Philippines: A singular and a plural place* (2000) by David Joel Steinberg, which gave me a general idea of Filipino society and a deeper insight into the Filipino government since the Spanish colonization until nowadays. After doing an outline of the points of my project, I decided to start with the history of the Philippines. I used the book by Steinberg previously

mentioned, complementing it with the website www.philippine-history.org to have a clear timeline of the presidents of the Philippines through the years.

The postcolonial theory section includes three authors who, although not Filipinos, have coined concepts that can be applied to the situation of the Philippines: the colonized mind by Frantz Fanon, the process of colonizing the mind by Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o, and the concept of mimicry by Homi Bhabha.

The books *Qualitative research: theory, method and practice* (Silverman, 1997) and *Speaking of Ethnography* (Agor, 1986) were used to have a starting point in learning about the methodology of Qualitative Research and the area of researching in a social approach about culture.

To see the opinion of Filipino people, there is a part of interviews about their perception of American influence. Although at first, the interviews were going to be oral, after doing one, it was clear that it would be more convenient to do it written. The interviewees were shy and were not sure of what to say. I wrote the questions and asked some Filipino connections if they wanted to participate. The young participants spoke English fluently but the middle age group and the old one could not, so one of the young participants helped to translate their interviews. Because of that reason, that participant was the first one to do the interview, to make sure he was not influenced by the others.

1.3. State of Art

The theory of the Philippines as a neocolony is not new. Much research has been done about this topic from different perspectives, although articles and books generally look more at historical events than the society nowadays. However, the articles published about the Philippines as a neocolony are very interesting and allow the reader to have a good insight into Filipino society.

One interesting text is "American Neocolonialism in the Philippines" by Usha Mahajani, a review of Alejandro's Lichauco's book *Imperialism in the Philippines*¹. Mahajani praises the work of Lichauco for his courage and defends that September of 1972, when the United States stated that they would not interfere in Filipino affairs but at the same time had thousands of troops deployed in the country, was an important moment in which the Philippines became "still more deeply enmeshed in the neocolonialist trap

¹ Alejandro Lichauco. (1973). "The Lichauco Paper, Imperialism in the Philippines." New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1973, pp. xv, 111.

of the United States” (Mahajani, 1974, p. 4) At the same time, as Mahajani claims, Lichauco’s text is really important as it contributed to the anti-imperialist literature and attacked directly to neocolonialism, already identified as the new and dangerous form of imperialism.

Another good source of information to take a look at is the website www.chrispforr.net². In his article “The Philippines is a Neocolonial State”, Chris Pforr addresses the issue of the Neocolonialism in the Philippines. He is a foreigner learning about Filipino history and culture, based on the theory that the Philippines is a neocolony. He claims that it was not until he learned about the concept of neocolonialism, that he was able to understand the situation of the Philippines and its society (Pforr, 2008). The difference between Pforr’s website and this project is mainly that in the website there is no native perspective. He writes from objective facts and although he has spent some time in the Philippines, he does not include statements from natives. However, his website is interesting because although there is no connection with the article about neocolonialism, he also shows how the life in the Philippines.

I want to make a special mention of one of the most notable postcolonial intellectuals from the Philippines, Epifanio San Juan, who based his career on raising awareness about the problematic situation in the Philippines and also other societies, about the decolonization. He was born in 1938 in Sta. Cruz, in Manila (Institute of Creative Writing of the University of the Philippines Diliman, 2020). After graduating from the University of the Philippines, he studied at Harvard University, where he later worked as a tutor. Since that, he has worked in many important universities and has received many awards for being an excellent writer, especially poet, and professor of literature and Filipino culture and history. Although he comes from a literature background, he ended up devoting himself to cultural studies (Pozo, 2004). Nowadays, he is the director of the Philippines Cultural Studies Center, placed in Connecticut (USA).

One of the areas in which E. San Juan Jr. is best known is in the area of criticism, normally directed towards Colonialism. Some of his most acclaimed works are *After Postcolonialism: Remapping Philippines-US Confrontations* (2000), *Beyond Post-Colonial Theory* (1998), and *From Exile to Diaspora: Versions of the Filipino Experience*

² In this website, Chris Pforr, a traveler, writes in his website about the places he has been to and shares resources about different topics.

in the United States (1998). San Juan has original ideas, in the sense that those differ greatly from the ideas of other postcolonial critics. According to Yoshiko Nagano, “San Juan understands the above trend [taking the United State as a model of postcoloniality] of the early postcolonial studies as a Western-oriented tendency [...]” (2008, p. 6). It is because of that, that he criticizes very important and mainstream postcolonial intellectuals (in which he includes Homi Bhabha) for focusing not on praising and promoting indigenous cultures but on destroying “Western logocentrism.” San Juan tries to vindicate that the indigenous minorities that were colonized still do not have the attention or recognition they deserve in the sense that they are not the focus in the mainstream postcolonial studies. As Nagano points out, “[...], most of such discussions are not directly related to the actual problems in politics, economy, society, and culture in the formerly colonized countries. Instead, they focus only on issues concerning the formerly colonized [...]”. And he continues, “San Juan contends that the developed countries have successfully absorbed the postcolonial question within their epistemological terrains” (Nagano, 2008, pp. 9–10). San Juan fights for the need of the acknowledgement of colonized minorities and the spread of its cultures. In his words, as a Filipino that emigrated to the United States, he has very clear that the version that is portrayed is the one that the United States wants to showcase, and that is of course one in which they are the good ones. As he stated in the interview with Michael Pozo, “Unfortunately we've returned to the time of the terrible metanarratives, this time the metanarrative of United States triumphalism” (Pozo, 2004).

He is one of the most well-known faces insisting on the existence of neocolonialism, its difference with postcolonialism, and the necessity to acknowledge neocolonial territories. As he explained to Michael Pozo, “I understand neocolonialism as the domination of peoples and societies by capital (primarily Western, but including Japan) through the liberal market and other ideological means, not through direct political rule” (Pozo, 2004). He even stated that the number of neocolonial territories is probably the same as postcolonial ones. San Juan also studied “popular anticolonialism premised on historical memory and symbols of belonging and solidarity” in his book *Beyond Postcolonial Theory* (San Juan, 2016, p. 18). The work of Epifanio San Juan has helped to spread awareness about the situation of the Philippines and also the high number of still colonized, in terms of the mind, countries.

2. POSTCOLONIAL THEORY

2.1. Fanon: *The Colonized Mind*

Frantz Fanon was born in 1925 on Martinique, an island under the colonial power of France. He dedicated his initial work to the anti-blackness issue, which he lived in his own flesh. In 1953, he moved to Algeria, even that marked him and made him think not only about anti-blackness but about decolonization in general. However, to understand his later ideas of decolonization, one must understand his initial stage of anti-blackness.

In his first book *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon claims that “the Negro knows nothing of the cost of freedom for he has not fought for it. From time to time he has fought for Liberty and Justice, but these were always white liberty and white justice; that is, values secreted by his masters” (Fanon, 1991, p. 221). He states that the Negro has not really fought for equality and real freedom, we could say “Freedom of the colonial mind” as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o would later denominate. Later in the book, he gives the reason for it, “The black man wants to be like the white man. For the black man, there is only one destiny. And it is white. Long ago the black man admitted the unarguable superiority of the white man, and all his efforts are aimed at achieving a white existence” (Fanon, 1991, p. 228). The black man has accepted to be inferior and therefore there is no way that the white man, or even the black man himself, can admit the value of the black man. To reach equality the break of this conception is needed.

This image of the colonized as helpless and ignorant of his own value and, therefore, not decided to seriously impose himself, contrast greatly to another of Fanon’s most important works *The Wretched of the Earth*. Bhakti Shringarpure wrote in his article (shared by *The Guardian*) about Fanon documentary (directed by the Swedish filmmaker Göran Hugo Olsson, “Fanon’s posthumously published *The Wretched of the Earth* has often been viewed as a call to violent action against the colonizer, as a radical militant anthem for all oppressed peoples, and as a deeply controversial ideology of resistance” (Shringarpure, 2014). Fanon can be misunderstood by the complexity of his ideas regarding the liberation of colonialism, to support violence, and indoctrinate his readers to be violent against the system, but nothing further from reality. David Macey, Fanon’s biographer, explains that violence was already in the environment he was in at that time. Algerians felt very violent against the government and he supported that they needed to liberate themselves from it. Therefore, he defended that they had to let that violence out as it was “inevitable to a revolution”. Macey clarifies “Fanon does not “glorify” violence

and, in fact, rarely describes it in any detail. [...] The violence Fanon evokes is instrumental and he never dwells or gloats on its effects” (Macey, 2014).

As Drabinski remarks, “To speak as the colonized is, therefore, to participate in one’s own oppression and to reflect the very structures of your alienation in everything from vocabulary to syntax to intonation” (Drabinski, 2019). By “accepting” the language of the colonizer, the colonized enter to form part of the game. They stop being themselves to become a shadow of the colonizer, as would later develop further later Homi Bhabha with his concept of Mimicry. Fanon ends *Black Skin, White Masks* with a self-reflection and words of hope not only for the black community but for the whole humanity as well: “My final prayer: O my body, make of me always a man who questions” (Fanon, 1991, p. 232). A wish that he dreams all the world tried to adopt, as it is the way to start decolonizing and becoming equal.

2.2. Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong’o: Colonizing the mind

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o was born and grew up in Kenya when it was under the colonial power of the British Empire, but as he says in his book *Decolonizing the Mind: the politics of language in African literature*, “Imperialism continues to control the economy, politics, and cultures of Africa” (Thiong’o, 1986, p. 4). In an interview carried out in Barcelona in 2019, Thiong’o talked about the postcolonial era of Africa and the different ideas he has learnt during his life, dedicated to share his African culture, and his concern about the preservation of the African culture. He explains how important was the discovery of Frantz Fanon in his youth and how it was thanks to him and his book *The Wretched of the Earth* that he understood the difference between economic, cultural and political independence (Adam, 2019). The book defends that, “It was possible to be politically independent, but that was not necessarily being economically independent,” in Thiongo’s words (Adam, 2019). Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o focused on the colonial mind and how the colonizer imposed their culture in the colonized, explained in his words from his book *Decolonizing the mind*:

Colonialism imposed its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. But its most important area of domination was the mental unaversive of the colonized, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the

world. Economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people's culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others. (Thiong'o, 1986, p. 16)

However, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o does not think that only the colonized nations, or should we say ex-colonized nations, have a problematic mentality that alters the equal balance of power culturally speaking that the world should have, but "the whole world, including the West, is still dominated by a middle-class, Eurocentric, white male minority" (Adam, 2019). It is because of that reason that he defends that, "Decolonizing the mind is very important for both Africa and Europe alike. [...]. Europe first has to decolonize itself; it must understand that many of its cities were built on profits generated through African bodies" (Adam, 2019).

One of the main aspects that he wants the audience to understand is that "Language, any language has a dual character: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture" (Thiong'o, 1986, p. 13). It is because of that, that by imposing the language to the colonized, colonizers are at the same time imposing their culture, not only for current times, but for the future too. In his book *Decolonizing the mind*, he says one sentence that briefly captures the essence of colonialism of the mind, "The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom" (Thiong'o, 1986, p. 9). Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o wants the world to reflect about it and asks, "But by continuing to write in foreign languages paying homage to them, are we not on the cultural level continuing that neo-colonial slavish and cringing spirit?" (Thiong'o, 1986, p. 20). As Tania Adams points out, "Thiong'o defends the mother tongue as a weapon against linguistic imperialism, and recommends decolonizing minds and the imagination, in Africa and Europe alike" (Adams, 2019).

2.3. Homi Bhabha: Mimicry

Homi Bhabha was born in 1949 in India, between the independence from the British Empire and the creation of the Republic of India. Still nowadays working in postcolonial studies, he is famous for many concepts, such as mimicry, colonial hybridity, and ambivalence, all of them applied to the area of the colonial mind.

The concept of mimicry refers to the idea of the imitation per part of the colonized of the colonizer culture, which in all cases fail. This results in hybridity in which the colonized lose their identity but do not achieve the identity of the colonizer. As Rebecca Liu states in her article in *The Prospect* magazine, “This attempt will always fail, he writes, but that failure brings forth the possibility of protest (the colonised mimicker is both, he wrote, “resemblance and menace” to the coloniser)” (Liu, 2019). This is what Bhabha denominates as the ambivalence of the colonial authority, in between the imitation and the threatening on part of the colonized. Homi Bhabha explains, “The ambivalence of colonial authority repeatedly turns from mimicry –a difference that is almost nothing but not quite– to menace –a difference that is almost total but not quite” (Bhabha, 1984, p.132).

Here is when it comes to the concept of hybridity, which can be explained as a process of changing and getting in between. The native adapts to the culture of the colonizer in order to do what he is imposed to think that is the best, at the same time getting further away from his own culture, “the same, but not quite”. In his book *Of Mimicry and Man*, he describes this as:

Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. (Bhabha, 1984, p. 126)

That results in the loss of belongingness, the colonized can never belong to the colonizers because he will always be seen as different, and now he does not belong to his own culture, as he is already different. According to Abdennebi Ben Beya, “The dominant culture is contaminated by the linguistic and racial differences of the native self. Hybridity can thus be seen, in Bhabha’s interpretation, as a counter-narrative, a critique of the canon and its exclusion of other narratives” (Beya, 2020).

Bhabha was influenced by Frantz Fanon, but he did not agree exactly with him in terms of colonial identity. “What I have called mimicry is not the familiar exercise of dependent colonial relations through narcissistic identification so that, as Fanon has observed, the black man stops being an actional person for only the white man can represent his self-esteem. Mimicry conceals no presence or identity behind its mask: [...]” (Bhabha, 1984, p. 129). While Fanon thinks that the colonised still have their own identity

covered by the coloniser's education, Bhabha thinks that the colonized loses their identity to become hybrids.

The colonized do not have the same culture as the colonised no matter how hard they try. They are just able to adopt the same habits or values but they do not have the same essence. In other words, "Mimicry repeats rather than re-presents" (Bhabha, 1984, p.128). They lose themselves and just become a shadow of the coloniser. They can feel that they are not included in the colonizer group and they are discriminated but they cannot go back to their own culture because this is how they have been educated.

3. THE PHILIPPINES: A BRIEF HISTORICAL SURVEY

3.1. Spanish colonization

In 1521, the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan in an expedition commanded by the Spanish king, arrived at the coast of Limasawa Island, in Southern Leyte. However, what it is now the Philippines, didn't become a colony of Spain until 1564. The main objectives for the colonization of the Philippines were the access to the spice trade, the conversion of the inhabitants to the Christian faith, and the connection with other Asian countries as China or Japan to make easier the entrance of Christian missionaries to expand the Christian belief. The only thing that could be achieved was the conversion of the Filipinos to Christianity, though not in the south and the north, occupied by Muslims and indigenous tribes, respectively (Dolan, 1991). The Spaniards, already experienced in colonizing due to the colonization of the Americas, tried to do the process without much harm to the population. In general, the process started as smooth and the Filipinos did not oppose the colonization much (except for the Muslim group) so it was relatively easy. However, as time passed, that premise was ignored, and the authorities behaved cruelly against the natives, imprisoning, torturing, and even killing without enough reason (Newson, 2009).

3.2. American colonization

On June 12, 1898, in Kawit, inside the province of Cavite, Emilio Aguinaldo declared the Philippines as an independent nation. The event took place after the Spanish troops were defeated at the Battle of Manila Bay, which occurred on May 1 of the same year, during the Spanish-American War (Dumindin, n.d.). However, neither Spain or the United States accepted this declaration and continued their battle against its control. The

United States was not willing to let go of the opportunity to add another country, in a strategic position, to the American Empire (Winston, 2019). The reason behind this was the increase of commercial opportunities, the expansion of their influence in Asia, and at the same time, the rivalry against the other big empires as Spain, Germany, or Japan (Zelikow, 2019). It was not until the 10th of December of 1899, that Spain signed the Treaty of Paris, giving the control of the Philippines to the United States, and therefore, starting the era of the American colonization.

The American colonization took place between 1898 and 1946. To the eyes of the Philippines and other countries, the reason that the Philippines became an American colony was that the United States won the battle against Spain for its control. However, the reality was that Spain was having economic problems and the United States saw an opportunity to expand its territories, so they offered the Spanish government the possibility to buy the Philippines. The United States wanted to make the Filipinos believe that they were trying to save them from the Spaniard cruel rule, so they agreed with Spain that the Spanish army would purposely be defeated while in the eyes of the Filipinos, the American army would risk their lives in a battle to help the Philippines. The Spaniards would still conserve their honor, not surrendering to the Filipino people which they considered inferior, but to a powerful country like the United States. The Americans would be seen as saviors and Filipinos would be in debt with them (Gonzalves, 2009).

On January 23, 1899, the First Philippine Republic, popularly known as the Malolos Republic (as the event took place in the city of Malolos), was established with Emilio F. Aguinaldo at the front (Dumindin, n.d.). Aguinaldo, before becoming president, was already a leader in the military field and participated between 1896 and 1898 in the Revolution against the Spanish rule. When he became president, he still rebelled against the United States in the Philippines-America war. The republic ended on March 23, 1901, when Aguinaldo got captured by the United States and never able to become president again, though he tried (Dumindin, n.d.). This ending gave way to the Commonwealth period, ruled by the United States. The period between 1901 and 1935 was politically empty as the control of the nation was held by the U.S military forces, that occupied the country.

From 1935 to 1944 Manuel L. Quezon (also a military) was the president of the Commonwealth government of the Philippines, the first one elected by the population. Quezon improved many aspects of the country: establishing a land reform that helped the population to be able to own the land instead of working the land owned by Spanish

colonizers, organizing the military defence. He also boosted commerce and foreign relations but focused especially on stopping corruption and making the government more organized (Powell, 1936). During the final years of World War II, 1942 to 1945, the Philippines was occupied by the Japanese, and president Quezon was forced to exile to the United States. Sadly, he died while still in exile and was replaced by Sergio S. Osmeña, who became president from 1944 to 1946. As Osmeña was the vice-president in the period of the presidency of Quezon and agreed with his ideas, he continued with his measures involving land property, military defense, commerce and foreign affairs, and corruption (Dolan, 1991).

In response to the Japanese conquest of the Philippines, part of the population decided to fight back, joining anti-Japanese guerrilla groups. The most successful organization was the *HUKBALAHAP* (*Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon*, translated as People's Army Against the Japanese). After killing many Japanese troops and their wealthy supporters, *Hukbalahap*, or commonly called “the *Huks*”, ended up controlling Central Luzon, establishing their own rules, and even recollecting taxes (“Hukbalahap Rebellion”, 2014). During the years of occupation, those workers and humble people who supported the anti-Japanese association benefitted from it (“Agrarian Reform History”, n.d.).

3.3. Political independence

After the independence from the United States was achieved in 1946, there have been many presidents but two have stood up especially. From 1972 to 1986, Ferdinand Marcos was elected the president. He had to exile to Hawaii due to the revolution of the Power People after the death of his opponent Benigno Aquino, supported by this group (Dolan, 1991).

As it is explained by David Joel Steinberg, “Benigno Aquino died at his return from the exile in Boston, after many tries to return to his country. When his plane landed, he was shot in the head by a criminal, and it’s still a mystery who planned his death” (Steinberg, 2000, p.142). Nevertheless, the story of a random anonymous criminal killing him because he opposed his ideas is not very convincing, and other options seem more credible. All theories point at that criminal being paid by someone to do it, but who was behind all? Some think that it was the wife of Ferdinand Marcos the one that, without telling her husband, planned all. This is supported by a rumour that says that when she told Marcos that Aquino had been killed, he was very angry and threw a glass of water to

the floor. Ferdinand Marcos wanted to imprison him but not really killing him. He knew that if Aquino died, he could become a martyr and it would make him lose his force. Another reason that makes it difficult to believe that Marcos was the one that ordered the murder at the airport is that it would have been easier to kill Aquino while he was still in exile. In that way, the news would not have been so big and it would have been easier to cover the truth. Aquino's death when he just returned to the Philippines and when all eyes were on him, made it very convenient.

The other possibility, completely opposite, is that it was Benigno Aquino himself, someone close and supporting him, like his wife Corazon Aquino, or both who ordered his own death. Aquino's death made him a hero, a martyr, and was the turning point to his career. Coincidentally, the speech that Aquino "prepared" (1983) to read at the airport at his arrival included the following: "According to Gandhi, the willing sacrifice of the innocent is the most powerful answer to insolent tyranny that has yet been conceived by God or man." Yes, he died, but his ideas took more strength and gained supporters. It is curious that through all the process for his burial, his wife Corazon Aquino was not as affected, and she put the country's need for Aquino in front of her own family needs. This, together with the fact that after some time, Cory Aquino (as she was best known) was elected president (1986-1992), makes her suspicious of being part of the plan. Although there are a lot of theories and no clear resolution of what happened, the Philippines continued with their history, leaving it aside but still not forgetting.

The controversy continued in Philippines politics, as on 20 February 1986, for some hours, there were two presidents at the same time: Corazon Aquino and Ferdinand Marcos. People supported Cory Aquino, as she was known, and organized a massive revolution that lasted four days, the People Power Revolution, to end with the 20-year rule of Ferdinand Marcos. As Sheila Coronel defends, "Cory Aquino was the complete opposite of Ferdinand Marcos. He was the consummate political animal - charming, cunning, and ruthless; she was an anti-politician. But this apparent weakness was her strength, and this fact led Marcos to underestimate her" (Coronel, 2009). Marcos ended up going to Hawaii in exile because he was accused of fraud. Cory Aquino had convinced almost all the nation, making them see her as one of them, a woman that had lost her husband because of the government of Marcos. Her official words after the funeral of her husband Benigno Aquino in 1983: "I am just one of the thousands and millions of victims of the Marcos dictatorship. And I know very well that I am not the victim who has suffered

the most. But... perhaps I am the best known... of Marcos' long list of victims" (Simon, 2009).

There have been people trying to destroy her career by accusing her of lying and victimizing herself, accusing her of hiding during the revolution and blaming her for pertaining to a rich family. She indeed pertained to a rich family but she did not hide during the revolution. The revolution was unexpected and Aquino was coincidentally in another event at that time, but when she heard about it, she took a private plane to go to help. "She decided, 'balik na tayo sa Maynila (let's return to Manila, my translation) because that's where the people are, rising against Marcos, and I want to be with them,'" said Corazon Aquino according to the former senator Aquilino Pimentel, who was also an important opposition leader (Grande, 2018).

On the other hand, Cory Aquino pertains to the family Cojuangco (which was her surname before marrying), and there is still ongoing a big issue about Cojuangco's property. 6,453-hectare Hacienda Luisita is the second biggest land area and it pertains to the Cojuangco family. After the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), which ironically Cory Aquino established in the Philippines, by law, private and public lands had to be distributed to the small independent farmers to promote social justice ("Republic Act No. 6657", June 10, 1988). Not only the Cojuangco refused to give their land, but also, taking advantage of the title of Aquino as president, sent the police to fight the farmers when the farmers were doing a strike. That event, called the Hacienda Luisita Massacre, ended up with 7 deaths, 122 injured, and 111 detentions (Ranada, 2013). Families of farmers are still nowadays searching for justice, but at least two of the families of the persons that were killed have received part of the land (Simbol, 2016).

However, there are a lot of accusations and issues but no clear truth about who is the right one. Neither Marcos nor Aquino had a clear career, and all the information about them is subjective and biased depending on the side the person or company belongs. What is clear is that "Impunity is a recurring theme that can be found throughout Philippine history, and it is always the ordinary Filipino people on the receiving end of it and the elites that perpetuate it" (Encabo, 2019).

3.4. Nowadays Philippines

Nowadays the president of the Philippines is Rodrigo Duterte. In May 2017 there was a rebellion by a terrorist group in the city of Marawi. The president declared the Martial Law and the city, though already destroyed, was finally liberated in October. The

current government is based on equality, working to improve the quality of life of the poor part of the country, and making the population more equal in terms of money and sentiment, promoting national pride. According to data collected in 2015 by the Asian Development Bank, there is a 21,6% of the population living below the National Poverty Line. The main focus of Duterte is the anticorruption policy, but he has made big improvements in his anti-drug program. The military forces are used by the government to fight the “social cancer” –the term they use to denominate the drug addicts and traffickers, gangsters, thieves, and criminals in general. As Darryl John Esguerra wrote for the newspaper *The Inquirer*, “Duterte has been pushing for the revival of the mandatory *ROTC (Reserve Officers’ Training Corps)* program, which he said would instil patriotism and discipline to young Filipinos” (Esguerra, 2009).

In recent times, there has been a big controversy as Rodrigo Duterte has closed one of the biggest Filipino channels, *ABS-CBN*. Coincidentally, the one that was mentioned before (through one of their journalists, Gigi Grande) that defended Aquino when she was accused of hiding during the revolution. Thanks to Cory Aquino, the Lopez family, owners of *ABS-CBN* (apart from the *Manila Electric Co.*, part of the *Philippine Commercial and International Bank (PCIB)* and other corporations) could get back their businesses that Marcos administration had shut down (Arillo, 2020). The reason behind this shutdown has been the expiration of the 25-year franchise and the rejection per part of the government to renew it. The *National Telecommunications Commission* decided on May 5th to not renew the franchise and to order its shutdown. The rejection was due to the constant attacks to president Duterte, but more importantly their many supposedly irregularities in their company. The most important point, which cannot be said to be sure until a judge considers it, is that it has been reported that *ABS-CBN* did not pay taxes as they should have. In their part, *ABS-CBN* claimed on May 11th that they have paid all the taxes as the law dictates and that every year the company is audited by the *BIR (Bureau of Internal Revenue)* and a third party, *SGV & Co*, one of the largest auditing firms in the country (*ABS-CBN News*). However, the Deputy Speaker and *SAGIP* representant, Rodante Marcoleta, stated on May 26th that, "Because of this unconscionable tax avoidance scheme, *ABS-CBN*'s alleged effective tax rate in 2018 was at -5 percent. This means that *ABS-CBN* managed to avoid paying taxes in 2018." As Arniel C. Serato for *Pep.ph* highlighted on May 28th from the words of Marcoleta, “The congressman also questioned why *GMA-7*, supposedly a much smaller company with a smaller income, paid nearly double of *ABS-CBN*'s tax bill” (Serato, 2020). *ABS-CBN* news published a

very sensationalist article on its website³: “Sen. Risa Hontiveros said she wanted to send the message that “thousands will die in this virus” if *ABS-CBN* is muzzled” (Gutierrez, 2020). They used a woman and her family, explaining their harsh economic situation, making it look like the TV channel was the only thing that could make them forget bad things and, at the same time, be informed about the world and dangers. “Closing down *ABS-CBN* was “no different than what happened during martial law. This abominable act of the current Duterte administration further exposes the true character of the regime” (Gutierrez, *ABS-CBN*, 2020).

According to the demographic data from 2019 collected by *The World Bank*, the population of the Philippines is about 108.117.000,00. The issue is that the population grows at an exponential level that makes the country poorer each year as it is not capable to grow economically at the same rate. In 2019, the population had a growth of 1,37%. As David Joel Steinberg states in his book *The Philippines: A singular and a plural place*:

Abortion is illegal in the Philippines, carrying a long prison sentence for anyone convicted, but increasing numbers of women have turned to birth control, including the use of abortion. According to a survey cited by *Asian Development Bank*, one-third of all pregnancies in the Philippines were terminated by illegal abortions in 1998. (Steinberg, 2000, p. 220)

The little sex education that is given to the young, and the strong religious belief of not using birth control, combined with the strong opposition to abortion and also its illegality, make the issue of natality very important. People become poorer and more tired as they need to work all day because the salaries are not enough to feed all the family. However, in this aspect, Filipino traditions and values shine. For Filipinos the most important thing is family, and they do all they can to help their relatives. Filipinos firmly believe in “*Utang na loob*”, which meaning would be “debt of gratitude”. It does not matter if it is not a close relative and they do not talk much or even if not blood-related family, Filipino people treat everybody who “enters” the family as real relatives (Steinberg, 2000). This is what probably has increased the number of people in poverty but also shows the kindness in Filipino culture. For them, the “we” is more important than the personal

³ The article was written by Jason Gutierrez, journalist from The New York Times. This shows the good relationship between both magazines and, therefore, companies. This supposed relationship will be later expanded.

needs, and they even have a very strong sense of nationality, not only with the nation but also with their province and town (Hays, 2008).

4. FILIPINO PERCEPTION OF AMERICAN INFLUENCE: A SURVEY

4.1. The interviews

One big part of the interviews was about the perception Filipinos have of themselves. The six participants are young but while five of them have lived all their life in the Philippines, one of them has been born and raised in Spain. Her answers contrast generally with the others because she can see more objectively the influence of the United States in the Philippines, a country that she feels her own, even if she was not born there. This analysis will be divided into three parts: the colonial mind (showing what is the perception Filipinos have about themselves in relation to the United States' influence over their country), education (to be able to understand why they have that perception), and the media (to see how they see themselves and the United States through Media).

4.2. Discussion

4.2.1. The colonial mind

This analysis will start with the study of how Filipinos perceive themselves, which is very related to Frantz Fanon's idea of the colonial mind. Identity is very important in a society, and when that identity is covered by the shadow of another country, there is a problem. The society, although already independent (political and/or economically) but not culturally independent, is still under mental colonization. In this condition, the country cannot progress on its own, so the people have to break that unstated norm and fight for equality and real freedom. In the next section, which analyses the responses regarding their identity, the focus will be on their mentality to see if they have a colonial mind.

When they were asked in which ways the American colonization helped the Philippines, each of the participants focused on different aspects, but the most repeated was the military. Apart from that, participants mentioned education (specifically the creation of the public school system), agriculture, sports, economy (letting Filipinos be owners of markets when only Spaniards could be owners during Spanish Colonization), transportation, health system, industrial system, clothing, and food. One of them also claimed that the American colonization contributed a lot in Filipino Culture. Another

participant expressed that she believes that the colonization helped the Philippines in the language aspect, although that can maybe be considered one of the reasons for the colonization.

One of the questions was about how much of America do the participants see in themselves, to which there were very diverse answers. Two of the participants chose to answer with percentage, one of them saying she and the society have 50% of America in themselves, while another participant said he had 60% of America in him and society 80% because they think being more Western can improve their lives. The “American” things that some of the participants see in themselves are English, movies, music, fashion, food, education, and mentality. One of the participants said that she does not see herself very influenced and does not want to change her Filipino values and culture for American ones. Another one explained that Filipinos prefer imported products, especially American, over local ones as they think American products have better quality and status. The participant that was born and raised overseas, explained that she does not see much of America in herself because of living in another country all her life, only her English when she speaks Tagalog. However, she also described Filipinos to be highly influenced by America in language, music and TV programs, but added the American ideal of beauty. The problem she is referring to is the growing obsession about using beauty products, and even pills, to make their skin lighter.

The participants were also asked whether they feel that the United States sees the Philippines as an equal. Most of the answers of the participants state that the United States does not see the Philippines as an equal. They pointed out that the Philippines is poor, and a Third World developing country, while the United States is powerful, rich, and a First World country. It is interesting to highlight that one of the participants remarked that anyways both countries are allies and equal in values and humanity, while another one stated that they were allies until the current president of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte, broke the connections with the United States, that always ended with the United States winning more than the Philippines. With that statement, he making reference to the recent news regarding president Duterte against the United States. Duterte openly said that he does not like the other country and wants to break all ties. He refused to visit the United States when he was invited to attend a meeting between the United States and the *ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)* (Tomacruz, 2020). He also decided to end the *Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA)*, which permitted the United States military to stay and

train in the Philippines (Parameswaran, 2020). After that question, the participants were asked about their opinion regarding which country helps more the other. The majority of the participants opined that the United States is the one that helps more.

Taking into account all of their answers, the list of aspects in which the United States has helped more the Philippines, includes: the military, technology, fighting against Filipino terrorist groups, economic aid. One participant claimed that “[An] economic budget because of our debts started during American Colonization in our country.” There were only two answers that opposed that opinion. One of them said that both countries help each other equally, while the other one was that the Philippines is just depending but cannot prosper economically as a country, and therefore, is more benefitted. This is an interesting point as it could be taken as an attacking argument because it implies that the United States takes advantage of its higher power and economy. This answer reflects how this participant, the one that was born and raised abroad into a Filipino family, does not have a colonial mind. She is able to see objectively the situation, and that is why her answers are the ones more different in most of the questions.

When asked about whether the Philippines is in debt with the United States there was a clear division. Half of the participants answered “no”, while the other half said yes. Two participants said that the Philippines does not owe anything to the United States but they are grateful because they helped their country for a long time. One participant answered that they are in debt because the US helped them to fight against the Japanese and be free, apart from helping their economy after the war. In relation to that, the next question was whether the Philippines has to be thankful to the United States, taking into account all the history between both countries, there were some differences. Two participants said that they would always be thankful, while another two said that they are thankful but to a certain extent, just in some aspects. Contrarily, the last two said they do not have to be thankful, and one of them added that the reason is that, “[...] many Filipino suffered, abused and discriminated in their hands during their colonization. They also have bad influence such as the colonial mentality.”

The participants were also asked about the high number of Filipinos that go to the United States in search of a better future. Three of the participants made reference to the “American Dream” and the hope Filipinos have of finding a better life there, while another one answered that, sadly, Filipinos need to leave the country because it is not possible to improve the lifestyle of locals, so out of necessity they emigrate to the United

States to be able to progress. Another participant opined that some had a bad time and some got lucky to have a better life than the people staying in the Philippines, while the last one did not care much about it and answered that everyone takes their decisions and do their life. The participants had different answers when they were asked whether they would migrate to the United States, two of them said they would not do it, one said she would, and the last two were not sure about it. The participant that did not want to answer this question was the one that did not care about the issue.

Nowadays, Filipinos are choosing to migrate to countries from Europe and Western Asia, instead of the United States. The participants were asked about the reason for this change in their opinion. There were some references to the president of the United States, Donald Trump, and his immigration policy. Two participants answered that Filipinos realized that in Europe and Western Asia they can get a high salary and better job and life conditions than in the United States. Another participant said that she thinks that one of the reasons is that America is not safe anymore because of the massive shootings that take place there. Other answers pointed to the higher number of job opportunities for Filipinos and a better future in European and Western Asian countries. Participant 5 said that “they are finally enlightened that there is no "better future there". The last participant guessed that it is because of the image the United States is giving to the rest of the world about the minorities living there and their conditions.

4.2.2. Language and Education

Education has a big role in colonialism and it is the weapon the colonizer uses to keep their legacy for a longer time in the colonized. In the words of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o in *Decolonizing the mind*, “The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom” (Thiong’o, 1986, p. 9). Another of the ideas of Thiong’o, that former colonies receive political independence but rarely economic independence, is also present in the Philippines. In this section, interviewees were questioned about the education they received to see how it affected them. The first step to achieve decolonization is the decolonization of the mind, and that is not possible without the awareness of the wrong aspects.

When the participants were asked about their origins, there were very diverse answers. Participant 1 and 4 were in a similar line as both pointed out to precolonial times. Participant 4 deepened more as she explained that Austronesians came from the

combination of Mongoloid and Australoid. She did not mention any other origin but participant 1 also added Spanish origin. Participant 1 said that in school they are not taught about precolonial times, and people can only learn that by themselves through the internet or studying History in college, which is the case of Participant 4, who finished her History degree a few years ago.

The most different answers came from two participants that were the only ones that did not mention Filipino origins. One of them answered that her origins are Spanish while the other said his origins are Asian only, without specifying. Both of them were born in the Philippines and have Filipino parents, so it is a bit strange that they did not include Filipino origins, especially when in other questions they answered with a lot of pride for being Filipino. Participant 5 described herself as having Filipino and Spanish origins, which is what they are taught in school. Participant 6 is the only one that was born overseas to Filipino parents, concretely in Catalonia, Spain. She considers herself to be Filipino, Catalan, and Spanish. It is important to note the order in which she said it, putting her Filipino origins first.

When asked whether they think that the United States is involved in Filipino education, all the participants answered affirmatively. Participant 4 pointed out that the United States established Public Schools to give every Filipino child the right to study. Participant 1 gave another point of view on this. For him, the United States did not do it to help them but to make sure that Filipinos learn English and a version of history that benefitted them, portraying the United States as a savior and friendly country. He also added that, in books, there is no reference to the Filipinos that were killed during the American conquest.

An example of the influence of the United States on Filipino education, some participants talked about how English is the main language in education, while Tagalog is only used in the Tagalog subject. Only one of the participants answered about the image of the United States according to education. She answered that the general image of the United States that is portrayed in Filipino schools is that it is “a better place to be than in the Philippines”. It is interesting to note how only one of the participants answered the direct question of what is the portrayal of the United States in school. In other questions that were about similar topics but not so directly about their education, other participants stated the same image of the United States.

4.2.3. The media

Mass media is a dangerous tool that portrays what powerful companies want people to think. The phenomenon surrounding this propaganda, in this case favoring the United States, can be related to the idea of the colonial mind by Homi Bhabha. When Media reports on the United States as a powerful and superior place, part of the Filipinos can feel tempted to mimic Americans, as it is seen as a sign of higher education and status. The problem is that in the way, they lose part of their Filipino culture and become hybrids, people between both cultures.

The vision of the United States that our participants got through media is the image of power and strength, an ideal country better than the Philippines, and even the most powerful country in the world. As one of the participants pointed out, media showcases the “American dream”. One of the participants even affirmed that it is portrayed like the United States’ presence can be seen and felt in all the nations of the world.

Diana Roxas, an advertising executive of the Filipino media company *ABS-CBN*, declared to Time magazine that, “dream of living the American dream. [...] We live in an Americanized culture where most people consider the U.S. the land of milk and honey.” *ABS-CBN*, which has been mentioned already in this paper is, supposedly, the most famous broadcaster. This, however, cannot be proved as there are not purely objective sources that talk about it. *ABS-CBN* itself is the only source that has shared the statistics of the audience that the Filipino TV networks have. According to *ABS-CBN*, on February 6, the statistics from *Kantar Media* regarding the audience per network show that their network is in 1st position with 44%, while *GMA* is in the second position with a 33%, and *TV5* in 3rd position with only 2% (*ABS-CBN*, 2019). They stated that the data comes from Kantar Media, a company that works on data and statistics from media of different countries, but casually this company (which is usually considered trustworthy in Spain) has not posted any more data in its supposed Facebook page since before all the issue with the shutdown of *ABS-CBN*. However, *ABS-CBN* is probably the most viewed TV network, as it is the one more mentioned in social media. Therefore, taking *ABS-CBN* as the most influential TV network, it is important to know its background to see their ideological position. The Lopez family owns the company of *ABS-CBN* and has strong ties with the Aquino Family, which is evident as Cory Aquino reopened *ABS-CBN* after Ferdinand Marcos closed it during the Martial Law. Since then, the network has been caught to be very biased, praising the Aquinos and constantly attacking Marcos and

Duterte, who openly agrees with Marcos in some aspects, like in the war against drugs, the limitation to only Filipino nationals to own companies, and the importance of military and obligatory military service. There are some reasons by which it can be supposed that *ABS-CBN* corporation has connections with the United States and that would mean that the network would favor the image of the United States, contributing to the American image of superiority. When the company was closed during the Martial Law, Marcos ordered the arrest of its CEO, Eugenio Moreno López Jr., who escaped from prison and exiled himself to the United States with his family. Another link, and probably the strangest one, is the official statement made by Morgan Ortagus, the U.S. State Department spokeswoman this May 8: “We are concerned by the situation regarding *ABS-CBN*” (“American gov't 'concerned' over *ABS-CBN* shutdown”, 2020). Their concern is very suspicious as it should not be that important for them if they supposedly do not have anything to do with the Philippines.

In the interviews, one of the questions was about the perception of nationalities. Two of the participants opined that now the world is more open-minded and, although there is still racism, it is not as radical as in old times. Another two participants stated that the cause is the technology, which allows globalization and the acknowledgment of other realities. The thing is that, when they were asked whether they ever had made to feel inferior by some American person or article in social media, four of the six participants affirmed that they have. The other two said they never experienced that and they said Americans are friendly, but admitted to have not been in contact with American people or media. Another one of the participants said that she felt inferior because of being from “a poor country who had a lack of education and a poor economic system, although it has a rich culture.” An interesting fact is that the two participants, who said that the world was now more open-minded and racism is not as radical as in the old times, were the ones that answered to not have experienced a feeling of inferiority on the internet.

However, when the participants were asked directly if they have ever wished to be American, there was a blatant unanimity in the participants. They all stated that they would not want to be American and they are proud of being Pinoy (a common term to refer to Filipino). The participant that was born and raised overseas explained that, although Filipinos admire the United States and many people wish to be American to have a better social status, Filipinos are proud of their nationality and their origins, which

for example is reflected in the fact that you can always see comments in social media saying “Proud to be Pinoy” or “Pinoy pride”.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this paper was to show the perspective of the Filipinos about the influence of the United States in their country. The Philippines is a developing country that cannot progress on its own, and therefore needs the help of other countries. The United States has been taking advantage of this reality even after granting the Philippines its political independence. Taking that into account, the Philippines could be said to be a neocolony, and the main question remains whether Filipinos are aware of that. The starting perception was that Filipinos are not very aware of the issue, and instead of being critical about it, they generally believe in the United States’ propaganda of superiority.

The historical events explained in this paper permit to understand the division within the Philippines regarding politics that started long ago but continues nowadays. That division has even extended to other aspects as TV networks as it was mentioned. The postcolonial theory applied to the answers of the interviewees, reveals how they have what Frantz Fanon would call a colonial mind. The respondents admitted that although they were proud of being Filipino, they still felt inferior to the United States in some aspects, like appearance for example. However, some of the answers to the interview proved that the initial hypothesis, that Filipinos are not aware that the United States has still power over the Philippines, was wrong. Many answers showed how a part of the Filipinos see that the United States did not “save” the Philippines just to help them but to get something from them. It is not that they do not see it, but that they do not want to see. This was confirmed by one of the natives, who said that people do not mind about it. One part of the country knows the truth, they have realized the hypocrisy of the United States and their real purpose, and the fact that the version of history taught in school comes from the American perspective. The other part of the country believes that the United States was a saviour and altruistically helped them to be free because they do not bother to doubt about what they learnt in school.

People, not conscious of being still colonized mentally, just focus on earning money to be able to maintain themselves and their families to survive. Having those hard conditions, they do not care about history, they care about today. The system of the

Philippines is so chaotic that there is no near possibility of the country becoming absolutely independent. The only hope is that little by little people realize the truth and the colonial mind disappears. Only in that way, the Filipino society will be able to progress.

Before concluding, an important caveat should be made, and it is the fact that it is difficult to find objectivity in the Philippines. Through the research, the search for objective facts has been very difficult and, in some cases, impossible. The country is very politically polarized and they relate all topics to that opposition. This project does not purport to have found the correct side but to just depict the contrast. In any event, that opposition, although it changes the view of the participants about the United States, does not change the colonial mind that Filipino society still has, which can be seen in many of the interviewees' answers.

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8. APPENDICES

8.1. Appendix A: The questionnaire

Gender:

Age:

City:

1. Which origins do you think or feel you have?

Ano sa tingin mo o pandama mo ang pinag mulan ng iyong lahi?

2. What is your perception of those nationalities nowadays? And when you were little?

Ano ang iyong pang unawa o pananaw sa mga bansang ito sa panahon ngayon?

3. In which ways do you consider that American colonization helped the country?

Sa anong paraan mo isaalang-alang na ang mga amerikano ay nakatulong sa bansa?

4. How much of America do you see in yourself? And in the rest of Filipinos?

Ilang porsyento sa tingin mo ang nakikita mo sa pagiging isang amerikano?at sa ibang pilipino?

5. Do you think the United States sees Philippines as an equal?

Sa tingin mo ba ang united states ay nakikita na ang Pilipinas na kapantay ng antas nito?

6. In the Philippines-United States relation, which country do you think helps more the other?

Sa Pilipinas at Amerika bilang magka ugnayan, alin sa dalawa ang tingin mo ay mas may naitulong?

7. Do you think Philippines is still in debt with America?

Naiisip mo ba na ang pilipinas ay mayroon paring utang sa amerika?

8. Does Philippines have to be thankful to the United States, taking into account all the history between both countries?

Ang pilipinas ba ay dapat mapagpasalamat sa America, isinasaalang-alang ang lahat ng kasaysayan sa pagitan ng parehong mga bansa?

9. Which is the portrayal of the United States that the education tries to give? Do you think the United States is involved in the Filipino education?

Alin ang paglarawan ng Estados Unidos na sinusubukan ng bansa na magbigay ng edukasyon? Sa tingin mo ba and america ay kaugnay ng edikasyon sa pagaaral ng mga pilipino?

10. How do you think the media portrays the United States?

Paano sa tingin mo nilalarawan ng media ang united states?

11. Have you ever felt inferior by some American person or media?

Naramdaman mo bang naging mababaw sa iilang mga amerikano o media?

12. Have you ever wished to be American?

Ni minsan ba ay hiniling mo na maging american?

13. What do you think about the high number of Filipinos that go to the United States to have a better future? Have you thought about doing it yourself?

Ano sa tingin mo ang taas ng bilang ng pilipinong pumupunta america para magkaroon ng magandang kinabukasan?naisip mo narin bang gawin ito?

14. Lately the Filipinos emigrants are choosing countries from Europe and Western Asia instead of the United States as their destination. Why do you think it changed?

Sa panahon ngayon ang mga nandarayuhan ay pinipili ang mga banda mula europa at kanlurang asia sa halip na sa United states ang kanilang pangunahin destinasyon ano sa tingin mo ang dahilan kung bakit ito nag bago?

8.2. Appendix B: The interviews

Interview 1

Gender: Male

Age:22

City: Concepcion, Tarlac city

1. Which origins do you think or feel you have?

I think more on Spanish descendants because they stayed here in a lot of years and Austronesian as our real country origins.

2. What is your perception of those nationalities nowadays? And when you were little?

Nowadays nationalities are getting more open minded and forming equality and there's still racisms and discriminating others more on now that there's pandemic virus. when I'm little racisms are more rampant and people are greedy.

3. In which ways do you consider that American colonization helped the country?

As I think and know they helped us from being slaves and gave us strength to have our freedom from being in hands or rules of Spaniards and Japanese colonization.

4. How much of America do you see in yourself? And in the rest of Filipinos?

I see myself of being American in terms of reading English that they thought us in school and a bit in music and more on liking Hollywood movies and a bit in fashion.

5. Do you think the United States sees Philippines as an equal?

I think USA doesn't see us as equal in capability but before we are strong allies till my current President changed the decision of it that USA is just using us in a lot of terms, USA is part of rich country while Philippines is just a developing country.

6. In the Philippines-United States relation, which country do you think helps more the other?

I think the America helped us a lot about army and mechanisms that we are not capable to have and they helped us invade a lot of terrorists in all our history because our country is still developing country.

7. Do you think Philippines is still in debt with America?

We don't owe them anything but they helped us for long time and we are grateful about it.

8. Does Philippines have to be thankful to the United States, taking into account all the history between both countries?

Yes, we will be always thankful for USA for their help for long time.

9. Which is the portrayal of the United States that the education tries to give? Do you think the United States is involved in the Filipino education?

Education can help all the Filipinos to eradicate the poverty. Education with hard work can make a person rich the life they want and make a great part of our country.

10. How do you think the media portrays the United States?

Media always shows that USA can handle all things because they think they are super strong country and armed forces while the truth is that they are getting down nowadays that they can't even win against war this time.

11. Have you ever felt inferior by some American person or media?

As i feel American are friendly and they can't change being good to being bad because they are known as our friendly country and i never been with American media.

12. Have you ever wished to be American?

I never thought about being American, but I'll still be accepted even if I'm not American and I'm proud being Filipino.

13. What do you think about the high number of Filipinos that go to the United States to have a better future? Have you thought about doing it yourself?

As far as I know there's less than 2 million immigrants in part of US since 1980 till now and some had a bad time from there and some got lucky that they rise above those people from here, I've never think of working abroad but if there's chances maybe I'll try to work as long as the salary can help my family here to live well.

14. Lately the Filipinos emigrants are choosing countries from Europe and western Asia instead of the United States as their destination. Why do you think it changed?

Filipino now are thinking of high salary and a bit kind of good work and because America changed about their immigrant policy that other Pinoy didn't like it so they saw more opportunities from other country that they can be safe and not much war involved.

Interview 2

Gender: Female

Age: 27

City: Fairview, Quezon City

1. Which origins do you think or feel you have?

I think my origins came from Spanish descendants. Spaniards colonized our country for more than 300 years that's why I think my bloodline came Spanish origins.

2. What is your perception of those nationalities nowadays? And when you were little?

I think nowadays nationalities around the world is now more open minded, more adhering to equality and hating racisms. When I was little, racisms are rampant.

3. In which ways do you consider that American colonization helped the country?

American colonization helped our country because we achieved our freedom from oppression from Spaniards, Japanese. People learned how to fight hard for our liberty or freedom in all ways.

4. How much of America do you see in yourself? And in the rest of Filipinos?

I think I never see myself more of American ways, We as Filipinos have so many good qualities or cultures that are far different from Americans. Yes, they belong to firstly world country, and they influence massively in the Filipino ways of living in most ways like fashion, food, language, and other things. But one thing is for sure about me, is I will never trade my values, traditions and cultures i grew up with from Americans.

5. Do you think the United States sees Philippines as an equal?

US and Philippines are allies. In terms of each country's capabilities, we are not equal as US belongs to First world country, while Philippines belongs to category of Developing country. But in terms of rights and value in humanity, contribution to the world, I think USA and Philippines are equal.

6. In the Philippines-United States relation, which country do you think helps more the other?

In terms of aid, USA helps more than Philippines help USA, in the reason that, Philippines is just a developing country while USA already belongs to G7. Or one of the riches countries in the world

7. Do you think Philippines is still in debt with America?

We don't owe USA anything. But we are grateful for all the help USA extended to our country for so many years.

8. Does Philippines have to be thankful to the United States, taking into account all the history between both countries?

Yes. We will always be grateful for USA.

9. Which is the portrayal of the United States that the education tries to give? Do you think the United States is involved in the Filipino education?

Education can help all the Filipinos to eradicate the poverty. Education with hard work is the only way how we can uplift our lives. I Think USA has a massive influence in our educational system. For example, our medium of instruction is English language.

10. How do you think the media portrays the United States?

Media portrays that USA think they are the most powerful country in the world. That their presence can be seen and felt in all nations of the world.

11. Have you ever felt inferior by some American person or media?

No. I think Americans are friendly. Though i never had a chance to be with American media.

12. Have you ever wished to be American?

I want to visit their country one day. But no. I never wish to change my citizenship. Proud to be Filipino.

13. What do you think about the high number of Filipinos that go to the United States to have a better future? Have you thought about doing it yourself?

I am happy for them. You know Most Filipinos have this American Dream. Many wishes to go there promising a better life, better opportunities. No, I do not see myself working and living in the US, as there are so many shootings there. America has so many enemies all around the world, so I don't feel safe living there.

14. Lately the Filipinos emigrants are choosing countries from Europe and Western Asia instead of the United States as their destination. Why do you think it changed?

It is because of immigrant policy of President Trump. They are not favored during Trump administration. And I think, America is not so safe place anymore as massive shootings are rampant in different states.

Interview 3

Gender: Male

Age: 28

City: Manila City

1. Which origins do you think or feel you have?

Asian.

2. What is your perception of those nationalities nowadays? And when you were little?

They are more intelligent now because of the technology surrounds them.

3. In which ways do you consider that American colonization helped the country?

In militarization by providing a high-end tactical skills and equipment.

4. How much of America do you see in yourself? And in the rest of Filipinos?

For me 60 percent for other Filipinos it is 80 percent because they believe Western people can improve their lives.

5. Do you think the United States sees Philippines as an equal?

No as of the moment because American believe that Philippines seek alliance with china.

6. In the Philippines-United States relation, which country do you think helps more the other?

In history, US helped Philippines in many ways and in all aspects like in economy and in military.

7. Do you think Philippines is still in debt with America?

Yes, however I don't have the exact figures.

8. Does Philippines have to be thankful to the United States, taking into account all the history between both countries?

In some aspects, yes.

9. Which is the portrayal of the United States that the education tries to give? Do you think the United States is involved in the Filipino education?

Yes, USA has a great contribution in Philippine education nowadays.

10. How do you think the media portrays the United States?

Media has a big role and impact and it can influence a lot.

11. Have you ever felt inferior by some American person or media?

Yes.

12. Have you ever wished to be American?

No.

13. What do you think about the high number of Filipinos that go to the United States to have a better future? Have you thought about doing it yourself?

Filipino people see that America has big opportunities for their lives, No I don't.

14. Lately the Filipinos emigrants are choosing countries from Europe and Western Asia instead of the United States as their destination. Why do you think it changed?

Filipinos are more intelligent now and they are making some research and base on the facts they see that Europe and some Asian countries could bring them to a stable and higher salaries.

Interview 4

Gender: Female

Age: 23

City: Pasig City, Manila

1. Which origins do you think or feel you have?

I think, according to studies and theories, Filipino nationality came from Austronesians. Austronesians came from the combination of Mongoloid and Australoid who has fair skin, medium height.

2. What is your perception of those nationalities nowadays? And when you were little? Before, countries mostly have pure nationalities but nowadays nationalities have diversity because of globalization. People around the world communicate and interact with various people around the world and create a combined and new nationality.

3. In which ways do you consider that American colonization helped the country?

4. How much of America do you see in yourself? And in the rest of Filipinos?

American Colonization contributed a lot in Filipino Culture. Specifically, in Educational System (Public Schools). It also influenced the Filipinos in transportations, health system, industrial system, clothing, food and mentality for example Filipinos prefer to buy and use imported products particularly those who came from America (we believe that imported products are expensive but original and quality products).

5. Do you think the United States sees Philippines as an equal?

As a third world country, I think United States will never see Philippines as their equal. Because US is richer and more progressive than Philippines.

6. In the Philippines-United States relation, which country do you think helps more the other?

I think US provides more help to the Philippines when it comes to economic budget because of our debts started during American Colonization in our country.

7. Do you think Philippines is still in debt with America?

Yes. Yes, because they helped the Philippines to fight and gain freedom from Japanese colonization. They also help our economy after the war.

8. Does Philippines have to be thankful to the United States, taking into account all the history between both countries?

No, because they colonized Philippines and many Filipino suffered, abused and discriminated in their hands during their colonization. They also have bad influence such as the colonial mentality.

9. Which is the portrayal of the United States that the education tries to give? Do you think the United States is involved in the Filipino education?

Yes, because US started the Public-School System in the Philippines wherein every poor Filipino child had the right to study.

10. How do you think the media portrays the United States?

I think, the media portrays the US as a progressive and among the powerful country in the world.

11. Have you ever felt inferior by some American person or media?

Personally, yes because we are Filipino from a poor country who had lack educational and economic system but has rich culture.

12. Have you ever wished to be American?

No. I'm proud to be a Filipino.

13. What do you think about the high number of Filipinos that go to the United States to have a better future? Have you thought about doing it yourself?

We cannot blame those Filipino who dreams of American Life. It's their choice but It's sad because they left our country but I think they still have their Filipino Pride. For my family, yes, I want to work in US to earn more money and provide their needs.

14. Lately the Filipinos emigrants are choosing countries from Europe and Western Asia instead of the United States as their destination. Why do you think it changed?

Well, aside from US, European & other Eastern Asian countries are also progressive and provides more job opportunities for many Filipino.

Interview 5

Gender: Female

Age: -

City: Baguio

1. Which origins do you think or feel you have?

Filipino and Spanish.

2. What is your perception of those nationalities nowadays? And when you were little?

Nothing. Wealthy.

3. In which ways do you consider that American colonization helped the country?

Exposed us to better economy trades.

4. How much of America do you see in yourself? And in the rest of Filipinos?

50%.

5. Do you think the United States sees Philippines as an equal?

No. Look at us lower.

6. In the Philippines-United States relation, which country do you think helps more the other?

Equal.

7. Do you think Philippines is still in debt with America?

Yes 100% yes.

8. Does Philippines have to be thankful to the United States, taking into account all the history between both countries?

Should be thankful but not too gullible.

9. Which is the portrayal of the United States that the education tries to give? Do you think the United States is involved in the Filipino education?

The United states is a better place to be than in the Philippines. Yes.

10. How do you think the media portrays the United States?

A better place than our country.

11. Have you ever felt inferior by some American person or media?

Yes. On social media because of ethnicity.

12. Have you ever wished to be American?

N O.

13. What do you think about the high number of Filipinos that go to the United States to have a better future? Have you thought about doing it yourself?

I think "you do you" to them. I am not very fond of the idea of leaving in united states.

14. Lately the Filipinos emigrants are choosing countries from Europe and Western Asia instead of the United States as their destination. Why do you think it changed?

Because they are finally enlightened that there is no "better future there".

Interview 6

Gender: F

Age: 25

City: Barcelona

1. Which origins do you think or feel you have?

Filipino, Catalan, and Spanish

2. What is your perception of those nationalities nowadays? And when you were little?

Aunque, en general, exista admiración hacia Estados Unidos y haya gente con el deseo de querer ser americano para ascender socialmente (supongo que también abre más puertas a más oportunidades, en vez de ser más un tema nacional), la gente filipina

también se enorgullece de sus orígenes y nacionalidad. Expresiones como “Proud to be Pinoy” o “Pinoy pride” son muy populares, por ejemplo.

3. In which ways do you consider that American colonization helped the country?

El idioma, aunque también se puede considerar como una de las herramientas por las que se llevó a cabo la colonización.

4. How much of America do you see in yourself? And in the rest of Filipinos?

No mucho, quizás el inglés. Aunque no hable mucho en tagalo, es muy común usar palabras en inglés mientras hablas en tagalo. Incluso se forman palabras nuevas a partir de palabras en inglés y conjugadas en tagalo.

En el resto de filipinos, supongo que también la lengua, en el estilo de música y los programas de televisión. También aspirar al ideal de belleza basado en tener la piel blanca. Como cuando te comenté que están obsesionados con productos de belleza como jabones, aunque también toman pastillas para tener la piel blanca.

5. Do you think the United States sees Philippines as an equal?

Creo que no.

6. In the Philippines-United States relation, which country do you think helps more the other?

Creo que se beneficia más Estados Unidos mientras Filipinas sigue dependiendo de manera que no puede prosperar económicamente como país, así que supongo que Filipinas es el que más ayuda a Estados Unidos.

7. Do you think Philippines is still in debt with America?

No.

8. Does Philippines have to be thankful to the United States, taking into account all the history between both countries?

No.

9. Which is the portrayal of the United States that the education tries to give? Do you think the United States is involved in the Filipino education?

Yes.

10. How do you think the media portrays the United States?

Ideal, como algo a lo que hay que aspirar. Creo que se vende mucho el “sueño americano”.

11. Have you ever felt inferior by some American person or media?

Yes, in social media.

12. Have you ever wished to be American?

No.

13. What do you think about the high number of Filipinos that go to the United States to have a better future? Have you thought about doing it yourself?

Que es muy triste tener que irse del país para que las condiciones de vida de uno sean mejores. El sistema está montado de una manera que impide mejorar la calidad de vida de la gente local, quienes sean quedado sin recursos.

14. Lately the Filipinos emigrants are choosing countries from Europe and Western Asia instead of the United States as their destination. Why do you think it changed?

Me imagino que es por la situación política y la imagen internacional que dan sobre las comunidades minoritarias, así como sus condiciones.