

**Assessing the use of anthropological concepts in the promotion of civic education and fostering civic engagement: The case of the Philippine Center for Civic Education and Democracy (PCCED).**

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*How anthropology might break free of the academic walls it has boxed itself in --- that is, for it to move beyond problems defined by the discipline "to the problems of the world" (Borofsky, 2007, 7/13 online) --- ought not to be a matter of theoretical speculation, and especially as a prerogative of academic anthropologists. The fact is, time and again, anthropological perspectives have been made to speak to political, economic, social and cultural issues by individuals and groups active in the public arena. A critical yet collaborative engagement with these advocacies might be a convenient and helpful first step towards freeing the discipline from its self-imposed isolation and, ultimately, "[upholding] the transformative potentials of anthropological knowledge" (UGAT, 2011).*

*This commentary focuses on the work of a particular non-government organization with which the author is actively engaged --- the Philippine Center for Civic Education and Democracy or PCCED --- and seeks to assess its use of key anthropological insights in framing projects aimed at promoting civic education and fostering civic engagement among secondary public school teachers, high school students and members of local communities. It explores not only how this has led to more theoretically informed approaches but also, and just as importantly, what the limitations of these approaches are and how they might benefit both from further theoretical elaboration and from the reflexive sensibility that anthropology as an academic discipline advocates.*

## **Introduction**

I would like to begin by saying that I have always wanted to write this paper and that I am quite thankful UGAT provided just the occasion for such an endeavor. Those of us involved in NGO or advocacy work will know that a critical assessment of our own so-called "transformative agendas" is never an easy task. Not only because reflexive self-monitoring is always easier said than done (as an intellectual exercise, that is) but that there are real constraints for doing so when the object of such assessment is an enterprise to which one is personally invested. This paper concerns an organization I helped found and which I also presently head as Chairperson of its Board of Trustees --- the Philippine Center for Civic Education and Democracy or PCCED.

Here, I aim to critically evaluate PCCED's use of key anthropological insights in framing different projects aimed at promoting the concept of civic education and fostering civic engagement among secondary public school teachers, high school students

and members of local communities. This commentary explores not only how such insights have led to more theoretically informed approaches but also what the limitations of these approaches are and how they might benefit both from further theoretical elaboration and, more generally, from the kind of reflexive sensibility that academic anthropology advocates. It goes without saying that, here, I shall be raising rather uncomfortable questions --- for myself and my PCCED colleagues, at least.

The phrase “anthropological” I use in a rather loose fashion. It includes not only concepts with a clear provenance in the discipline but also concepts familiar to, or that may resonate, with anthropologists and those belonging to allied fields. In more concrete terms, this should at least include all those ideas that could potentially contribute to our understanding of that “contested process of meaning-making” in society that Susan Wright writes about (Wright, 1998, p. 5). Needless to say, then, as far as this paper is concerned the “anthropological” ultimately (and simply!) hinges on the “cultural” on the assumption that it is with “culture” that anthropology may properly claim some special competence as a discipline.

There is good reason for taking this loose approach. I believe Borofsky’s (2007) hope of moving anthropology beyond problems defined by the discipline “to the problems of the world” (7/13 online) can only be fully realized if anthropology breaks out of its own specialized theoretical vocabulary. Indeed, how can we speak of “[upholding] the transformative potential of anthropological knowledge” (UGAT, 2011) where anthropologists remain caught up in their own narrow, and theoretically confined, concerns? To put it another way, anthropology ought to unlearn its distaste for the vulgar and the pedestrian if it must aspire to “invigorating public conversations” (Borofsky, 2007, 2/13).

### **Anthropology’s political silence --- the bigger story**

Anthropology has paid a high price for this self-imposed isolation. Looking back at the infamous Asian values debate, for instance, Kessler’s (1999) commentary has taken anthropologists (and sociologists, too) to task for their failure to critically engage the “vulgar cultural theory” upon which the whole debate rested and for allowing “all that pseudo-sociological ‘values chatter’” to go uncontested (2/4, online). Kessler writes: “Explanations of accelerating Asian economic performance in terms of ‘Asian values’ entailed an analytical regression, ... an insidious return of the ‘structural functionalism’ of the 1960s, especially its simplistic attempts at explaining social situations by attributing causal power to various hypostatized or idealized value-complexes covertly abstracted from those situations” (1/4).

This “intellectual abdication” (as Kessler calls it) was also, and more embarrassingly, evident during the political science-led revival in the 1990s of academic interest in the link between culture and political development. Here, what I find rather disturbing is not the audacity of political scientists in tackling wholesale the phenomenon of “culture” (which simply picks up where Almond and Verba left off in the 1960s) but, rather, the silence of anthropologists on the politically urgent issue of the role that culture played in a stable democracy.

The fact is, “[by] the 1990s, observers from Latin America to Eastern Europe to East Asia were concluding that cultural factors played an important role in the problems they were encountering with democratization” (Inglehart, in Harrison and Huntington 2000, p. 92). And it was scholars outside of anthropology like Fukuyama, Harrison, Huntington and Putnam who would latch onto the Weberian tradition by exploring how cultural traditions shape political and economic behavior (p. 80).

In the Philippines in the aftermath of the EDSA Revolt, when democracy was very much in a precarious state, close attention was also paid to the question of how cultural factors might help create a stable and viable democracy. Despite the exuberance of Marxist intellectuals, there emerged significant support in academe for the view that the scope of political reform should include not only dismantling the authoritarian machinery but also the adoption of values more in keeping with democratic politics. Of course, against the backdrop of persistent electoral fraud, endemic political violence, the threat of

military adventurism and the resulting climate of political uncertainty, the question of what made for a working democracy could not be a purely academic one.

Again here, with a few exceptions from anthropology (e.g., Mulder 1997, Zialcita 1997), political science and its allied disciplines dominated knowledge production and debate. At its most systematic, this involved proffering notions of “political development” which revived concepts relating to “political culture” introduced by the likes of Pye, Almond and Verba in the 1960s (Wurfel 1988) and/or continued the traditional Philippine academic discourse on patron-client relations and its complement of so-called traditional Filipino “values” (Wurfel 1988; Timberman 1991).

The patron-client framework dominated Philippine studies in the 1960s and, in the 1990s, remained largely unchallenged (Sidel 1999, p. 7). Indeed, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) appeared to have bought into this framework in a 1999 document entitled “Pastoral Exhortation on Political Culture”. The CBCP declared thus, “Our electoral and political behavior likewise strongly displays this same clientelist orientation --- the basis of our ‘politics of patronage’” (CBCP 1999, p. 6). The dominant view was that the preponderance of these elements of traditional culture worked against the kind of participatory politics demanded by the country’s imported republican institutions.

As if to confirm anthropology’s silence on the matter, the most serious challenge to the “political development” perspective would actually come mainly from within political science itself. Significantly, these alternative perspectives would purvey a decidedly “structuralist” approach. There were, for instance, the neo-Marxist scholars whose analytical account of Philippine politics focused on a “weak state” captured by competing interests and with little autonomy from dominant classes or entrenched particularistic groups in society (Rivera 1991, cited in McCoy 1994, p. 11).

And then there were those who, critical of what they considered to be essentialized views of Philippine society and unwilling to downplay the role of state structures and institutions, took as their departure the analysis of state formation in the Philippines. Not convinced by the “strong oligarchy, weak state” thesis that was in vogue in the late 1980s and 1990s, these scholars painted an alternative picture of politics that focused on “the distinctive and enduring institutional legacies of American colonial rule in the Philippines and the patrimonial nature of state-oligarchy relations in the archipelago” (Sidel 1999, p. 12; see also Anderson 1988 and Hutchcroft 1998).

### **“Bagong pulitika”**

These contestations notwithstanding, it would be safe to say that for those concerned with the success or failure of democratization after Marcos, “the process would entail far more than a simple return to the days before martial law when elite, clan politics reigned and political parties differed more in appearance than anything else” (Diokno 1997, p. 1). For the Democracy Project spearheaded by the Third World Studies Center at U.P., which brought together in conference people from academe and civil society organizations, democratization involved “the evolution and development of democratic processes, institutions, and political cultures” (Diokno 1997, p. 2). All such efforts came under the popular rubric of *bagong pulitika* or “new politics”.

Diokno’s (1997) synthesis of the discussions states that “The fundamental question... is two-fold: how to develop a sense of community and public good, and how to empower the people” (p. 34) (She then cites concepts from political science as “useful guides” in organizing the democratic agenda arising from the conference: March and Olsen’s framework of democratic political development and Przeworski’s concept of effective citizenship).

For his part, Abueva (1997) would state the problem of democratization as relating to: “1.) the building of sound, functional institutions, governmental and non-governmental, through which the new democratic political system shall operate; and 2.)

the shaping of an appropriate, supporting political culture consisting of civic values, sentiments, attitudes, evaluations, and behavior..." (Pp. 20-21). Democracy, to Abueva, is not only defined by the presence of competitive elections, broad citizenship and suffrage, and respect for basic civil and political liberties and minority rights (its "procedural meaning"). More importantly, it is about "effecting" the people's will through the processes of governance (its "substantive meaning") (p. 2).

### **The Philippine Center for Civic Education and Democracy**

As an enterprise, the Philippine Center for Education and Democracy (PCCED) grew out of the post-EDSA consensus --- if, indeed, one can call it that --- that democratization can only be sustained, and a democratic future for the country guaranteed, if the institutions of democracy are rebuilt on stronger cultural foundations. A key document of PCCED lamenting the narrow public understanding of democracy restates Abueva's formulation, this time by locating the "substantive" as against the "procedural" meaning of democracy within the Classical Greek tradition of citizenship:

*... instead of citizens' participation as the benchmark of a genuine, substantive democracy, only its procedural meaning is practiced --- where the existence of elections is sufficient to call one's country democratic. The original concept of democracy where each citizen is knowledgeable about the issues that surround his nation, aware that its ills could be solved by thoughtful action...and willing and capable of acting upon them, is set aside (PCCED 2005., p. 15).*

A "non-stock, non-profit organization", PCCED is dedicated to the promotion, through educational initiatives, of good citizenship as a necessary condition for a functioning democracy. "Good citizenship" is here taken mean a reasoned commitment to fundamental democratic values and principles manifested in active engagement in civic life ([www.pcced.org.ph](http://www.pcced.org.ph)). The founding members of the organization were faculty members of the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) based at the Ortigas Center in Pasig City.

The organization dates from 2004 with the very first of its Civic Education Training Seminars (CETS) for public school teachers. The program, which involved helping teachers integrate civics or citizenship modules into the existing public secondary education curriculum, was the recipient of funding assistance from the US Department of State Small Grants Commission. CETS is an integrated approach at increasing the competence of teachers in Civic Education, primarily in strengthening their grasp of the subject matters included in the "*Makabayan*" (or "Citizenship") Curriculum. The modules have been crafted in such a way that concepts of democracy and civic education are seamlessly integrated or "embedded" into the four social studies subjects that comprise the citizenship curriculum in high school.

Another early program is "Project Citizen" (PC), a systematic approach to educating students in democracy which PCCED licensed from the Center for Civic Education (CCE) in the United States, and subsequently adopted and adapted for use in Philippine high schools. Aiming to connect students' knowledge of their rights and duties as citizens with community work that provides them real-world experience, PC trains students in seeking public policy interventions to solve local problems. It is a program for increasing democratic participation, political efficacy and civic engagement levels of students by providing opportunities for acquiring civic knowledge, skills and dispositions.

Although PCCED would subsequently pursue other projects, CETS and PC were particularly important in that many of the key concepts that would inform the organization's work in civic education were either developed when the CETS modules were being prepared, or adopted from Center for Civic Education (CCE) materials that some members came in contact with through PC-related activities and trainings. What follows is a summary and integration of these ideas.

## **The Philippines as a nation in the making**

The most foundational of these is a revisionist historical perspective that first appeared in the CETS modules: the concept of the Philippines as a nation and a democracy in progress (and not as a failed nation or a floundering democracy). This actually interrogates the kind of primordialist discourse often reproduced in standard Philippine history textbooks. The main argument is that the nation as a cultural reality is the work of history, and that for Filipinos in the present to engage in meaningful nation-building they must, of necessity, understand the process and conditions of its historical emergence. According to Paul Dumol (2005), one of the organization's founders:

*Before the missionaries came (indeed, before Magellan came), the Philippines as a particular territory did not exist.... The teacher must stress how the Philippines as a particular territory is an invention of the Spaniards that needed to be accepted by Filipinos. ...Today, there are still people in the Muslim south who do not accept the view of the Philippines as a single territory, just as their ancestors never did (p. 34).*

The process of national becoming would continue in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, rapidly going through three stages. The first stage, "consisted in installing the framework of statehood and laying the bases of a national community" (p. 37). The Americans conquered the Muslim South and the Cordilleras, imposed a common language (English), set up a transportation and communication network that stitched together the Archipelago, and established a national government to be gradually run by Filipinos that would culminate in the Philippine Commonwealth. "Democratic processes were followed, while the spirit of feudalism prevailed" (p. 37).

The second stage, dating from the Philippine Commonwealth, is "the attempt to make that strange creature --- a feudal *bayán* in democratic dress --- work" (p. 37). This experiment, Dumol points out,

*...culminated in the notorious years of martial law, in which the President was like the pre-Hispanic *datu*; his cronies, like the pre-Hispanic *maginoo*s; and everyone else, like pre-Hispanic *timawas* and *alipin*s. This was, of course, what all the other presidencies were like to varying degrees, but we needed the assassination of Ninoy Aquino to make it plain that such a situation is unacceptable (p. 37).*

The third stage is where PCCED situates its work: The demonstrations triggered by the Aquino assassination inaugurated the present stage defined by the struggle towards genuine democracy and away from the feudal society that has condemned formal republican democracy to failure. This feudal society, characterized by the *maginoo-alipin* mentality, is a society of vertical loyalties. The task at hand is to effect a transition from this kind of society to one predominantly defined by horizontal loyalties, a task that requires "the ever-widening scope of the common good ... [and] an increasing appreciation of human dignity" (p. 39).

## **The nation as a civic (and not an imagined) community**

This process, as envisioned, conflates being a nation with being democratic. "The problems of the nation ...are problems of transition: that transition from family-centeredness to nationhood and from feudalism to democracy initiated only a little over a hundred years ago" (Dumol 2005b, p. 31). As long as the *maginoo-alipin* mentality persists, the Philippines will remain a nation "in progress". Thus, Dumol (2005) points out that "The end of the nineteenth century saw the birth, not of the nation, but of the desire of being a nation" (p. 36). The fullness of nationhood is achieved only when Anderson's (1991) imagined "deep, horizontal comradeship" (p. 7) ceases to be imaginary and becomes political reality.

Clearly, here, the nation is envisioned as a civic community --- reflecting not only the influence of classical Greek political theory (Aristotle and his handy evolutionary framework, for instance) but also the influence of Jose Rizal's ideas on

nationhood. Rizal's lengthy admonition in the last chapter of *El Filibusterismo* on the Filipinos' lack of civic virtue has had a particularly strong resonance among the founding members of the organization. It might as well be PCCED's political creed:

*Our misfortunes are our own fault ... as long as the Filipino people do not have sufficient vigour to proclaim, head held high and chest bared, their right to a life of their own in human society, and to guarantee it with their sacrifices, with their very blood; as long as we see our countrymen feel privately ashamed, hearing the growl of their rebelling and protesting conscience while in public they keep silent and even join the oppressor in mocking the oppressed; as long as we see them wrapping themselves up in their selfishness and praising with forced smiles the most despicable acts, begging with their eyes for a share of the booty, why give them independence? ... What is the use of independence if the slaves of today will be the tyrants of tomorrow? And no doubt they will, because whoever submits to tyranny, loves it! (Pp. 252-252).*

My own subsequent elaboration of this theme would also be an elaboration of Dumol's concept of the *maginoo-alipin* mentality: "unable to situate themselves within a larger society of anonymous others and thus think and act for the interest of an abstract public, it is not unusual for voters to respond to the challenge of choosing leaders mainly with their personal or familial interests and preferences in mind" (Camposano 2005, p. 58). Since the idea of public interest is reduced to mere legal fiction, it is easy for people to be seized by the personal charisma of would-be saviors or drawn into the patronage networks of traditional politicians (p. 58).

### Creating citizens

PCCED's advocacy of civic education thus presents a decidedly cultural (rather than institutional or structural) approach to the problem of democracy, and therefore of nationhood. The organization believes that the challenge of making democracy work in the Philippines should be addressed not by re-engineering the country's imported republican institutions but by laying the cultural basis for genuine political participation, or what the organization prefers to call "citizenship". Again, here, classical political theory provides a convenient model: the ideal citizen is likened to the Greek *polites* --- "an individual absorbed in the affairs of the polis or city-state, a true political animal" (PCCED 2005, p. 14).

Using the evolution of the Tagalog word *bayan*, Dumol (2005) attempts a teleological (and I would say, indigenous) approach to citizenship by introducing the concept of *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan*. He asserts that, "If we look back to the evolution of the word *bayan*, we realize that its evolution is accompanied by the ever-widening scope of the common good.... [and] an increasing appreciation of human dignity..." (p. 39). The historical expansion of the meaning of *bayan* indicates a process of evolution from which emerges not only the idea of the nation as the expanded *bayan*, but also the synthetic (i.e., in the sense of "synthesis") idea of *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan* as constituting the negation of the vertical *maginoo-alipin* mentality in favor of a democratic nation with horizontal loyalties.

The teaching of Philippine history is therefore crucial in that it is a natural site within which citizens may be formed. As political education *par excellence*, Philippine history should clarify for students the meaning of the historical movement from independent barangays to a single nation with a view to winning them over "to the future we should be moving toward" --- not the mere desire for nationhood but "an expanded appreciation of the common good that encompasses the entire country and to a respect for human dignity that cuts across social strata" (2005b, Pp 30 - 31), in other words, *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan*.

Another approach to conceptualizing citizenship within PCCED cobbled together concepts developed within political science and the liberal political tradition. The participant orientation constitutive of active citizenship in society is seen as a function of two factors: 1.) The desire and confidence to participate in the political process called "political efficacy" (see Almond and

Verba 1963); and 2.) Elements such as social trust, norms and networks that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit called “social capital” (see Putnam 1995, Fukuyama 1999) (Camposano 2005, p. 56).

Social capital is “deemed more fundamental in that it allows persons without dyadic or personal ties to work together for a common cause, thus laying the basis for collective political action” (Camposano 2005, p. 56). Social capital can only be generated through civil society in that “they are developed through active, collaborative relationship with others and are ultimately based on the mental habit of recognizing common interests ‘and choosing to look for collective rather than individual benefits’” (Cox 1995, 5/7 online).

### **Civic knowledge, skills and dispositions**

An important influence in PCCED’s effort to conceptualize citizenship was its engagement with the U.S.-based Center for Civic Education and Democracy (CCE). In 2004, PCCED began the process of adopting (and adapting) for the Philippines one of CCE’s signature programs called “Project Citizen” (PC). An interdisciplinary and immersive instructional program for adolescents originally developed in the United States, PC is predicated on the belief that, “the ideals of democracy are most completely realized when every member of the political community shares in its governance” (Branson 1998, p. 10).

As a method of civic education, PC generally aims to promote not only an understanding of democracy but also “reasoned commitment” to democratic values and principles as crucial requisites to genuine political participation, here understood as “sharing in governance”. As Branson (1998) pointed out “Democracy is not utopian, and citizens need to understand that lest they become cynical, apathetic, or simply withdraw from political life when their unrealistic expectations are not met”. Civic education must therefore provide young people with an understanding of politics not as a zero-sum game but as ‘the art of the possible’ (Branson 1998, p. 11).

In training students to seek public policy interventions to solve local community problems, PC is designed to improve the capacity of Filipino high school students “to participate competently and responsibly in the political system”. It provides a practical, hands-on approach to learning about how our system of government works, as well as how to actually monitor and influence its policies (PCCED: Project Citizen Philippines 2007, p. 7). PC aims to achieve what Branson (1998) considers the three (3) components of good civic education: knowledge that is needed to participate effectively in the political system, critical thinking and participatory skills, and dispositions or traits that contribute to the healthy functioning of the political system (pp 11- 17).

Branson (1998), however, states that civic dispositions or what Alexis de Tocqueville termed “habits of the heart” (e.g., self-discipline, respect for human dignity, civility, respect for the rule of law and willingness to listen and negotiate) are probably of greater consequence to democracy than knowledge or skills in that they are integral to government founded on effective citizen participation (p. 16). She quotes Judge Learned Hand’s 1944 speech:

*Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it; no constitution, no law no court can even do much to help it. While it lies there, it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it* (Quoted in Branson 1998, p. 17).

### **Reflexive analysis, not political paralysis**

Certainly, a commitment to reflexivity (Bourdieu 1990b) demands that we not take for granted the link between history, the national community and citizenship. Indeed, we may well consider any account of a nation’s emergence (revisionist or not) as

some kind of an “imaginary totalization”, partaking of an “imposed legibility” created when we disentangle ourselves from everyday life and all its opaqueness and complications (de Certeau 1984, p. 93). Though unconventional, it may still be admitted that PCCED’s revisionist historical framework does involve a form of deductive theorizing, something de Certeau (1984) calls a “totalizing eye”. And we have Said (1983) to remind us that

*Theory ... can never be complete, just as one’s interest in everyday life is never exhausted by simulacra, models, or theoretical abstracts of it....we distinguish theory from critical consciousness by saying that the latter is a sort of spatial sense, a sort of measuring faculty for locating or situating theory, and this means that theory has to be grasped in the place and the time out of which it emerges as a part of that time, working in and for it, responding to it...The critical consciousness is awareness of the differences between situations, awareness too of the fact that no system or theory exhausts the situation out of which it emerges or to which it is transported. And, above all, critical consciousness is awareness of the resistances to theory, reactions to it elicited by those concrete experiences or interpretations with which it is in conflict (pp 241-242).*

Nonetheless, anthropology’s release from academic confinement and its foray into the public sphere comes with a price, one that has to do with the imperative of political action. Reflexive analysis then should not lead to political paralysis. To go public means to engage social “realities” (whatever these are), take a stand and assume a determinate course of political action. I believe that our commitment to reflexivity can move us beyond the threshold of intellectual introspection, towards a transformative agenda that recognizes, among other things, the need for ongoing analysis and control of categories used (Swartz, 1997, p. 273).

To allow ourselves to be framed by the “reality” of the nation need not mean a relapse to the primordialism of conventional Philippine history, nor does it necessarily mean the exclusion of other “realities” (or identities) or the denial of the contingent nature of social life. It is simply to recognize, as Caroline Hau (2000) does, that “the contingencies of everyday life neither vitiate the need for decision-making and political action, nor disable us from having to deal with what can happen and what does happen” (p. 7). Hau herself admits that, “there is also something about everyday life and experience that is always in excess of the systems of thought and sociopolitical action that seek to apprehend and organize it” (p. 7). More importantly, Hau posits a notion of an open-ended nationalist project by arguing that this “excess” ought to be seen as

*...the condition of possibility of both literature and politics because no writing or political program can exhaust the possibilities of the social reality it seeks to engage. The nationalist project is always unfinished because literature and politics can only generate more writing and action. The space in which writing and action unfold is opened up, if not necessitated, by the excess that slips their grasp. Because the excess exists, writing and action cannot end (p. 7).*

Dumol’s (2005) notion of the Philippines as a nation in the making, in so far as it refers to “the ever-widening scope of the common good ... [and] an increasing appreciation of human dignity,” may yet gesture towards what Hau (2003) calls the “fraught nature” of nationalism --- so pregnant with possibilities that it “opens up the imagined community (and indeed scholarship) to constant revision, to being made, unmade, and remade over and over, thereby accounting for the nation’s continued efficacy in these times” (Quoted in Abinales 2003, p. xiv). Here, Dumol’s idea of *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan* as the negation of the vertical *maginoo-alipin* mentality (and other similarly disempowering hierarchies) may be seen as a call for the progressive democratization of Philippine society.

The question, however, presents itself: How do we go about dismantling the kind of social hierarchy represented by the *maginoo-alipin* mentality? Dumol seems to suggest that infusing society with *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan* is sufficient to undermine this hierarchy. Is this indeed a problem to be addressed solely by education in the civic virtues? A purely phenomenological approach to the problem of democratic citizenship does overlook material inequalities and the relations of power. It amounts to a form of what Bourdieu called “subjectivism”, a theoretical position which, together with its polar opposite in “objectivism” and its privileging of underlying structural regularities, “collude in obfuscating the anthropological truth of human practice” (Wacquant on Bourdieu, quoted in Pilario, n.d., p. 2).

Without privileging material circumstances and power relations in the production of culture (that is to say, without us becoming disciples of Marvin Harris), it may be supposed that “cultural production [does] takes place within specific historical, political and economic relations which structure textual meanings” (Barker on Kellner, 2000, p. 365). It would thus make sense for any attempt at expanding citizenship and fostering civic engagement “to engage more thoroughly with the political economy of culture, that is, with questions of ownership, institutions, control and power, exploring the ways in which the moment of production inscribes itself in the range and meanings of cultural products” (Barker on McGuigan, 2000, p. 365).

Clearly, Dumol is not suggesting that the poor, comprising the bulk of the *alipins* in Philippine society, become oblivious to their poverty. Yet, the notion of *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan* could benefit from an awareness of positionality: In so far as this notion of citizenship is not attuned to material constraints and the relations of power that sustain social hierarchies, it may be legitimately asked to what extent is it inflected by class (to which Dumol and we his colleagues at PCCED belong) and/or indeed is its gaze confined by a theoreticist bias --- i.e., removed from the realm of practical knowledge into a realm of leisurely (and distanced) contemplation? To what extent is it the fruit of an academic bent? (see Swartz 1997, Pp 272-273).

Needless to say, culture is no mere dependent variable (to use rather crude positivist language). To engage with the political economy should not mean taking the view that culture (or things “cultural”) may be “read-off” from what is material-economic or political. Rather, it is to assert frankly that the divide between culture and political economy is not a very helpful one and that any cultural project aiming at a society of so-called “horizontal loyalties” cannot be theoretically silent about the economic and political inequities that help sustain existing hierarchies.

A possible solution to this problem would be to deploy Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990a, 1990b,) concept of the habitus to theorize citizenship and civic engagement. As a historically inscribed system of habits and dispositions allowing for the non-mechanical production by social agents of thoughts, perceptions and actions (1990a, pp. 54-55), the habitus is also “a product of the social world and its history, of past socialization experiences, of the structured world and its socio-economic hierarchies” (Pilario, n.d., p. 30). To conceive therefore of the *maginoo-alipin* mentality as an orchestration of a specific habitus means to create theoretical space not only for civic virtues (as democratic habits displacing feudal ones) but also for their socio-economic conditions of possibility.

Yet, the habitus is merely durable and not eternal (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, cited in Pilario, n.d., p. 113). The possibility of directed change rests with the concept of reflexivity --- an expansion of critical consciousness that can awaken us from our complicity with the taken-for-granted world (the *doxa*) of unconscious, somatized dispositions. As a form of “[self-monitoring] and the use of knowledge about social life as a constitutive element of it” (Barker 2000, p. 390), reflexivity can lead to our mastery of the relation we entertain with our dispositions, as well as awareness of their social and historical embedded-ness (see Pilario, n.d., p.113).

Tentatively, we may thus think of democratic citizenship as an open-ended process (i.e., in the sense of being forever provisional) of increasing or expanding political engagement built on the acquisition of reflexive consciousness. Such a politics, because it involves critical reflection and a “[discourse] about experience and revision of social activity in the light of new knowledge” (Barker 2000, p. 390), cannot be foreclosed by effective participation in the processes of geographically confined republican institutions (although we can certainly envision it beginning with them). Neither should it be pegged to a unitary notion of the public sphere. A reflexive, open-ended politics “should accept the desirability of multiple publics and multiple public spheres while at the same time working to reduce inequality” (Barker on Fraser, 2000, p. 362).

## Beyond conventional cartography

A reflexive (and therefore open-ended) politics ought of course to raise the question of whether citizenship must still claim a necessary connection to the nation-state. The transgression of national space by the intensifying cross-border movement of capital, people, information, culture and ideology, has, as Appadurai (1998) pointed out, radically altered the relations between and among subjectivity, location, political identification and the social imagination. According to Hall (1992) globalization and the consequent deterritorialization of culture “have a pluralizing impact on identities, producing a variety of possibilities and new positions of identification...making identities more positional, more political, more plural and diverse; less fixed, unified or transhistorical” (Quoted in Harris, 2001, p. 5).

Clearly, *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan* discloses a traditional, place-based orientation that has yet to come to terms with a world reshaped by transgressions and cross-border movements. Indeed, *bayan* does not only refer to people residing in a particular place but also “denotes a conscious relationship to a place, which is equivalent to a taking possession of it” (Dumol 2005, p. 38). Needless to say, in its present formulation, *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan* still axiomatically views or “[imagines] the world as a collection of autonomous, monadic spaces, whether these spaces are imagined as nations, regions within nations, or cultures demarcated by region or nation” (Szeman, 1997, pp. 1-2). The same too may be said of PCCED’s call “to participate competently and responsibly in the political system”.

The transformations occurring today have clearly destabilized the bundling of citizenship with the territorial nation-state, producing what Sassen (2002) calls “operational rhetorical openings for the emergence of new types of political subjects and new spatialities for politics” (Sassen 2002, p. 5). The destabilizing of state-centered hierarchies of legitimate power, according to Sassen “signal a deterritorializing of citizenship practices and identities, and of discourses about loyalty and allegiance” (p. 5). Nowhere is this process more pronounced than in what Sassen calls “global cities” which serve as strategic sites for new types of politics:

*The conditions that today mark the possibility of cities as strategic sites are basically two, and both capture major transformations that are destabilizing older systems organizing territory and politics. One of these is the re-scaling of what are the strategic territories that articulate the new political-economic system. The other is the partial unbundling or at least weakening of the national as container of social process due to the variety of dynamics encompassed by globalization and digitization....what matters here is that cities emerge as strategic sites for major economic processes and for new types of political actors. Insofar as citizenship is embedded and in turn marked by its embeddedness, these new conditions may well signal the possibility of new forms of citizenship practices and identities (Pp 21-22).*

For her part, Ong (2006) complicates the presumed unity of citizenship by talking about the disarticulation of different dimensions of citizenship such as rights, entitlements, a territorial state, etc., and their articulation with market-defined norms, neoliberal values, or universal notions of human rights. She notes that these “(re) combinations of globalizing forces and situated elements produce distinctive environments in which citizens, foreigners, and asylum – seekers make political claim through pre-existing political membership as well as on the grounds of universalizing criteria” (p. 500).

There is however no compelling reason to believe that the ties of culture to location can ever be completely severed (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 149), and that there are in fact countervailing processes to deterritorialization pointing to the persistence of locality (Kolb, 2003, p. 4) or the rise of new, technologically mediated forms of localization (Ito, 2000). And beyond the fact that that “place holds us” given the constraints of embodied existence, it should be pointed out that people too “‘hold on to place’ for a variety of individual, social and cultural reasons” (Kolb, 2003, p. 8). Instead of stopping with the notion of deterritorialization, the pulverization of the space of high modernity, Gupta and Ferguson (1992) have called for efforts “to theorize how space is being reterritorialized in the contemporary world” (p. 20).

Geographically based places, in particular, are enduring sources of localized sociality since they have, according to Ito (2000) “the historical force of years of sedimented rhetoric, imagining, and territory building” (p. 5). Emotional investment in “place” can lead not only to the persistence of the local but also to the localization of the global (p. 5). It is said that “places are spaces invested with human experiences, memories, intentions and desires which act as important markers of individual and collective identity” (Silverstone 1994, cited in Barker 2000, p. 276).

Nonetheless, as increasingly global systems of transnational interactions, exchange and mobility function ever more intensively (Vertovec 1999, p. 1), it is clear that we cannot continue insisting on the territorial nation-state as the “end of history” (Fukuyama 1989). The open-ended politics demanded by this new environment and the new dialectic of global and local questions (Beck 1998, cited Vertovec 1999, p. 6) is clearly incompatible with such a Hegelian notion. With the rise of the Filipino Diaspora and the progressive transnationalization of everyday life in Philippine society it is incumbent on us to recognize “the possibility of new forms of citizenship practices and identities” (Sassen 2002, p. 22).

There are questions that can only be properly posed, debated and resolved within a transnational framework. Global public spaces have been actualized largely through technology, according to Vertovec (1999). These spaces are characterized by “far-reaching forms of information dissemination, publicity and feedback, mobilization of support, enhancement of public participation and political organization, and lobbying of intergovernmental organizations.” Although much needs to be done to realize the full civic potential offered by these spaces, Vertovec claims that a considerable amount of political activity is now being undertaken across transnational space by international NGOs, transnational social movements and ethnic diasporas (Vertovec 1999, p. 6).

### **Conclusion: towards an open-ended politics**

How exactly democratization might proceed in the context of an accelerating interweaving of communities through growing flows of trade, capital, technology, culture, information and people (Yergin & Stanislaw, 2002, p. 383) is a matter for speculation. Still, globalization need not be seen as the end of civic engagement “as we know it”. It can be conceived as the advent of new forms of civic engagement shaped by an expanding menu of possible and plausible solidarities. Indeed, the deterritorialization of citizenship practices and identities will likely require the kind of intellectual and moral capacities (or knowledge, skills and dispositions) that have made possible civic engagement in more confined settings. Galston (2004) offers a concise statement of these capacities:

*[Enlarged] interests, a wider human sympathy, a sense of active responsibility for oneself, the skills needed to work with others towards goods that can only be obtained or created through collective action, and the powers of sympathetic understanding needed to build bridges of persuasive words to those with whom one must act* (p. 263).

Our commitment to the progressive democratization of society should make us continue engaging with what is conveniently termed the “democratic tradition”. I am convinced that values such as justice, diversity, liberty and solidarity may yet move us forward. Justice and diversity gesture toward pluralism and the representation of the widest range of opinions, practices and conditions. Liberty and solidarity on the other hand suggest forms of sharing and cooperation which are genuine and not coercively enforced (Barker 2000, p. 363). As for the issue of “democratic governance”, Chomsky (2001) has pointed out that, “It seems self-evident that we should want people to be free, to be able to play an active part in making decisions about matters of concern to them, to the largest possible extent” (5/9, online).

PCCED’s discourse on civic education that focuses on knowledge, skills and dispositions as cultural requisites for expanding and sustaining political participation may be recast using Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus, i.e., with a view to expanding critical consciousness that interrogates people’s somatic complicity with the taken-for-granted world of unconscious dispositions (the doxa). Civic education should therefore aim not only at strengthening commitment to the common good and human dignity but also at creating a reflexive sensibility, an inclination to self-monitoring and an openness to “the revision of social activity in light of new knowledge” (Barker 2000, p. 390).

Thus it should be a kind of political education that allows people not only to master their relation with both their “civic” and “un-civic” habits and dispositions, but also to be aware of their social and historical embedded-ness and positionality. It should be framed by an idea of citizenship as an open-ended concept, or what Sassen (2003) calls an “incomplete institution...not meant ever to be complete” (1/6, online). She writes:

*It needs to be able to respond to new conditions, new claims, and new ideas about what citizenship entails. Being complete would mean closed, and hence a dead institution. It would then cease to be embedded and responsive to the environment* (1/6, online).

Dumol’s (or PCCED’s) concept of democratic citizenship as involving “the ever-widening scope of the common good” and “an increasing appreciation of human dignity” needs to be conceptually delinked from the geographically confined, place-based (national) orientation of *pag-ibig sa tinubuang bayan*. This is an urgent task in light of issues such as environmental degradation and global warming, the global debt and financial crisis, and various humanitarian crises due to wars. The project of progressively democratizing Philippine society (i.e., the dismantling of the *maginoo-alipin* mentality) should be seen as only one among many possible projects. Civic engagement should be seen as having only a contingent (and not a necessary) relationship to the political space of contemporary republican institutions.

At this point, for instance, we can ask: How might we imagine “citizenship” and “civic engagement” within the Filipino Diaspora?

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