MAY KATUTURANG PAMAMAHALA sa Kasalukuyang Yugto ng Kasaysayang Pilipino (1913-2017, Panahon ng Pagbubuo ng Bansa)

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THE ORIGINS AND RISE OF PHILIPPINE POLITICAL CORRUPTION:
On How “Kaginhawahang Bayan” was Utilized by the Elite to Join and Prosper in the Spanish and American Regimes

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I. Introduction

- Historically and culturally, political corruption in the Philippines comes from two sources. One, from the system of the two world powers of Spain and America in the Philippines which had to employ foreign machineries of politics and administration in the country that served above all else their own political, economic and social interests.
I. Introduction

• The other, from what the local elite brought into this system which was their relationship with their “sakop,” having redefined the meaning and value of the acquisition and management of “kaginhawahang bayan” in order to join and prosper in the Spanish colonial and American imperial regimes, and therefore reclaim what was lost to them in socio-economic stature and leadership roles brought about by the crisis confronted by early Filipino communities with the dawn of colonialism beginning 1588.
I. Introduction

Since corruption in the colonial and imperial systems in general has been written about by numerous scholars, both in Spain and its colonies, and in America and in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, this paper focuses specifically at the second phenomenon approaching it from the perspectives of “Pantayong Pananaw” and “Sikolohiyang Pilipino” as it informs the discipline of Public Administration and Governance in the country.
I. Introduction

- The paper is derived from “The Historical Roots of Philippine Bureaucratic Attitudes and Patterns of Administrative Behavior vis-à-vis Corruption” which is Chapter IV of “HANAPBUHAY”: THE FILIPINO BUREAUCRAT’S QUEST FOR “GINHAWA” IN THE WORKPLACE: Its Implications for Understanding Bureaucratic Corruption. A Dissertation by Ma. Carmen V. Peñalosa National College of Public Administration and Governance, University of the Philippines, Diliman.
I. Introduction

- Having been drawn into the discourse of the West through various means of enticement and coercion, and with the baggage of the old system of “pinuno-sakop” relations, our elite will eventually exhibit a brand of leadership informing a system of Filipino politics.
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- that in modern times would mean utilizing the old system in order to perpetuate themselves in government (now governance), no longer for the common good (“kaginhawang bayan”) essentially, but in the image of the colonial power primarily for self-aggrandizement (“pansariling pakanibangan”) and to secure in perpetuity the social and economic interests of their families (i.e., “ginagawang hanapbuhay ang trabaho.”)

http://www.tambooks.com/shop_image/product/23489.jpg
I. Introduction

• Earlier, the mutually beneficial *pinuno-sakop* (leader-ward) relationship provided the basis for the pinunos’ (leaders) acquisition and management of “ginhawa” for distribution among their respective “sakops” in exchange for their respect and loyalty, and primarily for the benefit of the entire community (*kabuuan*). Eventually, offices became essential in so far as these generated “ginhawa” that could be managed and distributed by the “pinuno” to their former “sakop,” so that in exchange their loyalty and respect were cultivated and maintained in order that the former could profitably engage in an internecine political struggle for supremacy among themselves and/or among rival families no longer in the local scene but also national political arena.
I. Introduction

- The formerly mutually beneficial “pinuno-sakop” relationship, would be transformed during the Spanish colonial era into the exploitative patron-client relations; and then eventually during the American period into patronage and spoils politics. The organizational structures and legal forms introduced by the colonizers, being the only mechanisms accessible to the principalia (during Spanish times), and then the Filipino elites (from American colonization up to the present) to reassert, consolidate and perpetuate themselves in power, would be exploited in ways derivative of both Spanish and American bureaucratic and political corruption.
I. Introduction

II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913): Centralization of socio-political and economic power in the hands of the Spanish colonial authority and the origins and rise of corruption in the islands

II. America in the Philippines: The Filipinization of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders and the rise of present Philippine Governance

III. Conclusion
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- The period starting with the crushing of the Tondo Conspiracy in 1588 marks the
  1. introduction of a new system of leadership and administration; and the
  2. beginning of a broader base for national unity beyond the forms of the petty kingdoms and rajaships within the Spanish occupied zones.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- Contrary to the earlier system of loose confederations held together by kinship, social relations, continuous alliance-building and nurturing of interpersonal relations through the efficient management of *ginhawa*, the Spaniards would hold the colony together through a centralized colonial government, territorial control and politico-administrative coercion as well as Catholicism.
The Colonial Government

The Executive Branch (Governor General)

Provincial Government
  Alcaldia (Alcalde Mayor)
   Pueblos or Towns (Gobernadorcillos)
     Barrios (Cabeza de Barangay)

The Judicial Branch (Royal Audencia, Residencia, Lower Courts, Governor-General)

Municipal Government
  Corregimiento (Corregidor)
   Pueblos or Towns (Gobernadorcillos)
     Barrios (Cabeza de Barangay)

City Government
  Ayuntamiento (Cabildo)
   Cabildo City Council
     Alcalde
     Regidores
     Aguacil Mayor
     Escribano
     Barrios (Cabeza de Barangay)

KING OF SPAIN
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- The relative success of the Spanish colonial government was made possible through the collaboration of the datu/hari/raha and the timawa/timagua/maharlika ranks, which were adjusting to transformations in the system of social stratification (based on race-and-culture difference; colonizer and subject population dichotomy) and the distribution of wealth and power within a mercantilist money economy from the colonialist-exploitative viewpoint in contrast to the previous persistent native sharing of ginhawa/kaginhawahan (total well-being of the community).
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

The former *datu/hari/raha* along with their former *sakop* -- i.e., *their kamag-anakan, timawa/timagua/maharlika, alipin* and other people under their stewardship -- were now

1. “barbarians and pagans” and
2. *subjects* of the Spanish King (vis-a-vis Spaniards in the colony as *the citizens, or the public*).

*Public interest* became equated with the interest of Spain.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- On one hand, those who earlier wielded economic and political power within the former system of confederacy but refused to collaborate with the Spaniards would lose the same systematically and through various stages and means throughout the duration of Spanish colonial rule. On the other hand, those who cooperated were left with their properties and some degree of politico-administrative power, but still and always beneath, and to the advantage of, the colonial master.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- Because these earlier *pinuno* would never be allowed to attain the status of the colonizer as citizens; and meaningfully participate in matters of government and administration, a revolutionary fervor, although unwillingly at first, would eventually be born out of this class.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- A formal, extensive and rigidly organized bureaucratic structure was introduced to mediate between the subjects (Indios) and the citizens (Spaniards) in the colony, and between the colony and the Royal Crown in Spain. Thus was born the Spanish civil service (función pública) in the Philippines and an administrative caste that had come to be distinguished by racial typing and profiling.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

Unlike earlier when “offices” were at the complete disposal of a confederation of Filipino leaders in the generation, management and distribution of ginhawa/kaginhawahan among their sakop (this being their basis for leadership and to which they were held accountable), the institution of a Spanish colonial bureaucracy would introduce at least theoretically the distinction between “public” and “private” interest; or thus the western conception of an “office.”
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

“Public service” would encompass official Spanish pronouncements and acts deriving authority from imperialist rule. Examples are the

1. conversion of the natives to Christianity;
2. subjugation and pacification of the islands;
3. supposed protection of the natives against their enemies by the encomendero, and
4. allocation of funds for public infrastructure.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

In exchange, the subjects were to

1. pay tributes,
2. accept forced labor (*polos y servicios*),
3. subscribe to the *vandala* system, and
4. defend the colonial government when called to do so.

But while these policies supposedly came from the Crown, administration in the colony thrived on two contradictory principles of administration: “*no se hage novedad*” or “do not introduce any innovation (on royal prescriptions)” and “*obedezco pero no cumplo*” or “I obey but do not comply.” As a result, official policies if they were at all implemented in the colony were done so only sparingly.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality  (1588-1913)

• This gave rise to complete discretion on the part of the Spaniards in the Philippines on matters of administration. They, supposedly by virtue of their exposure to the realities in the archipelago compared to the Crown in Spain, were in the best position to know what should be done and how matters of the state ought to be conducted in the colony.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality  (1588-1913)

• Thus policy demands carrying wide areas of discretion were usually resolved in favor of self-aggrandizement rather than “public service” or service to the Spanish public or the Crown, much less in the interest of the “King’s subjects,” the Indios, nor in that of the mainly Chinese foreigners. The result is the unfortunate confusion over what is “public interest” and “private aggrandizement.”
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• To begin with, upon colonization, the King himself through his Governor General disposed of Philippine lands as rewards to *conquistadores* in the form of *encomiendas* as personal possessions that could be passed on to succeeding generations.

http://www.slideshare.net/ncjopson/spanish-conquest-of-the-islands-9146801

II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• Then in order to encourage Spaniards to stay in the colony, public offices were offered as incentives, sometimes distributed as personal properties for life or sold to the highest bidder so that public office came to be considered as “private property.”

II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• This was particularly the case at the provincial and municipal levels where, based on a Spanish tradition, offices were sold through public auction with preference for families of the first settlers, but in any case Spaniards. This encouraged graft and corruption because the money spent to buy the office/s had of course to be recuperated, with a profit if the Spaniard was to gather sufficient funds to retire in Spain or Mexico.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- In addition to these, the *indulto de comercio* which gave provincial governors the right to trade allowed the Spaniards to extract wealth for personal gain. Moreover the *visita* and the *residencia*, control measures passed in Spain to investigate officials (particularly the governor general after his term of office) had little regulatory effect. Not only were they seldom conducted, they could also be reversed in the Colony itself and even in Spain through a powerful patron in the capital. This was a system which, in anticipation of bribes to be disbursed in the colony and in Spain, further encouraged corruption.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• Thus formerly at the helm of politics and administration in the respective jurisdictions, the former datu/hari/raha found themselves at the lowest levels of governance in this new colonial set-up. They were transformed into cabezas de barangay and gobernadorcillos of the bayan that were now reorganized into pueblos through the so-called reducción.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- In exchange for privileges, these members of the former Filipino aristocracy were used by the Spaniards to implement and enforce tax collection and the laws of the colonial system among the “Indios,” but they possessed no real political and administrative powers. As a matter of fact, the real power resided in the cura.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality  (1588-1913)

• As for the timawa/timagua/maharlika, quite a number landed in clerical/secretarial jobs with the cura and the alcalde mayores, the Spanish provincial governors, or the corregidores, the equally Spanish only military governors. Others were recruited or forced to work as local officials and later tenientes and guardias civiles in the various pueblos and cities including Manila.

II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• Some served as sailors and soldiers in the galleon trade and for the maintenance of Spanish power in the archipelago and for various military expeditions and colonial efforts both in the Philippines (principally, Mindanao and Sulu) and elsewhere in Asia (East Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand) and the Pacific (Marianas).
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• In general, they served as “public servants” in the colonial administrative machinery -- abogadícillos, directorcillos, escribanos (clerks, secretaries), accountants and managers, soldiers and seamen -- aside from being priests, singers, actors and actresses, musicians, printers, poets and translators.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• Now under a system of salary and wages that was neither enough to equal their earlier possessions confiscated by the Spaniards nor to maintain a decent way of life (i.e., maginhawang buhay). More strictly speaking however, they were servants not to the Filipino public, but to the Spanish colonizers! The rest of the bureaucracy was occupied by Spanish mestizos and insulares or Spaniards born in the Philippines.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- Early into the 19th century, the Spanish colonial system that came to be more deeply rooted in racism was firmly in place. At the top were the Spaniards who now had practically become an administrative caste (in all aspects of government, from the central administration, judiciary and the military; and even that of the Church).
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality  (1588-1913)

- This colonial elite class was not accessible to non-Europeans, particularly non-Spaniards. Among the Spaniards themselves, the *peninsulares* or those born on the peninsula (in Spain itself) ranked higher, in terms of precedence in society and the right to office, than the *insulares* or Spaniards born in the Philippines and considered of lesser breed.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- Next in the hierarchy were the Spanish mestizos who could occupy subaltern positions of power in the administrative system and the military. Then came the Chinese mestizos who had control over the economy, together with their more foreign forbears. From their alliance with the former Filipino aristocracy would rise the principalia, prosperous economically but deprived of political and administrative power in the colony.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- And at the bottom were the rest of the “Indios,” the former sakop. The majority of the subjects were now poorer and unacculturated, or acculturated to a much lesser degree compared to their collaborating leaders. From them would begin and erupt a revolutionary ferment to be later joined in by the principalia, mestizo sangleys and some Spaniards.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• The old aristocracy now in the service of Spain as collaborators, and the breeding ground for what later would be known as the principalia, would give rise to the ladinos (Spanish-speaking natives) and subsequently the secular priests and ilustrados-propagandists. In conjunction with the Chinese mestizos, this new class of acculturated Filipinos would be exposed to and eventually adopt the Spanish system of social relations based on “reciprocity” and the money economy.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- The Spanish system would find its way into the former *pinuno-sakop* relations where the *pinuno* was considered manager and distributor of *ginhawa*; but in the new colonial scheme of things, the old *ginhawa* relationship would be redefined incorporating the exploitative nature of the Spaniards relations with their subjects. In the view of the later Katipunan, the natives would lose their *kaginhawahan* to a system whereby the Filipinos would “feed” the Spaniards who gave nothing in return.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• The main reason was the aristocracy’s involvement in the lower echelons of the Spanish bureaucracy, which allowed it to take on the ways and customs of the Spaniards -- specifically their treatment of their offices as private property and the main means for personal aggrandizement; since being now largely kept from conducting their former trading and raiding expeditions (*pangayaw*), the new Filipino bureaucrats and later politicians could only assist the *curas* and the *alcaldes mayores* in their dealings to mutually enrich themselves.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality  (1588-1913)

- If only to maintain their social status, together with the former timawa/timagua/maharlika, they used the Spanish bureaucracy to develop their new power niches. For instance, they sold as their own the lands, forests and rivers they formerly held in trust as common property of the entire balanghay or the bayan. The sold lands became the basis for the hacienda system, at first held by the friars and then later acquired by Spaniards and Chinese mestizos. They postponed releasing their “slaves” (alipin saguiguilir) after several royal decrees were passed “freeing” the alipin.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- In fact, earlier on, they were able to sell the *alipin*, including the *aliping namamahay* who in olden days could not be sold. They collected money from those who refused to render “public service” (*polo y servicio*) and underreported the accounts. They earned on interest rates applied to money loaned out to those who did not want to do work. In some cases, they would not release the allowances of those who could not afford to pay for their exemption. There were also accounts of forced “public service” details not merely human exploitation but also torture, death and depopulation of certain localities; operating under a system of collaboration-connivance between the Spanish authorities and the local aristocracy.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• In the nineteenth century, Marcelo H. del Pilar collided with the parish priest of Malolos who bloated the list of taxpayers for the aggrandizement of his church. Earlier the prelates worked hand in glove in the same enterprise with the native aristocracy through the *gobernadorcillo* from which del Pilar himself sprang, his father having been likewise a three-time *gobernadorcillo* and subsequently a government clerk in the office of the provincial governor (*alcalde mayor*).
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- According to Rizal: “All the Filipinos, as well as those who have tried to do business in the Philippines, know how many documents, what comings, how many stamped papers, how much patience is needed to secure from the government a present a permit for an enterprise. One must count upon the good will of this one, on the influence of that one, a good bribe to another in order that the application be not pigeon-holed, a present to the one further on so that it [sic] may pass it on to his chief.... And above all, great patience, great knowledge of how to get along, plenty of money, a great deal of politics, many salutations, great influence, plenty of presents and complete resignation!”

II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- The administration of the Tabaco monopoly established in 1780, aside from the oppression of the peasantry that it occasioned, would be riddled with graft and corruption from the beginning until it was abolished in 1881. Reports of abuses involving Spanish and Filipino officials in the person of gobernadorcillos and the cabeza de barangays as well as local merchants abound. Earlier and more specifically in the Visayas until 1814, no worse system “could scarcely be devised” than the tobacco monopoly.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• According to Jagor, “...Officials, thinking only of their own private advantage, suffered no competition in their provinces, employed their official power to oppress the producer to the utmost extent, and thereby checked the production; and the Government treasury chest suffered frequent losses through bankruptcies, inasmuch as the magistrates, who drew a salary of $600 and paid a license of from $100 to $300 for the right of trading, in order to make money quickly, engaged in the most hazardous speculations.”
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

The “right of trading” referred to the *indulto de comercio* or, more properly, *indulto para comerciar*, literally a “pardon for trading” which in 1751 was accorded the *alcaldes mayor* (provincial governors) and *corregidores* (military governors) to engage in commerce in order to set limits to the already prevalent trading activities of the provincial bureaucracy, despite their prohibition by the laws of the Indies.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality  (1588-1913)

• Together with the friar traders, the provincial and military governors enriched themselves with the help of the native elites or the principalia class who were the de facto entrepreneurs in local trade, whether overland or the coasting trade with Manila and beyond. The “legal” basis for the control of trade was the *bandala* system which forced ordinary Filipinos on the local level to sell their products to the government at very cheap prices.
Ang cedula ang nagsisilbing pagkakalinlan ng mga Pilipino sa panahon ng Kastila at paraan ng pagbabayad ng buwis

Ang sapilitang pagbebenta at pagbibili ng mga produkto sa pamahalaang Kastila

Promissory Note

Paraan na ginagamit ng mga Kastila bilang pambayad sa mga produktong nabili sa mga Pilipino
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• In the words of Corpuz, the coastal trade had developed over the years and by then “all the provinces were covered, and there were many rich natives and mestizos who could take over the alcaldes’ role” so that in 1844 the *indulto* was abolished. Interestingly in this regard is the career of Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy, a Tagalog-Chinese mestizo, who like his father served as gobernadorcillo of his home town and engaged in the “coastal trade” between northern Luzon and Manila and Cavite.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- He would later join Bonifacio’s Katipunan shortly before the 1896 Himagsikan and subsequently in what is now regarded as the first coup d’état in Philippine history wrestle power from Bonifacio during the Tejeros Convention, have the later murdured and entrench himself, in connivance with other local political elites, as president of the Malolos Republic.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• All these were in the context of developments in nineteenth-century Philippines. The population in the Christianized areas by then had grown partly beyond the kinship aggregations, and with the politico-administrative reach of the colonial government extending beyond its early territory, the former leaders while retaining their basic concern over their former sakop, would have no basis for accountability at this new level of colonial integration other than probably that based on the compadrazco system or ninong-inaanak relationship (an extension of the kamag-anakan, although artificially).
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• The general inclination was to gain as much from the colonial system to be able to reestablish their former wealth and prestige, and therefore continue their role as managers and distributors of *ginhawa* among their old *sakop*. The problem however was that this sense of accountability did not grow to include those beyond their former territorial domains and *sakop*. 
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- The freeing of the earlier *alipin* had likewise loosened the ties that bound them to their *pinuno*. The *timawa/timagua/maharlika* not only had joined them in the common disarray of “freedom” but had also lost the basis for their relationship with their “*panginoon*.” And since land was no longer at their *pinunos’* disposal, and raiding and trading could no longer be done, money and profits from land now became the new source of *ginhawa* that would secure the leaders’ continuous hold on their *sakop*, thereby ensuring their former social standing.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• And because jobs and careers were now open to both the pinuno and their former sakop, the only way for the old panginoon to maintain their relationship with them was through reciprocal relations within the new money economy and political dispensation.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• In the broad view, the former *pinuno* would now preoccupy themselves with personal enrichment, joining in the Spanish exploitation of the civil service on the local level, the sole mechanism available to them to accumulate wealth and power. Now in the form of “patron-client” relations; and sometimes sustained through the *compadrazco* (which encompassed both the relationship between and among the *compadres*, and the *ninong-inaanak* relationship); bureaucratic corruption flourished throughout the colonial bureaucracy sustained and aggravated by influence peddling from businessmen.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• This plus the fact that the bureaucracy was regarded as a system of exploitation with the ordinary “Indio” as victim could explain the former pinunos’ proclivity to graft and corruption. This is best shown in the intimate politico-economic relationship between the gobernadorcillo and his backers from the same principalia “class.” As Glenn A. May has described the symbiosis for Batangas in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the gobernadorcillo, aside from remuneration and social perks of the title, derived extra income from “some of the proceeds of tax collection, or from charging excessive amounts for licences, or from engaging in a variety of shady practices.” On the part of his economic backers, certain advantages could be expected such as:
Governments during the Spanish Era

Functions of a Gobernadorcillo

- Preparation of pardon or tribute list
- Recruitment and distribution of men for draft labor
- Polos y servicios
- Communal public work
- Military Conscription
- Postal Clerk
- Judge in civil suits involving 44 pesos or less

http://image.slidesharecdn.com/pscn-120717004102-phpapp02/95/pscn-26-728.jpg?cb=1342485722
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• “...If roads and bridges were to be repaired in Balayan, the ones that would get the first priority would be those that led to the sugar estates, sugar mills, warehouses, and other facilities of the particular family... that was able to control the municipal tribunal.... Even more important.... [s]ince the gobernadorcillo initiated most serious legal cases and was responsible for marshalling the evidence for the courts, he was in a position to quash any judicial action that was brought against members of the faction that had elected him to office. At the same time, the judicial powers at his disposal enabled him to make life difficult for the opposing faction.... Finally, in assessing taxes and collecting fees, the gobernadorcillo could be expected to be far more lenient on – and even bend the law for – the faction that sponsored him, and... be much less accommodating to the faction that did not....”
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- Milking the colonial state of the little that was accessible to the *principalia* was considered justifiable, considering that the Spaniards distributed and redistributed the *Indios’* wealth -- territories and properties, as well as products of their labor -- among themselves. All this was aggravated further by *frailocracry* and the plunder of the economy by Chinese and Spanish businessmen. According to Edina the most important 19th century Philippines corruption practices were in the area of fiscal management: the falsification of accounting documents, evidence of embezzlement of salaries and public funds, arbitrary and excessively high taxes and fees, imposition of illegal fines, demands of bribery.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• “The reasons for corruption were many: the governors had executive, legislative and judicial powers. No checks and balances were built into the system, and when there were, they were unenforceable. There was a vague limit between what were public goods and what were private ones.... The salaries of public officials were low.... The laws were so complex as to easily hide misappropriations and fraud... Finally, the common people had no idea of the law and submitted meekly to the injustices and abuses....”
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- These all look very familiar even in our own “enlightened” time when the elite survivors of both the Spanish and American colonial regimes have taken over. Note that much of what is attributed by scholars to Filipinos as history of systematic graft and corruption is not exactly “Filipino” at all but actually of Spanish vintage inherited by our elites who have given it a “native” flavor, derived from the ancient pinuno-sakop relations.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• Having been exposed to Spanish political corruption, the old aristocracy transformed this traditional and mutually beneficial relationship into the exploitative patron-client system in the American colonial period and beyond in order to survive and perpetuate their interests. Thus, still in Spanish times, while there was minimal, if any, political corruption among the Filipino aristocracy at the national level because of the inaccessibility of power except towards the end of Spanish rule in the pueblos. **Bureaucratic corruption within the context of pueblo politics became pervasive with offices primarily used to acquire and distribute ginhawa.**
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• Thus not only did Spanish colonization disrupt the development of the Philippine ethnic states then already at inter-regional levels, thereby stifling the formation of a national consciousness that could serve as the basis for politics and administration beyond petty kingdoms, it likewise established a different basis for political leadership and social cohesion -- one that was now oligarchic in nature, exploitative and locality-based.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- However, the last quarter of the 19th century would give rise to two major political challenges to colonial rule, reaching its climax in the Philippine Revolution of 1896. These two divergent directions of national consciousness and formation, one based on indigenous formulations, the other on Western categories would converge, albeit temporarily, in the Himagsikang 1896.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• This convergence and the ensuing battle for control of the direction of the Himagsikan would result in the tragic death of Bonifacio, the supreme founder of the Katipunan and the first Philippine President having established the “Haring Bayang Katagalugan” or Sovereign Tagalog Nation and the eventual domination of nation-state aspirations by ideas derived from the West. Although primarily responsible for fueling genuine nationalist struggle, the ideological direction of Inang Bayan would be seized by Aguinaldo and Filipino elites only to be betrayed by these same political leaders to the Americans.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• The Filipino elites would espouse revolutionary ideas strongly influenced by the ideas of liberal democratic philosophies and would succeed in determining the eventual nature and character of Philippine government and administration, even if only for a short period of time, starting from Aguinaldo’s “Revolutionary Government” and ending with the fall of his “First Philippine Republic,” established by the Malolos Constitution of 1899 as “democratic” and “republican” in form. Reference to it as “representative” however has to be qualified, since the Bayan who comprised the majority at that time had neither the right to qualify for any position nor to vote for those qualified.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality  (1588-1913)

- Even in present times, although the 1987 Philippine Constitution outlines processes that take on a semblance of genuine democracy, governance nonetheless remains largely elitist. Thus, as precursor to the present form of democracy, the Malolos Constitution organized government into three separate branches -- the executive, the legislative and the judicial -- but owing to the nature of the times, it already vested enormous powers in the chief executive and in the political elites.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- Within this elitist system, Mabini, then adviser to the new government, was probably one of the first to espouse the cause of merit and fitness and careerism in the civilian bureaucracy. Predating his principles of accountability were moral precepts outlined by Jacinto. Mabini’s *True Decalogue* suggests the development of a professional administrative class, carefully outlining the distinction between appointive and career positions, and therefore anticipating administrative structures that distinguished between political and professional aspects of public administration.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• Not surprisingly, the Malolos Constitution outlined in large part the protection of private property that, at that time, was mostly held by the principalia and their ilustrado offsprings. All of these moves tended to consolidate the power base and system of leadership attained by the elites within the Spanish colonial set-up. But whatever value the revolutionary government and the Malolos Constitution had was lost with the establishment of American colonial rule.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- In a way, these Filipino elites were responsible for the general course of nation-building in the country through their abandonment and betrayal of the *Himagsikan* of the Katipunan; collaborating with the new American colonial masters, as their ancestors had done with the Spaniards. From the Propaganda Movement to Mabini’s *True Decalogue*; from Aguinaldo’s military coup d’état at the Tejeros Convention to the Malolos Republic;
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- and from collaboration with the Spanish colonial administration to the American colonial state and civil service, the educated sons and daughters of the former aristocracy would exhibit a characteristic and unfortunate confluence of Filipino and Spanish cultural elements in their governance and administrative behavior.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• The Filipino elites despite pretensions and pronouncements that evoked national consciousness and fantasies of freedom from colonial yoke, were coming from the earlier system of *pinuno-sakop* relationship and a long history of collaboration with the Spaniards that would give rise to the formation of the patron-client system. *In the latter, offices were essential in so far as they generated ginhawa* that could be managed and distributed by the *pinuno* to their former *sakop*, so that in exchange their loyalty and respect were cultivated and maintained in order that the former could profitably engage in an internecine political struggle for supremacy among themselves.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- They were essentially the *principalia* of the Spanish era venturing into a similar relationship with a new colonial interlocutor/master, the Americans. Given their predisposition to collaborating with the foreigner for expediency, they were *either* acculturated and became foreigners themselves *or* remained essentially Filipino, but capable of using the colonial system to their advantage. Either way, theirs was a behavior and predisposition that did not develop beyond their former interests in relation to their *sakop*, nor beyond their appreciation of inherited social position. Moreover, a new dimension would be added to the kinship (consanguinal) system as basis for delineating *sakop* boundaries.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

• Other than marriage, the *compadrazco* system that necessitated *compadre* relations and *ninong-inaanak* ties would be further developed. In fact, the *compadrazco* system would become, in contemporary Filipino politics, a popular means of cultivating the politicians’ socio-political base and therefore stability in power, as well as their constituents’ *ginhawa*. Finally, the former practice of the *timawa* attaching themselves to *pinuno* would find new meaning in *warlordism* or the employment by political leaders of local goons.
II. State Construction and the Formation of Nationality (1588-1913)

- But this time, the system was no longer primarily in the service of the Bayan as a whole (kabuuan) or the entire pinuno’s sakop (to which he supposedly belonged), but solely for the personal interest of the politician himself. Ginhawa was no longer being shared with Bayan but restricted by the elite to its sole kapakinabangan, although the instinct of self-preservation would later force the elite to restore some form of sharing with the “masses” in what would be called “patronage” in the struggle for political power among themselves within the new colonial dispensation characterized by “patron-client” relations with the Americans.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

• The American imperialist ambition cloaked in “benevolent assimilation” marked a new era of colonization in the Philippines amidst the Filipinos’ continuing struggle for nationhood on the level of Bayan. The collaboration of the acculturated Filipino elites ushered in the start of a new system of politics and administration that initially hinged on the so-called “pacification of the islands” and the Americanization of a portion of the “natives.” It installed a political system that was defined by America’s imperialist designs, despite approximations of republican and democratic government.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- As in the Spanish colonial bureaucracy, political corruption at the start of the American colonial rule was largely limited to the colonizers because of their complete monopoly of political power. The Filipino elites would begin to really participate massively in bureaucratic and then eventually political corruption with the decentralization of politico-administrative power from Americans to Filipinos during the “Filipinization” of the bureaucracy and with their increased access to the various “democratic” processes afterwards.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- Initially, a military government was set up to ensure American sovereignty in the islands. After the “pacification,” the First Philippine Commission headed by Jacob Schurman recommended in January 1901 the establishment of civil government independent from the United States with a bicameral legislature.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- It was the Second Philippine Commission headed by William Howard Taft which carried out its recommendations with Taft himself becoming governor in what was called the “Insular Government” which, aside from the various branches of civil government, established the civil service and enacted in July 1902 the Philippine Organic Act which provided for the establishment of the Philippine legislature with the Commission as the upper house and a lower house, the Philippine Assembly, which would be elected to office in 1907.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- Taft would administer the Philippines until 1904 as governor-general of the Insular Government which lasted until 1935 when the semi-autonomous Commonwealth of the Philippines was established in 1935. In 1907 the Commission which till then acted as a unicameral legislature became the upper chamber to the Philippine Assembly of elected Filipino representatives.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- Despite the Philippine Assembly and the establishment of local governments, the entire political system remained under the close supervision of the Executive Bureau, an all-American office under the American Governor General, who could easily remove even minor officials from service on various pretexts. In fact, the Filipinos had no real hand in the administration of the colony.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- The most strategic aspects of administration such as the treasury remained purely in the hands of the Americans until after the Commonwealth era, when the government and the civil service were “turned over” to the Filipinos. By then, owing to the success of the American public educational system, the Filipino elites had already been Americanized and therefore largely predisposed to American dictates and influence.
Fundamentally, the administrative system that emerged in the 1900s was like that of the Spaniards – i.e.,

1. colonial in every respect, highly centralized;
2. established to ensure the stability of American political power as well as mercantilist interests in the colony.
3. As a formal bureaucratic structure, it was extensive and rigidly organized; and
4. intended to mediate between the subjects (“natives” of the archipelago) and the citizens (Americans) in the colony, and between the colony and the American President in the US who however had a stronger hold on the colony compared to the Spanish King earlier, due mainly to proximity and modern means of transportation and communication.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

However,
1. the American President in the US had a stronger hold on the colony due mainly to proximity and modern means of transportation and communication;
2. as far as the congruence between policy pronouncements in America and those implemented in the colony, American imperial administration was more “honest” and “efficient” (largely because it was manned by Americans until 1913 when Harrison began the “Filipinization” of the bureaucracy);
3. With Puerto Rico, the Philippines was the American showcase on the international scene, it being also America’s first imperial conquest in Asia, signaling their ascension to world power status.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

• The new colony attracted not a few young and competent American graduates and civil servants who were influenced by the Progressive Movement in America. This reform movement had just successfully initiated innovations in the American Federal bureaucracy. In contrast to the evils of the spoils system in American politics that had plagued the country from the late 18th century onwards, this reform had successfully introduced the adoption of public administration principles such as political neutrality, careerism as well as merit and fitness for office. Of course, primarily and ultimately in the service and interest of the American public.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

• However, despite the United States’ efforts to establish a colonial administration that was “wise, just, stable, effective and economical” through a civil service that would effectively eradicate “the evils of delay, corruption and exploitation” and implement a “sound, honest and economical” means of collecting and applying taxes and revenues [that on paper was to “satisfy the well-founded demands and highest aspirations of the Philippine people,” but in actual fact (likewise) satisfied American imperial interests];
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- there were quite a number of graft and corruption cases involving American high-ranking officials and Filipino municipal treasurers. Among the latter was the case against Ramon Melencio of Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija who was accused and convicted of not turning over to his successor “the sum of 1.133.35 4/8 pesos, Mexican currency.” Another case involved a member of the Malolos Congress who had become the Governor of Nueva Ecija, Epifanio de los Santos. He was accused of falsifying a will by “six poor men and an illiterate woman” represented by Lt. Amzi B. Kelly, an American attorney. Nothing came out of this protest.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- Cases involving high-ranking officials were rare, however; and they did not usually prosper. The most famous of these was that of Secretary of Interior and member of the Philippine Commission Dean C. Worcester who felt alluded to in the October 30, 1908 editorial of the nationalist newspaper *El Renacimiento* entitled “*Aves de Rapiña*” (Birds of Prey) accusing certain American government officials of using public funds “to finance gold prospecting Benguet mountains for personal gain.”
III. America in the Philippines:
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• The editor, Teodoro M. Kalaw, and his city editor were sued for libel and duly meted out a sentence of imprisonment which was appealed to the Philippine and American supreme courts which both upheld the sentence; upon his assumption of office in 1913, however, Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison pardoned the Filipinos.
III. America in the Philippines:
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- As for Governor-General William Cameron Forbes himself, it was in the American Congress itself that he was accused towards the end of his term in 1913 -- by William Atkinson Jones, Chairman of the House Committee of Insular Affairs and future author of the Jones Bill which granted autonomy to the Philippines – of “transferring $1,695,514 from the gold standard fund to the Treasury;” of having “spent frivolously” the 3 million dollars of the Congressional Relief Act of 1903 intended “to relieve hardship, including... expenditures for the Benguet Road;” and of not having punished for various transgressions “three prominent American officials of the city of Manila.” Naturally, nothing came out of Atkinson’s charges.
III. America in the Philippines:
The “Filipinization” of the American Civil Service, its consequent Americanization of Filipino politico-administrative leaders

- Of a scandal in the American-manned police force in 1912, Forbes according to Gleeck, Jr. wrote in his journal that: “The investigations, resulting in the dismissal of the chiefs of police and detectives, were concluded only after Harrison became governor-general. There was also evidence of corruption in the Nozalezda Yard of the Bureau of Public Works where the American foremen seem[ed] to have been conniving at petty graft with native capataces...
III. America in the Philippines:
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- [overissuing lumber which went] into the houses of American employees, and a native time keeper [had] been padding payrolls. At the Philippine General Hospital American doctors ‘had been making money unethically, and [it was felt that] Forbes was protecting the culprits out of a sense of Harvardian or Bostonian loyalty.’ One Dr. Gregg was dismissed from the P.G.H. but ‘immediately placed in the University Hospital.’”
Another case which was leniently pursued by Forbes (who “was convinced that the railroad served vital developmental purposes”) but assiduously investigated during the Harrison administration was that of Jose Robles-Lahesa and the Manila Railroad’s right-of-way scandal. It was a private company heavily subsidized by the government. According to Gleeck, Jr. nothing “came out of the investigation, probably because there were indeed prominent Filipino politicians involved, and Harrison’s zeal for prosecuting those responsible for the scandal did not include them.”
III. America in the Philippines:
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- Overall however and compared to the American bureaucracy in the United States at the time, the colonial civil service was not only successful in applying punitive measures especially in cases involving low ranking officials but it was also generally free from the economic conditions that could otherwise predispose American civil servants to graft and corruption.
III. America in the Philippines:
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• Not only were American civil servants mostly professionals, they were also generally adequately compensated. Furthermore, since they occupied positions made available to them by Washington, they were dependent on the socio-political relations (specifically, those of “patron-client”) obtaining in the colony amongst the various American power elites.
III. America in the Philippines:
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Unfortunately the same cannot be said of their Filipino counterparts. The Filipino bureaucrats definitely were part of the “patron-client” relations established among American officials; however, they did not serve a government of their own making. They also received salaries that were one half or much less than their American counterparts, and were limited to positions that were non-policy determining and of no strategic importance.
III. America in the Philippines:
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• Nonetheless, according to the pro-Filipino Joseph Ralston Hayden, although the merit principle as “administrative practice and a tenet of political faith for the controlling American officials ... during the period between 1899 and 1913, the Filipinos... were as yet not bound by no such limitations in their quest for political patronage.”
III. America in the Philippines:
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• The system continued beyond 1913; but, although the Filipino politicians strengthened their control over the appointing power, “the number of political appointments to major civil service offices from without the service was very small indeed” and were limited mostly to cabinet level posts.
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

• The year 1913 was crucial to the integration of the colony and subsequently to the formation of national unity. After the massacre of the defenders of the *ilihan* (fortified mountain communities) of Bud Bagsak (June) and Bud Talipao (October) by the forces of General Pershing the “pacification” of Jolo was considered terminated and the Moro Province which had been established in 1903 by the civil government in Manila was abolished and transformed into the Department of Mindanao and Sulu with a civilian governor, Frank W. Carpenter, appointed on 28 November.
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

• The new governor negotiated the Carpenter Agreement by which the Sultan of Sulu, while remaining the “titular spiritual head of the Mohammedan Church in the Sulu Archipelago,” ratified and confirmed “without any reservation or limitation whatsoever” his “recognition of the sovereignty of the United States of America,” thereby integrating the Sultanate to the colonial state.
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- For the entire country which had already an elected Philippine Assembly since 1907 as lower house to the upper house of the Philippine Commission with American and Filipino membership, a new governor-general, Francis Burton Harrison, had taken office in October. It was he who carried out President Woodrow Wilson’s policy of “Filipinization,” preparatory to what the ruling Democrats then considered the necessary independence of the Philippines.
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- However, this also signaled what may be properly called the “Americanization” of Filipino bureaucrats considering that they had to acquire not only the mastery of the English language but also American values. Dr. Ricardo Trota Jose summarizes Harrison’s term of office ending in 1921 thus:
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- “Harrison took steps to increase the number of Filipinos in the government, while simultaneously reducing the number of Americans in the civil service.... [approving] bills from the Philippine legislature that offered early-retirement benefits to Americans in civil service jobs and reduced the salaries of those who stayed on in government. Posts vacated by Americans were then filled by Filipinos.

- Harrison also approved legislation that made all posts in the provincial boards elective, thus doing away with appointments from the governor-general. He increased the number of Filipinos heading executive departments and bureaus and allowed Filipino politicians, led by Manuel L. Quezon... and Sergio Osmeña, to form the Council of State, a body that served as a link between the executive and legislative branches of the government./
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- Harrison also... allowed increased government participation in the economy, through government-owned and government-controlled corporations. Further, he permitted Quezon and other political leaders to form the Board of Control, which would decide on policies for these corporations. He authorized the establishment of the Philippine National Bank and agreed to having it directed by a Filipino president....
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- It was the Philippine National Bank under its Filipino president which caused the biggest graft and corruption scandal during Harrison’s term. A director of the board when the bank was established in 1916, General Venancio Concepcion became its president from March 1918 to November 1920. A general in Aguinaldo’s army and later deputy collector of internal revenue, Concepcion was a protégé of Speaker Osmeña whose life he had once saved.
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

• The antithesis of the more professional and conservative first American president of the bank, according to Peter W. Stanley, Concepcion brought to office “a pronounced disdain for rigorous or specialized forms of knowledge .... [leading] the fight in 1916 against the employment of trained American bankers to the PNB.” Member of the Board Archibald Harrison, brother of the governor-general, began an investigation in May 1918 and by August had found out that in Negros Occidental alone:
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

“...loans had been made for large amounts, for agricultural purposes, on mountain land 25 miles from the nearest market that [had] never been cultivated and, owing to its location and formation, [could] never be cultivated. Many loans were found to be in excess of the assessed value of the land and, in other cases, the owner had declared the land at several times its value for the purpose of getting a larger loan.... Of the 230 mortgages inspected, a great many [had] not complied with the terms under which the loan was granted.... Several of them [had] frankly admitted it...."
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- In an attached document Harrison detailed 35 specific irregularities and presented “a 59-page indictment of agricultural and crop loan operations in Negros alone.” Concepcion ignored the charges and roused the Filipino members of the board to vote “with the acquiescence of Quezon” to withdraw the appropriation for Harrison’s investigation, forcing him to resign and, angry and humiliated, leave the islands. As for General Concepcion, he finally resigned in November 1920;
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- but Governor-General Harrison seemed to have concealed the anomalies in his report for 1920, dated 10 January 1921, where he simply mentioned that the Philippine National Bank had suffered during the year of crisis from “a too enthusiastic assistance lent during the previous years to the development of the industrial and commercial resources of the Islands” and that “E. W. Wilson, ... an expert and highly trained banker, has just arrived to take over the position of general manager of the bank with all the former powers of president of that institution.”
Many of the loans issued in these years were grossly and obviously unethical. Directors of the bank authorized extravagant loans to companies in which they were themselves investors, and General Concepción subsequently was sent to jail for misuse of the bank’s funds for his own advantage. Questionable or excessive loans were made to prominent political figures. Many loans were misappropriated by the recipients to finance personal consumption, instead of production or commerce. Plainly, the bank had become a vehicle for elitist profiteering and back-scratching an institutional reflection of the dyadic and familial character of Philippine personal ethics.
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- All of these recall a practice familiar to contemporary Filipinos and to what American-trained political scientists call “patronage”, “patron-client relationship” or “clientism” which pre-World War II American “colonials” had earlier dubbed as “caciquism.” At the base of these was politics, the key for control of economic and other resources — *kaginhawahan* in short — for largely political purposes. If Harrison was lenient with regards to the PNB scandal as well as to the Manila Railroad scam (*cf. supra*),
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- he was adamant inspite of political pressure from Filipino elites in the case of another revolutionary figure, General Mariano Noriel, who is best remembered as the president of the War Council which condemned the Supremo Andres Bonifacio to death at Maragondon, Cavite. This time he was himself condemned to death for having ordered the murder of landowner Gregorio Magtibay in the early morning of May 24, 1909. But more importantly, for brandishing his supposed political influence in Cavite that made him “untouchable” even to the Americans.
III. America in the Philippines
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Both Osmeña and Quezon came from the provincial elites who with the 1907 Philippine Assembly elections had begun to replace the old aristocratic Taft favorite politicians who had abandoned the Malolos Republic like the scholarly Trinidad Pardo de Tavera. Educated during the Spanish regime they had adjusted to the new one by quickly learning the ways and language of the Americans. They likewise were rapidly being joined by products of the American educational system in English that had been introduced in conjunction with the civil service.
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- For the Filipino, entry into the bureaucracy required passing through the educational system, declaring an oath of allegiance to the United States, and passing merit examinations that were not only in English but also constituted a subtle indoctrination to American imperial rule. In fact, in keeping with American imperial goals, the examinations had nominal competitive features and therefore could not have furnished adequate tests of fitness to given positions. From acculturation to Spanish culture they would now internalize the Anglo-American language and way of life in a little more than one generation in order to reinforce their power in Philippine society.
III. America in the Philippines
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• And because the public educational system was accessible to all, the playing field was opened even to a sector of the formerly unacculturated *Bayan*, although largely in a limited way. Some of them through education or successful Americanization would rise in social class and eventually come to be part of the then rising middle class and the transformed *principalia*.
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- These new and ancient acculturated elites would come to dominate politics and administration in the country; while the majority of the Bayan, unacculturated to both Spanish and American cultures, would remain the bastion of Filipino culture but powerless, voiceless and marginalized. Osmeña and Quezon represented precisely the transitional cohort between the hispanized generation and the new generation of English-speaking Filipinos whose descendants would become our contemporary Ingleseros.
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

• Whatever its actual cost and effect, for the former Filipino pinunos [together with the relatively new ones resulting from the American dispensation], “Filipinization” of the colonial bureaucracy re-opened the opportunity for them to consolidate their former power base, to acquire a more visible role in governance and to obtain access to sources of ginhawa (money, property and offices) that could further establish or sustain their relationships with their sakop.
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

Again, despite their absorption, this time into an imperialist “rational-legal” and therefore “modern,” but in fact Western bureaucracy, they would resort to extra-legal means to perpetuate their position in society — i.e., the patron-client relations as basis for patronage and spoils politics that, even in the United States, did not quite disappear despite several reform movements. The moment Philippine Independence was achieved and the President became Filipino, patronage and spoils politics would become pervasive, but this time among the Filipino elites, with the American “colonials” in the background.
III. America in the Philippines
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• In this context, there could be some truth to the Wood-Forbes critique and other American reports on instances of graft and corruption that were supposedly proportionate to the “Filipinization” of the Philippine Bureaucracy. It must be noted that these reports designated the caciques as the culprits, that “1% of political and social parasites” who engaged in “exploitation or deliberate legal robbery of the other 99%.”
In some cases, the “native” official was mentioned in contrast to the “higher” ones -- a distinction probably made between the lower echelon and still relatively unacculturated recruits to the bureaucracy on the one hand and the American-educated/acculturated and largely mestisized Filipino elites descended from the *principalia* of the Spanish period on the other.
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- The first was “affected by political considerations more than a sense of right,” viewing and deciding on matters “in the light of personal and political advantage for himself, his friends, and his party;” while the efforts of the second category “have been directed towards the acquisition of increased power.” Other critics focused on the so-called incompetence and gross inefficiency of Filipino bureaucrats in their administration of public affairs. While the reports may have been exaggerated in the light of American propaganda against the Filipinos’ bid for independence, these are consistent with our thesis.
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- However, there was no turning back on the “Filipinization” of the civil service, not only because of the Filipinos elites’ resolve to regain the status that their forbears have lost to the Spaniards and the Americans but also because of international developments in the 1920s that had tremendous economic repercussions in the Philippines. The devastating effects of World War I on the American economy and the anxieties brought about by the impending new world war defined American receptiveness to the ideas of divesting themselves of their colonial interests in Philippines.
III. America in the Philippines
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- At the same time, *trade imbalances* that led to high unemployment rates and unreasonably low wages fueled the *growth of radicalism* in the country. *Urban unrest* combined with an already *simmering countryside* because of exploitation in the farm haciendas of Central Luzon and the Western Visayas, and exacerbated by the *long standing clamor for freedom*, became the springboard for the *anti-imperialist uprising* in the 1930’s and the development of the leftist resistance movement.
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- This was the context of Wood’s administration and that of the rise of Quezon in conjunction with the reaction to it by the Filipinos. Quezon was able to consolidate the support of all Filipino political parties into one unified nationalist front that was to challenge the attacks by some Americans on the “Filipinization” process that resulted in among others, the firing from office of two provincial governors and three bureau directors.
III. America in the Philippines and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- Quezon’s call for top-ranking officials to resign (now referred to as the “Cabinet Crisis”) to paralyze the operations of the colonial administration however, did not come to a head. Although two legislative representatives of the Council of State and all members of the Cabinet resigned, the automatic takeover of cabinet undersecretaries supposedly demonstrated the “permanent, professional, non-political character” of the Philippine administrative machinery.
III. America in the Philippines
and the rise of Philippine politics and administration

- Yet despite the number of institutionalized punitive measures, a substantial weakening of “professionalism” was said to have occurred in 1935 when the Commonwealth government was finally established. In fact, accusations of incompetence were also hurled at the Filipino bureaucrats, supposedly a consequence of the slackening of civil service eligibility requirements.
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by the various American governor-generals in order to meet the increasing demand for Filipino bureaucrats and to hasten the “Filipinization” process. A process that however could not be reversed, “Filipinization of the American bureaucracy” or the “Americanization of Filipino bureaucrats” was finally completed when independence was eventually granted.
Meanwhile, the ambivalence of Filipino elites to the impending grant of independence and the possible withdrawal of American support after the country’s separation from the United States led to substantial economic concessions to the Americans. In fact, the American president, having retained the right to intervene, through the High Commissioner, on matters regarding the decisions of the Insular Auditory, exercised strong influence over the political and administrative systems in the country.
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- It was thus practical to retain patron-client relations with high-ranking American officials; but at the same time nurture party affiliations and public support that could be used to protect one’s position of power and influence.
Moreover, the government’s intensified centralism during the Commonwelt era as a reaction to the growing radicalism in the country meant delays in administrative processes and the proliferation and institutionalization of “personalized services” needed to avoid them. Since Quezon’s social amelioration and economic development policy asserted state leadership over the economy,
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- the Filipino elites were further exposed to influence peddling from the business sector comprised mostly of Chinese and mestizo Chinese, and therefore predisposed to political corruption. Contrary to democratic principles, Quezon also appointed city mayors and councilmen on the pretext that the people anyway “could exercise their control through the election of the president,” a decision that further cultivated patronage and spoils politics.
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- In fact, with the introduction of the electoral system, American patronage and spoils politics had also crept into the bureaucracy. The latter, now transformed into a system that also drew heavily from the distinctly Filipino patron-client relations, would thus provide the basis for political corruption among Filipino politicians. Now, as it had been during the Spanish era and in the early American colonization, ascension to office meant access to new sources of ginhawa (wealth and power).
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- Offices were a crucial source of means to sustain reciprocal relations with one’s constituents, relations that although exploitative on the national level, were regarded as mutually beneficial to the public official and his/her constituents on the local scene: an oligarchic exercise meant to perpetuate one’s place in the political arena. However, under the new democratic environment (particularly more so after 1935), nurturing one’s constituency became an important vehicle to acquiring electoral offices; and not just collaboration with the colonizers.
Thus, political corruption became a vicious cycle of grooming the public to gain access to public office; and using that hold on power to ensure the continued support of one’s constituency. In this case, the widening of one’s support base for and during elections became crucial. Thus nepotism and the accommodation of influence peddlers, mostly businessmen (some of whom also became politicians, the so-called “bureaucrat capitalists” in communist terminology, or who had established relations with bureaucrats either through consanguinity or affinity), became expedient for purposes of reelection.
Thus political corruption would become up to the present the most pervasive and exploitative form of corruption in the Philippines. Meanwhile, bureaucratic corruption, following the same historical and socio-cultural development of the political and administrative institutions in the country would also become pervasive, but being limited mostly to small time graft and corruption cases, the effects of which although cumulatively should not be underestimated, would not be as devastating as the former, it being principally at the helm of government and governance.
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• At this time bureaucratic corruption had already been consolidated through the Taft, Forbes and Harrison administrations, as we have seen. It can be described as the corrupted search for *ginhawa* in the context of the political accommodation of the Filipino elites to the new colonial dispensation as a continuation of the arrangement they previously had made with the Spanish colonial system.
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- The Filipino politicians now entered into a “client-patron relationship” with the American occupants to obtain both power and ginawa from them in order to validate their representation of the people vis-à-vis the colonial administrators, offering ginawa in turn as patrons of the people who as clients would accord the power of representation in an electoral system. The same system obtained both on the municipal and provincial levels where a mediatory role was accorded initially by the patrons-occupants to their local clients-politicians.
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• Quite obviously, this was no longer the original locus and ethos of *ginhawa* as the central binding force of the traditional community for the towns and provinces no longer acted on their own as they were attached to an ever widening hierarchy of patronage politics. Quezon is said to have consolidated this hierarchy of clientelist politics into one single system.
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• And this he was able to do in the context of the “nationalist” struggle of the Filipino elites against the anti-independence Governor Wood, so that by the time commonwealth status was attained/obtained the clientelist system was firmly established with Quezon at its apex in a transactional relationship with the colonial power. During the Commonwealth, Quezon’s system of patronage had been refined.
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- In October 1926 Quezon himself revealed the “private” corruption of his political opponent, Aguinaldo, who allegedly maintained: “...questionable ties with an American ‘carpetbagger,’ Carl W. Hamilton, who allegedly used Aguinaldo as a business front with a salary of P1,000 a month. Aguinaldo was also rumored to have received a flashy Packard limousine on top of his salary.
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• Aguinaldo’s son also allegedly got free board and lodging in Hamilton’s house in the United States. Quezon also revealed that a Senate investigation of the oil company which Aguinaldo headed as president uncovered Hamilton’s scam in water-stocks. Hamilton, who fled the country shortly, booted out Aguinaldo’s son from his U.S. home.” Although Aguinaldo was technically not in government, his friendship with Governor Wood compromised both of them, considering that Wood was privatizing government corporations in the interest of American capitalists at that time.
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• Quezon was thus not a saint with regards to patronage as *condicio sine qua non* in the accumulation of political power. Elaborating on an comment by UNESCO Chairman Alejandro R. Roces in 1971 that: “What we have today – for better or worse – is not a departure but a continuation of the Quezonian tradition.” With regards to graft and corruption, Alfred McCoy has pointed out that by 1941 Quezon appeared to have
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• “...many of the attributes of President Ferdinand Marcos’s martial law regime (1972-81). Through manipulation of constitution and bureaucracy both men sought... to perpetuate their power.... Their relentless accumulation of power at the center spawned a regime characterized by corruption and Cronyism – allies won government largesse and paid lavish gifts to their presidents, opponents faced a punitive bureaucracy.... Through a reinforcing manipulation of media, constitution, and government financial agencies, both gained near total control of nominally autonomous areas of the State – legislature, judiciary, economy, and local government. Such power used without restraint together with their ultimate sanction as America’s anointed [sic] reduced the elite opposition politicians to impotence.”
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• To some extent this appears to be a correct comparison, but with one noticeable difference. While both were indeed at the crest, historically, of an expanding wave of corruption, the wave that carried Marcos to the top began on a higher level and does not seem to have subsided after him, becoming a quasi-tsunami by the time of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo with the PDAF scam exposed in 2013 as one of its apices.
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- Furthermore, with independence and the official end of American colonial “tutelage” (and the start of neo-imperialism), an altogether different appreciation of government and the bureaucracy would prevail. On the national level, the Spanish-Filipino elite system (i.e., the “anarchy of elite families” in our time) would continue on a larger scale and the propensity to graft and corruption that the Spaniards and Americans had but aggravated in harsher economic conditions would contaminate even lower-level Americanized public servants.
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• Although supposedly a politically distorted rendering of Senate President José Avelino’s rhetorical question *in Spanish* in a party caucus about the necessity to address the immediate economic problems of the people in 1949 *[Señor Presidente, no es la verdad que sin hacerlos vigorosamente es traicionar y negar esencialmente nuestros deberes como servientes públicos? Para que esta nuestro mandato del pueblo?]*,
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• “What are we in power for?” [instead of “For what purpose (then) is our mandate from the people?”] became the emblematic rationale for patronage politics and corruption during and beyond the post-war reconstruction period – i.e., that the acquisition and exercise of political power of necessity involved corruption and vice-versa.
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• Although less controversial, Osmeña’s short-lived administration (1945-1946) was for all intents and purposes just the continuation of Quezon’s with regards to corruption. While there was little occasion for it as the country was in complete shambles and government institutions still had to be reconstructed, Osmeña’s regime was also ‘graft-ridden’ according to David Sternberg, who wrote in the *Christian Science Monitor* before the election in 1945 that his
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• “administration’s biggest liability was the venality of some elements of [Osmeña’s] official family and the/scandalous misuse of the fruits of his achievement in relief and reconstruction.” Sternberg was referring mainly to the distribution of relief goods coming from army surpluses at the outset and later from direct aid dispensed through the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration [UNRRA] which by March 1946, shortly before independence, had reached $6,000,000.”
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- With independence Manuel A. Roxas (July 1946 – April 1948) would be confronted with a higher level of corruption in his administration. This involved the surplus property turned over by the United States to the Philippine government from its Army stores. Although it was quite understandable that “...stealing from the government was an inevitable result of deprivation, liberation and weak protection given to surplus property dumps....
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• nonetheless, the vast extent and brazen character of corruption in the disposable of surplus property engulfed the Roxas government. The scandal was so gross and visible that even Press Secretary Orendain was obliged to admit it, though he blamed the Osmeña regime for having begun the looting....
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- Nonetheless, in Carlos P. Romulo’s assessment, “presidential leniency” was also partly responsible for the corruption, for “when friends, government officials and colleagues grappled for the chance to realize a profit, President Roxas looked the other way. “They lost everything in the war,” he explained charitably.”
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- As with practically all the previous scandals since the beginning of the American “tutelage” there is little if any reference to the involvement of the rank and file bureaucrats; patronage and graft and corruption seem to have involved mainly the political elite, majority of whom started from local political levels rising only to national prominence. The endlessly-repeated pattern of corruption in the Third Republic, according to Gleeck, Jr., was thus:
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• “.... A new president is elected, accompanied by old friends who at once seize new opportunities to abuse their positions. Wholesale robbery is followed by vociferous media criticism, usually exonerating the man at the top, who ‘could not say/ no to his friends,’ or ‘cronies,’ as they later became known. Under Quirino and his successors, the president’s relatives joined the cronies as beneficiaries of presidential beneficence and toleration. The single exception to this dreary and dispiriting pattern was the Magsaysay administration....”
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- Misinterpreted or not, Senate President Avelino’s remark cited above took place at the time of Quirino’s bid to get elected on his own as President of the Philippines. One of Quirino’s principal legacies was “his transmission of the corruption he inherited from Osmeña and Roxas ... which expanded during his tenure as chief executive .... [when] like Osmeña and Roxas, he found it impossible to fire his friends, to refuse favors to his financial supporters, or to discipline his relatives.”
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- For Alfiler, corruption during Quirino’s term (1948-1953) “permeated the entire gamut of the Philippine bureaucracy, extending from the lowest level of the civil service to the top, excepting the President himself,” although the generalization is rather short on details, particularly with regards to the rank-and-file bureaucracy.
Even Magsaysay had problems with his people regarding the “Chinese” influence in political decisions. The President never failed “to explode in fury when he realized that someone in his government was exploiting his office for corrupt purposes .... [particularly in conjunction with some Chinese compadre] purchasing special favors from the Philippine congressmen and Malacañang.”
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- One such instance was when a Senator connected the signing of a document by the Guy to “a considerable sum of money for the Nacionalista Party in its coming Presidential campaign” whereupon Monching thundered “No!” and “hit the desk so hard with his fist that the glass top broke.”
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- Quirino created an “anti-graft and investigation agency” which lasted only six months; so did Magsaysay which lasted four years and seven months. All the other presidents followed suit up to Estrada which in 2000 was still in existence.
### Presidential Anti-Graft and Investigation Agencies 1950-present


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• Quite obviously, to no avail. The administrations of Magsaysay’s successors were no different from that of Quirino’s. The Nacionalista party’s “master no less than its creature,” Carlos P. Garcia “faithfully exercised its traditional prerogatives of patronage and plunder, though little or none of the fruits of corruption clung to his skirts; he left office, if not a poor man, then one of limited means.”
Lost to his friends and family was the irony of his most publicized statement on corruption: “Every man has the right to provide for his family,” something the common tao would hardly disclaim with regards to the *ginhawa* that it was likewise his duty to give to his own.
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- But Garcia’s precept does not quite jibe with the more popular idea expressed in the Supremo’s “Ang kasipagan sa paghahanap buhay ay pagmamahal din sa sarili, sa asawa, sa anak at kapatid o kababayan.” For it is in the context of Jacinto’s distinction between liwanag and ningning, the former giving sense and meaning to Katuiran which comes directly from Langit [Bathalang Araw] in contrast to simple ningning which others pursue such as [political] power and glory.
The difference is quite clear: the *ginhawa* one seeks for one’s family and fellow countrymen redounds to the welfare and well-being [*kaginhawahan*] of the nation. It is for this reason that the OFW’s *pangayaw*, going “elsewhere” (as in: abroad) to look for *ginhawa* for one’s family [and thus also the *kaginhawahan* of Bayan] actually makes one truly a Bagong Bayani.
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- The contrast with political patronage and corruption is of course huge. García’s administration was indeed shot through with graft and corruption. One can mention just two cases in the “tide of corruption” inundating the government: the scandals in the GSIS and the Bureau of Customs. In June 1958 GSIS checks began to bounce due to insufficiency of funds, exposing a scandal featuring prominent businessmen: “…. Out of nearly a quarter billion pesos loaned, some of the largest loans had been made, not to GSIS employees, but to financial speculators and real estates promoters.
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• A one million-plus peso loan went to former Iloilo Sen. Jose Zulueta.... Joseph Arcache, a Manila businessman, applied for a P2 million only four days after Magsaysay’s death and received P1,400,000 12 days later.... However, it was Jose Cojuangco of Tarlac who really hit the jackpot. He received a GSIS loan for just under to purchase Hacienda Luisita from the Tabacalera Company...”
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• To investigate the Bureau of Customs scam Garcia chose a man of good reputation, Lt. Comdr. Marcelino Calinawan who duly submitted his report which “never saw light of day.” Its contents were however revealed by the *Free Press*. There were **15 syndicates** in the **bureau** “that control our financial and economic life.” Further: “.... the names of **29 multimillionaires** behind the **syndicates** should have been unmasked so our people would know the human octopuses
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- who have been strangling our economy and making life harder and harder for us; the high government officials, their wives, the flight attendants who have been smuggling millions of pesos to Hong Kong should have been exposed; but nothing has been done. They are too big and too powerful; they are the sacred cows of the administration....
Things came to such a head that the CIA secretly intervened to “look for another Magsaysay” but all it could get to support was Diosdado Macapagal who also foundered in the Stonehill scandal. And then, of course, came Ferdinand Marcos. He would create four anti-graft and investigation agencies, the last one surviving sixteen years until he was hounded out of power in 1986. Very few would probably dispute the following blanket assessment of graft and corruption under Marcos:
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• “His declaration of martial law in 1972 under false pretexts not only protected the fortune he had already acquired, most illicitly over the past two decades. It also served to accelerate the amassing of even more power and wealth for several more years.... He lorded it [the economy] over a rapacious team of trusted friends and associates whom he had given lucrative fiefdoms in the economy.... They treated the Philippine treasury as if it were their personal checking account.
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• The consuming preoccupation with wealth accumulation was abetted by multi-million international loans and massive U.S. foreign assistance packages that were meant for economic development. These resources provided easy opportunities for massive graft ... In the end, the Philippines had been bled of billions of dollars and had become the ‘basket case of Asia’ by the late 1970s...."
One should allow for a bit of hyperbole on Aquino’s statements above. On the whole the condemnation is correct, although it is not altogether true with regards to the Marcos of pre-Martial Law years. As Gleeck, Jr. has emphasized: “Marcos demonologists are treacherous historians…. They collapse time periods and describe both acts and attitudes *ex post facto* as if they were contemporary..../....His regime for the first four years, for example, was less corrupt than those of his two immediate predecessors, and the turnover of the economy to the cronies took several years after martial law....”
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• Years after 1986 the Marcos “politics of plunder” might have seemed a *non plus ultra*, an apex beyond which there would be nothing else comparable. Nobody counted on Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, particularly almost immediately after the so-called EDSA II “revolution.”
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• We have thus reached a critical point in our national history where we have to bring our institutions to a much sharper focus than ever before, especially with the implementation of the Local Government Code of 1991 and the recent agenda for greater decentralization.
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• The PNOY administration had begun to take seriously this focus with his anti-graft and corruption agenda, putting behind bars “big time” politicians, justices and bureaucrats as well as their conniving counterparts in the public and private spheres both at the national and local levels. This governance centerpiece by the Administration however may be compromised by present Duterte Administration who expressly mentioned in his first SONA that...
IV. Conclusion

- Corruption as we know it today started during Spanish colonization and intensified under American rule.
- It was initially and largely limited to Spaniards and Americans in their practice of politics-and-administration in the country.
- During the Spanish regime, it originally was mostly bureaucratic; with minimal political corruption at the level of the pueblo, where for the most part Filipino (Indio) “participation” in the political system was concentrated.
IV. Conclusion

• Political corruption involving Filipinos began to really proliferate and intensify in the 20th century when the now Western acculturated Filipino elites were allowed to participate in the various political and administrative processes decentralized by the Americans, mainly with “Filipinization.”

• At the outset, political corruption on the part of the Filipino elite was pertinent to the acquisition of “ginhawa” which could be used to regain one’s leadership stature to the mutual benefit of pinuno-and-sakop.
IV. Conclusion

- Later the *sakop*, now often referred to as constituents, became instrumental to the acquisition of office and *vice versa* -- *i.e.*, possession of office was necessary to obtain or maintain one’s *sakop* (“public support”) -- mainly because of the electoral process. In the now developed system of patronage and spoils politics under the Americans, influence peddling from the business sector also became an important source of funds to cultivate public support and therefore retain one’s hold on power.
IV. Conclusion

• Unfortunately, despite the resulting although still “incipient” formation of a national community spanning the entire archipelago and uniting the formerly dispersed and independent socio-cultural, economic and political units, the concept of sakop which was traditionally “kinship”-based and “ginhawa”-driven would not grow to include territorial domains beyond one’s province or “balwarte;” nor would it extend to include the entire archipelago, despite movements towards nationhood at the levels both of the Filipino elites and “Bayan” from the last quarter of the 19th century onwards.
IV. Conclusion

• Consequently, “pananagutan” or the public accountability of a politician would not go beyond one’s family and local constituency, from the smallest “barangay” or town units to those of the regions (based on the broader ethnic groups which gave rise to and continues to nourish what has come to be known as “regionalism”) and beyond, up to the country as a whole in the form of political parties and interest groups based principally on what has been called the anarchy of families or elite or oligarchic democracy. This despite the new democratic dispensation that allows for elections beyond one’s “balwarte.”
IV. Conclusion

• In truth, in the national scene and where one’s sakop now go beyond one’s clan and hometown or province because of elections, the ties that bind the leader to the broader spectrum of political support are no longer as clear and strong and lack the same compulsion to reciprocate support with accountability. This phenomenon however would only serve to perpetuate corruption as a leader would now have to negotiate his/her way into continuous alliance-building among local leaders in order to build up a wider base of public support (“sakop”).
IV. Conclusion

- From the present *datus* (barangay captains) and haris/rajas (town mayors and provincial governors, regional chiefs and cabinet members) to the bigger rajas and sultans (senators, congressmen, senators and presidents), the primary duty is no longer “kaginhawahang bayan” but “*pansariling pakinabangan*” and “*ginhawang ng sarili at ng pamilya/angkan*.” Thus the persistence and pervasiveness of corruption despite countless efforts at reform, some genuine others merely to pay lip service, over the last four centuries.
IV. Conclusion

• All of that comes as reflexes from our history. But there is also the American contribution *not only* in terms of the idea of “democracy” but of “electoral exercises,” which continue to foster the detachment of the moral and religious cultural bonds that formerly held the *pinuno* and *sakop* together. Now the only way to attach *sakops* to the *pinuno* is through the money economy, to create or to increase *utang na loob*. For their part, the *sakops* have likewise taken on the implications of the money economy.
IV. Conclusion

- The old systems of human relations tend to be replaced by those of “scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours” (Western reciprocity). Thus “vote buying,” political accommodation and influence peddling persist as a way of ensuring reelection for the perpetuation of political power which in turn perpetuates the “culture” of graft and corruption politico-economic system; and the entrenchment of political dynasties. Note however that present day bureaucracy merits a different study. In fact, contrary to the supposed culture of corruption, what may be found among bureaucrats is a culture of complaisance (pagkamaunaunawain).