

clearly identified; consequently, where to start a road map toward democratic consolidation cannot be drawn as well.

Overall, the book provides a good history of how elite rule has been embedded and why it continues to be so in Philippine politics. A significant contribution of the book is its critical examination of the current method of allocating party-list seats and its presentation and assessment of a better alternative, complete with mathematical formulas and proofs. The book would have been more significant had it provided concrete solutions to reform political parties and elections so that they do not function merely in the service of those with property or resources. The book falls short of this achievement.—**RICHARD HENRICK I. BELTRAN**, BA POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT, COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES-DILIMAN.

REFERENCE

Cullinane, Michael. 2003. *Ilustrado politics: Filipino elite responses to American rule, 1898-1908*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Jomo KS, ed. 2006. *The Long Twentieth Century: The Great Divergence: Hegemony, Uneven Development, and Global Inequality*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 262 pp.

[Note: The following review was read on the occasion of the book launching entitled “Development Economics in the Twentieth Century,” 24 July 2006 at the Balay Kalinaw, University of the Philippines-Diliman. The event was sponsored by the Third World Studies Center, Action for Economic Reforms, and the South-South Exchange Programme for Research in the History of Development.]

This is an interesting component of a study on the twentieth century led by Jomo K.S., assistant secretary-general for economic development, the United Nations. Although the title describes it ostensibly as an examination of divergence, the introduction immediately identifies the dominating effect of imperialism on economies and people. It emphasizes the continuing thrust of imperialism in the coming millennium.

The author points to the changing character of imperialism over the last century: from the overt mode of colonialism in early twentieth

century to indirect or informal control during the second half. And now, he points out to the continuing thrust of imperialism, one of “ultra-imperialism” where control is achieved through predominant military reach and the help of global institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. On the other hand, he points to the vulnerability of the United States because of the relative indirectness of its hold and the attendant need for acceptance of both dominant and dominated economies of global liquidity and continuing vast imports by the US of capital.

The author points to what he takes to be the main results of this imperialism: First, a substantial increase in inequality and, he adds, an actual slowing down of growth in the last quarter of the century, which is associated with globalization and liberalization.

This is a fresh point of view that I suggest we should consider. Instead of accepting the dominating presence of the United States in world affairs such as security and finance, it would profit us to look into the underlying reasons for the current situation.

The book then delves into the extensions and effects of imperialism. It starts and ends with elaborations on imperialism by Professor Prabhat Patnaik. It is significant to me that the book places the Patnaik chapters where they are because it serves to put a framework on the examination of divergence found in the other chapters. Professor Patnaik examines what he takes to be imperialism within the Marxian framework as extended by Lenin. A gross generalization that I will hazard here is how imperialism, according to Patnaik, is almost inevitable in social and economic development and how it has led to the high and increasing inequality that we witness today. Let me just add that after some more theoretical ruminations on how the concept and practice of imperialism evolved, Patnaik points out five consequences of globalization on the Third World.

First, liberalization entails a drastic reduction on the living standards of workers and peasants in the Third World.

Second, it abrogates the economic and political sovereignty of Third World countries.

Third, there is a progressive transfer of natural resources and assets, especially in the public sector, to foreign hands at throwaway prices.

Fourth, there is necessarily an attenuation of democracy.

Fifth, these countries “become inevitably enmeshed in ethnic conflicts, secessionist movements, communal conflagration and fundamentalist threats as they ‘liberalize’ their economies.”

Unfortunately, I only had time to look more closely into the chapters on Southeast Asia and Latin America, given my limited time with the book, because of my relative familiarity with these regions.

I would like to recommend those interested in the area to read very closely the chapter on Latin America because of its comprehensiveness. It provides a quick yet complete summary of developments in the region in this immediate past century.

The chapter on Southeast Asia by Maria Serena Diokno also provides excellent insight on the two versions of “free trade” in the region in the last century and on the responses within those countries, especially in terms of religion and language.

The other chapters provide similar rewards to those who will take the time to read the material closely.

Having enjoyed the book and happily recommended it for your own reading pleasure, let me leave you with some interesting questions to confirm.

First, let me quibble with the assertions that liberalization brought both higher inequality and slower growth in the last quarter of the 20th century. On inequality, this simple number has so many dimensions as to render incomplete and, possibly, inaccurate straightforward comparisons based on a single number. While the book explores the internal country, as against external, inequality numbers, as other authors have done, we are unclear as to whether it was liberalization or bad governance—as may seem probable in Africa—that caused this. The timing of cause and effect is also important.

On growth, the exact dating of when growth was slow or fast against when liberalization actually happened also need to be specified in more detail, although the consensus seems to be that liberalization does increase volatility and contagion of the type manifested during the Asian financial crisis.

Second, I find the overall conclusion to be too broad to be of specific significance. It would probably be more instructive if some dimensions of the phenomenon were studied more closely. For example, what would be the impact on the overall conclusions on globalization and liberalization if we explicitly considered the cases of Japan, China, India and the four “Asian dragons?”

Third, allow me to make a short stop on my take on the market as an important consideration when we assess globalization. While some observers look at the more perverse results of market process and decry the institution¹ I tend to take the market as an instrument: it has uses but can also impose penalties. It is impersonal and fair, but also cold

and ruthless. The reason it can induce efficiency is because it penalizes inefficiency, i.e. market pressure is both the good and the dark side at the same time. As an example, take the excellent volume by Paul Kennedy, “The rise and fall of the great powers.” He explores how, starting 1500, fractious, war-torn principalities of Europe were forced to compete against each other and managed to overtake a unified, complacent China over the next 200-300 years.

Fourth, what does this book say about the 3rd millennium? “If one believed the doctrine of imperialism, what can one say about the emergence of new players such as China and India – as Japan had before them? Will power be distributed? Will there be clashes, cooptation, or absorption? Who will colonize whom?”

Having posed these questions, I end contentedly with the thought I have fulfilled my teacher’s duty—that is, I have given you a very interesting and exciting homework.—CAYETANO PADERANGA JR., PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES-DILIMAN.

NOTE

1. Others look at the more benign results and take a Cassandra-like stance.

Beyond Conspiracy: 25 Years after the Aquino Assassination. Directed by Butch Nolasco. Written by Ruben Tanco. Foundation for Worldwide People Power.

For what purpose do we look back? What do we gain, and at times lose, from revisiting certain aspects of our history?

There can be no doubt that the assassination of Benigno ‘Ninoy’ Aquino, Jr. has been decisive in our nation’s history. But just as it is decisive, it is also marred with unresolved controversies. Though the incident goes down in history as what catalyzed the series of events that led to the EDSA People Power, memories of August 21, 1983 are now already vague, if not forgotten. For generations born long after Ninoy’s assassination and EDSA People Power, the real cause of Ninoy’s death may not even be important anymore apart from the usual curiosity conspiracies invite. The documentary *Beyond Conspiracy: 25 Years after the Aquino Assassination* offers a memento that reminds the older