MULA TORE
PATUNGONG PALENGKE

Neoliberal Education In the Philippines

Mga Patnugot

Bienvenido Lumbera
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Mga Nilalaman

Introduksyon ix

I. Kasaysayan at Konsepto

Edukasyong Kolonyal:
Sanhi at Bunga ng Mahabang Pagkaalipin
Bienvenido Lumbera 1

Philippine Education in the
Neocolonial Period
Alexander Martin Remollino 9

Liberalism, Neoliberalism and
the Rise of Consumerist Education
Edberto M. Villegas 19

The Symptom Called Marketisation
Sarah Raymundo 31

II. Karanasan at Patakaran

Deregulation at the Expense of
Quality Education
Danilo Araña Arao 43

Ang Irasyunalidad ng Rasyonalisasyon:
Isang Pagsusuri sa Public Higher Education
Rationalization Program
Jonnabelle Vidal Asis 55

Economics of Philippine Education:
Serving the Global Market
Jennifer del Rosario-Malonzo 81

Pribadong Tubo
sa Tersyaryong Edukasyon
Ronalyn Olea 95

Docile Minds, Commodified Bodies:
Young Women in the Context
of Globalization and Neoliberal Education
Joan M.E. Salvador 105

Corporatizing Public Education in the Philippines:
The Case of USAID and the Ayala Foundation
Peter Chua 115

Rationalizing Failures:
The Philippine Government
in the Education Sector (1997)
Ramon Guillermo 127

III. Neoliberalismo sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas

Neoliberalism in the UP
Elmer A. Ordoñez 139

Pseudo-Progresibong Pragmatismo
sa Usapin ng Pagpopondo sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas
R. C. Asa 145

Ang Revitalized General Education Program (RGEP)
ng Unibersidad ng Pilipinas: Edukasyong Nakamodelo
sa Pamilihan
Ramon Guillermo 179

Ang Pribatisasyon
sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas
at ang Landas na Tinatahak nito
Clodualdo "Buboy" Cabrera 195

IV. Neoliberalismo sa Kurikulum, Media at ang mga Alternatibo

The Pedagogical Role
of English
in the Reproduction of Labor
Gonzalo Campoamor II 199

Neoliberalistang Pagpapaplanong Pangwika:
Tungo sa Komodipikado
at Episyenteng Pagpapahayag
Melania L. Abad 211

History, Colonialism
and Textbooks
Francis A. Gealogo 227

Science and Technology
Education for Whom?
Giovanni Tapang 257

Kulturang Popular
at Pakiwaring Gitnang Uri
Rolando B. Tolentino 269

Ang Post-istrukturalismo
bilang Bagong Pormalismo
at Kanlungan ng Neoliberalismo
Gary C. Devilles 283

On Teaching Literature
Nonilon V. Queano 297

Ang Neoliberal na Edukasyon sa Media
Maricristh Magaling at Soliman A. Santos 305

The Struggle for Cultural
and Ethnic Justice in the Age of Neoliberal Capitalism:
The Case of Indigenous Education Among
the Aetas of Botolan, Zambales
Gerry Lanuza 311

"A para sa Armalayt": Ilang Tala
Hinggil sa Rebolusyonaryong Edukasyon
Kenneth Roland A. Guda 329

Teacher's Guide 335
Arnold Alamon

Ilang Tala Hinggil
sa mga Manunulat at Editor 345

Corporatizing Public Education in the Philippines: The Case of USAID and the Ayala Foundation

Peter Chua

Since the early 1980s, leading global institutions took a renewed interest in reforming public schooling across the Third World to address the managerial problem of fiscal sustainability. By turning to neoliberalism for the solutions, the policies and programs typically called for increased instructional fees, expanded systems to monitor and assess teachers, classrooms, departments, and campuses, and greater involvement of the private and nongovernmental sectors (Brock-Utne 2002; Torres 2002; Hill 2003; Akoojee and McGrath 2004; Leher 2004; Tikly 2004).

This chapter examines the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) renewed attention to Philippine public education after September 11, 2001 and its support for neoliberal education. This attention has resulted in an influx of millions of dollars and external technical consultants and the involvement of corporate-led groups such as the Ayala Foundation. A significant portion of this attention on education has been directed at the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The chapter discusses USAID's interest to provide pro-US curriculum locally, present the US in more favorable manner to ARMM youth and students, assist in intensifying labor export through corporate-led vocational training, and weaken local support for insurgent activities.

My analysis shows how the US government promotes actively its neoliberalist policy within the Philippine education sector by supporting and expanding activities of corporate-led nongovernmental organizations such as the Ayala Foundation and thereby further weakening education innovations from the public sector.

Returning with Kind Hearts and Self-Interested Motives: USAID and its New Thomasites

In the early 1900s, about five hundred teachers from the United States—commonly referred to as the Thomasites—arrived in Manila Bay on the USS Thomas and later assigned to disparate areas such as Cagayan, Samar and Jolo. While US Army soldiers began limited instruction to Filipinos on the English language, the Thomasites forged with the new US commonwealth government a US-styled education system in the Philippines. The Thomasites helped build public schools and developed core and vocational curriculum for Filipinos. These Thomasites were early precursors of contemporary US Peace Corps volunteers.

Almost one hundred years later, a new group of "Thomasites" from the US arrived in the Philippines to educate Filipinos. This time, they are not building and operating public schools, but rather transforming the public education system into a corporate-driven, neoliberal institution. Starting in 2004, the USAID appointed Dr. Thomas Kral as its Chief for the Office of Education in the Philippines to aid this neoliberal transformation. Kral was a former Peace Corps volunteer in the early 1960s and traveled to Sulu, earned his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in 1975, authored several English-language teaching books and worked in Turkey for the US State Department Information Agency, and was also the former US Embassy Cultural Affairs Officer in the Philippines. With his appointment as Chief Education Officer in the Philippines for USAID, Kral has been responsible in managing the range of US educational initiatives in the Philippines, some of which were conceptually developed before his 2004 appointment.

The US government became highly interested in Philippine education after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the US and the emerging US President's plan to have the Philippines and the surrounding areas as its "second front" in its global war on terror. Prior to 2001, the US supplied limited funds for reproductive health and HIV/AIDS education only (USAID 2001-2008; also see Chua 2001). Starting 2002, USAID received a dramatic rise in US congressional funding to develop and implement educational projects in the ARMM. These projects garnered US$2 million in 2002 and an additional million in 2003. In 2004, USAID submitted a budget to the US Congress with an explicit line item on education listed as "Increased Access to Quality Education and Livelihood Skills in Selected Areas," requesting US$4 million for 2004. Since then, the US directed about

US$10 to US$12 million annually to support so-called basic education projects in ARMM and other conflict-ridden areas.

The return of the Thomasites coincided with the large-scale return of US military forces to the Philippines in 2002 and 2003. Through the Joint US-Philippine Military Balikatan "exercises" and the US counterinsurgency trainings in the southern Philippines, US soldiers and security-intelligence teams helped the Philippine Armed Forces and police-security forces to bomb and assault several civilian-populated towns such as in North Cotabato, Lanao, Maguindanao, and Zamboanga localities. The Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo authorized these assaults under the pretext of an all-out-war against kidnappers of US citizens, the Abu Sayyaf Group, and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In October 2003, USAID made public its neoliberal logic to transform education in ARMM. In the job position advertisement for the Senior Education Advisor, USAID explained its desire to have a "team leader" to manage and oversee its education projects, to serve as policy advisor, and to coordinate with others to ensure the effectiveness of US-funded projects (USAID 2003). USAID selected Dr. Kral to fill this position and later upgraded his title to be Chief Education Officer.

The 2003 advertisement—like later official statements—explicitly mentioned the concern of the US about the situation in ARMM. It stated:

> The quality of education is typically poor and, according to reliable information, a certain proportion of Islamic teachers are adherents of Wahabi Islam and impart messages to their students that are consistent with the appeals of terrorist groups.
>
> Increased access to education… can play an important role in helping Muslim Filipinos become more effective players in the country's pluralistic and democratic state. [It] will help address alienation of the Muslim population, and help them see a better future as part of the Philippine state. [It] will help level the playing field and reduce marginalization of this population to enable them to compete for employment opportunities and participate more fully in economic growth.
>
> USAID/Philippines new education program intends to improve access to, and the quality of, education.... [Efforts] will include helping to prepare the next generation of Muslim leaders, professionals and decision-makers, and which will require higher education training as well. The program also will address the special

> problems of out-of-work youth in the conflict-affected areas. (USAID 2003)

This excerpt makes clear US interest in using education projects to counter certain Islamic and "cultural" values, to reduce dramatically recruitment to and support for so-called terrorist groups, and to promote US government's notions of pluralist democracy, societal inclusion, and economic opportunities. In effect, this US-backed education should result in a pluralist government with US-trained Muslim leaders and societal inclusion in which marginalized youth from conflict areas gets to participate somehow in a highly uneven and globally competitive labor market.

Other portions of the job description provided a brief US assessment of Philippine education. They highlighted the sharp decline recently in access and quality of previously "one-of-the best educational system in all of Asia." USAID and the Philippine government of GMA made this assessment based on their observation that English language competency is declining, the need to teach math and science in English again, and the need to train teachers on information technology and other subject manners to produce a more globally competent workforce.

After the selection of Dr. Kral as its education team leader in the Philippines, USAID turned to award grants and contracts to several international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to operate its many education projects. Of significance is its US$2.4 million award to International Youth Foundation (IYF) in December 2004 to operate educational projects in ARMM that provide youth education and livelihood skills. IYF is a US-based international nongovernmental organization with a mission to prepare "young people to be healthy, productive and engaged citizens." Since 1990, IYF operates programs–many funded by USAID–to improve the social, livelihood, political, and cultural conditions of young people in over 70 countries including the Philippines.

IYF and its USAID-funded projects serve as exemplars to the neoliberal turn in education policy. First, USAID creates—with seemingly liberal humanitarian hearts—educational projects to overcome the Philippine government's inability to provide quality education. While USAID projects seemingly help to provide education, the projects erode the remaining government programs on education and replacing them with US-funded and US-directed programs operated by selected NGOs (see Petras 1999). As a result, USAID—without publicly stating its objective to neoliberalize and corporatize education—promote the privatization and deregulation in

public education. That is, increasingly public education in the Philippines is being replaced with a more privatized and deregulated educational system through programs operated by NGOs such as IYF.

Second, the privatization of public education occurs as the result of USAID policy that promotes partnerships between its NGOs and the private for-profit sector. IYF, for instance, has been known to be effective in garnering globally material and financial resources from transnational corporations and corporate-led foundations. In this way, IYF's network of corporate and for-profit partners designs and implements education and youth programs that often support their corporate values and provide employable skills to better transition the youth from poverty to low-wage manufacturing and service work. As such, these programs reduce government control and regulation on educational content and quality and foster stronger private sector initiatives in the so-called public education.

Third, the privatization and deregulation of Philippine public education serve as part of USAID's more comprehensive economic and societal restructuring of the Philippine state and society to make the country more conducive for US businesses to make profit from their investments, operations, and direct support of U.S-based NGOs projects. Moreover, this US-led neoliberal restructuring occurs in coordination with other US activities involving counterinsurgency and military operations, which also seek to transform Philippine society.

Playing BiNGO with Education: The Ayala Foundation

The International Youth Foundation relies on several smaller NGOs—many Philippine-based—to implement its various educational programs as part of the Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA). In this case, IYF awarded sub-contracts to the Ayala Foundation, Consuelo Foundation, Petron Foundation, Philippine Business for Social Progress, and the Regional Center for Innovation and Technology operated by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization.

A deeper analysis of the Ayala Foundation (AF) activities for ELSA and other USAID-sponsored projects provides further details on the neoliberal shift in Philippine education. This neoliberal shift requires greater reliance on business- and industry-led NGOs—some have termed them BiNGOs—and their private sector counterparts to operate and implement "public" educational programs.

The Ayala Foundation is the corporate charity wing of the Ayala Group, which is one of the oldest, largest, and most powerful family-controlled business conglomerates in the Philippines. Since 1934, the Ayala Group—with its prominent Zobel family members—has been involved in real estate development (i.e. Ayala Land), banking and insurance services (i.e. Bank of the Philippines Islands), telecommunication (i.e. Globe Telecom), transport (i.e. Honda Cars Philippines and Isuzu Dealerships), electronics (i.e. Integrated Microelectronics), information technology, other business sectors, and public utilities (i.e. Manila Water Company). In 2007, the Group's combined worth is about US$15 billion.

For ELSA, the Ayala Foundation operates the "In-School Youth Engagement Program," which offers Filipino high school students the necessary skills and tools needed for them to "compete in the global market." To do so, the Foundation primarily trains student leaders to "implement community projects and participate in learning sessions and interfaith dialogues" (Ayala Corporation 2005). Geographically, the students come from municipalities in the ARMM and surrounding areas such as Sarangani, Basilan, Lanao Del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, North Cotabato, and South Cotabato.

In 2006, the Ayala Foundation held its first ELSA-related training, bringing together 63 high school students. The Foundation reported that the training sought to "develop a greater sense of awareness on leadership values and principles that will hopefully guide them in leading and having a clear vision for themselves and their respective communities" (Ayala Foundation 2006a). In a follow-up session several months later, the Foundation trained 26 appointed youth leaders who participated in the earlier training to be "responsible" and to identify seemingly pressing problems of the youth and develop corresponding projects to address the problems (Ayala Foundation 2006b).

Through these training sessions, the Ayala Foundation emphasizes the need for the youth to be "active responsible citizens of their communities and their country" through volunteerism and "youth-to-youth cooperation" and to pursue "peace-building and social development initiatives and promote good governance and active, responsible citizenship in their [ARMM] localities." These are the sort of "peace, development, and governance" values that USAID seeks to promulgate in the region, which advance US interests and challenge local and non-corporate-led initiatives striving for genuine social justice and peace in the region.

In addition to its participation in ELSA, the Ayala Foundation is involved with another school-related USAID project in the ARMM region. As part of the USAID "Computer Literacy and Internet Connection" (CLIC) program of the "Growth with Equity in Mindanao" project, the Ayala Foundation, other corporate-led NGOs, and US firms such as Microsoft, IBM, Intel, and Cisco Systems are contracted to provide internet access (with equipment and software applications) and training for teachers in selected public schools. As of February 2007, CLIC provided over 500 schools with computers and equipment for satellite and wireless internet access. However, after six months of the free internet connection, the public schools are then made to pay for internet services by charging computer use after school hours and during weekends.

Through USAID backing, the Ayala Foundation is carving a niche for itself in Philippine public schools. It is helping to transform public school students and their learning environment into corporate-led training ground for vocational education that supports neoliberal policies.

Based on my analysis of the Ayala Foundation's activities, it contributes to neoliberal education through at least two distinct market-advantage outcomes. First, the Foundation uses youth leadership training sessions as an employee recruiting ground of its various corporate activities and operation. Potential graduates of these sessions in ARMM are targeted for selection and active involvement in the Foundation's Young Leaders Congress, which brings together hundreds of high school youth from the various regions in the Philippines and the US since 1999. With additional training and involvement by the youth volunteer leaders, they become tracked for mid-level paid employment. Some graduates of previous Youth Leaders Congress, for instance, have served as session facilitators for the ELSA's In-School Youth Engagement Program. In this way, the Ayala Group uses US funds for Philippine public education to create a labor recruiting pool and to train youth participants on work values and skills that Ayala expects from its workers.

Second, the Ayala Group benefits directly from its Foundation's participation in CLIC. By training teachers on computer and information technology (IT) literacy and providing internet access to many ARMM students, the Foundation ensures that Ayala telecommunication and electronics companies (i.e. Global Telecom) get and maintain long-term contracts to provide internet access in Mindanao. This way, Ayala relies on US and Philippine government funds to expand telecommunication and related markets in the region. With government support of Ayala's

telecommunication activities in public schools, Ayala is able to carve out a greater niche in the region and plan to get more paid consumers who have learned to use and want greater internet access. Furthermore, the US-funded CLIC program ensues that Ayala companies can draw on IT-savvy workers from the ARMM to work in its telecommunication companies and its new lucrative business services firms that provide call center and document processing support.

In short, USAID, the Ayala Foundation, and similar BiNGOs benefit from the neoliberal restructuring of Philippine education. The post-9/11 USAID educational programs aim to improve the image of the US military and government among the ARMM residents by highlighting US support for anti-poverty, humanitarian, and youth-centered programs. Nevertheless, the programs enable US NGOs and private businesses to benefit financially through direct contracts and indirectly through the creation of a consumer base to buy and use the products of US companies. Moreover, through this neoliberal arrangement, the Ayala Foundation exerts more control over the training and pre-sorting of vocational workers and low-level supervisors to be employed in companies of the Ayala Group.

Seeking to Grab Hearts and Minds: GMA's Neoliberal Agenda on Public Education

Neoliberalism is becoming more entrenched in Philippine public education under the presidency of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (GMA). While the president claims to be interested in reducing poverty and improving social welfare through, for instance, better school programs and educational opportunities, her support for US policies on neoliberalism are resulting in greater poverty and hardship for the Bangsa Moro and other Filipinos.

Her neoliberal drive to restructure the government (i.e. Charter Change), its agencies (from public health, schooling, to courts), and its laws (i.e. anti-terrorism and national security policies) makes evident her desire for a more pro-US and pro-corporate government in the Philippines. Consequently, she seeks for a reformed government with laws and policies that ensure the erosion of the social programs for ordinary Filipinos, the end of their civil liberties and human rights guarantees, and the increased push for them to seek livelihood outside the Philippines.

In the arena of education, GMA strives to win over the hearts and minds of ordinary Filipinos, particularly those living in ARMM. With USAID-funded Ayala Foundation programs, GMA seeks to win over the

Muslim youth with computers, internet access, jobs, and peace and cooperation trainings. In this way, she hopes that Bangsa Moro youth might not join many of her political opponents who are sincerely striving for lasting peace and genuine justice in the region and for all Filipinos. Moreover, GMA hopes that Filipino youth learn to communicate better in English and to gain employable skills for informational technology-related jobs (such as by working inthe call center industry and for document services firms). That is, she wants to be the "global CEO" of the world's largest exporters of cheap, vocationally-skilled, English-speaking labor force.

The intensified labor export policy of GMA depends highly on USAID's recent education programs that seek to revamp Philippine education, in which the Ayala Foundation is just one of the active subcontractors. This revamping also requires the involvement of many more contractors and subcontractors to provide vocational training. As a result, US corporations and many other international NGOs—not analyzed in this chapter such as Save the Children, the US Peace Corps, Asia American Initiative, Synergeia Foundation, the Brother's Brother Foundation, the Knowledge Challenge, and Real World Productions, and Creative Associates International—benefit financially from their USAID contracts.

Additionally, it is important to remember that the expansion of neoliberal education requires its complement: the displacement of communities. With insurgent and counter-insurgent activities in ARMM and other regions of the Philippines, schools have been destroyed or made inactive. The clearing of ARMM areas through military and police campaigns often results in the creation of "peace zones" (see Chua 2006). The government then sends into these zones teachers, money, and technology and a highly politicized curriculum and elite values that benefits GMA and the US (Bakshian 2007; Gopalakrishnan 2007). Under these conditions of social displacement and "peace," GMA selects local leaders and—through Ayala Foundation's youth trainings—creates a long-term mechanism for further elite recruitment into her ranks.

Yet peace in the country remains elusive. GMA's culture of terror and political killings remain in full force, making it difficult to create any semblance of peace and viable learning environment. ARMM youth living in conflict and terror are most likely seeking refuge in safe locations outside the purview of GMA and her supporters. The youth are probably striving to maintain their language and learn about histories of colonial and anti-imperialist resistance. They probably are using inexpensive and more accessible forms of new technologies to communicate with others globally.

More concretely, this means that local ordinary Bangsa Moro youth and pro-people teachers and supporters are doubtless exploring how to develop more effective anti-GMA and counter-US learning materials and provide IT and science education oriented towards greater regional and national equity. They are no doubt also searching ways to deepen values emphasizing genuine democracy and economic justice in the Philippines.

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TEACHER'S GUIDE

Arnold Alamon

The brief teacher's guide in this volume is for educators who wish to use this book as a resource for their classes and advocacies. The guide aids the educator in a number of ways - identifying the pertinent article that addresses relevant concerns, suggesting class activities to enliven and make meaningful the learning process, and providing guide questions that the teacher and student can use as a tool in reading the book. This guide follows an alternative arrangement in order to draw out aspects of the essays that are useful in the handling of alternative classes. The set of essays that are included in each section

The first part of the guide discusses a number of important concepts that provide the theoretical basis for many of the articles' arguments included in this volume. Here, central concepts such as "neoliberalism" are defined and discussed in relation to other relevant ideas such as globalization. The second part traces the roots of neoliberal education in the Philippines from the colonial period up to the present. The contemporary features of neoliberalism and education are tackled in the third part. A special section includes a set of articles that tackle the experience of the University of the Philippines which demonstrate the impact of the neoliberal education agenda in the country's premier state university. The final section of the guide will discuss some alternative models to neoliberal education.

I. What is Neoliberalism?

The first set of essays to be discussed in this guide provides the educator and their students with the appropriate introduction to neoliberalism and

the neoliberal agenda in the education sector. Any talk of neoliberalism's consequence to education necessitates a discussion of the socio-historical origins of liberalism as an intellectual and social movement and its continuing resonance in the academe and beyond.

Villegas' article is useful in providing an extensive theoretical background on the history and principles that define liberalism from the classical Lockean liberalism to contemporary persuasions in economic theory. By tracing the roots of liberalism and its various manifestations in the academe to the bourgeois class and its drive to preserve its hegemony, contemporary attempts to justify the commercialization of education through the implementation of neoliberal policies are exposed of their hidden ideological agenda. Devilles' essay brings the terms of this debate to academic discourse by critiquing postmodern currents within the academe as the ideological logic of neoliberalism. He offers a critique of texts that adhere to the tenets of postmodernism, observes that postmodernism is the new formalism, while decrying these texts' and their authors' failure to historicize.

Bringing the analysis to contemporary realities in the Philippine education sector, Asis pursues the task of exposing the "irrationality" of supposed neoliberal rationality in her essay. She draws attention to four myths that make up the neoliberal education agenda and proceeds to unravel these using empirical examples. She presents counter-arguments to the case made by neoliberal proponents in the education sector that promote the commercialization of education. Guillermo, in his first essay, essentially takes on the same task of exposing the anti-people logic behind supposed education reforms sponsored by the IMF-WB.

What tie these essays together is that they challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions and supposed academic rationality of neoliberal strategies adopted by the State and US-sponsored multilateral institutions.

Activity 1 – Pinoy Henyo

As a class activity that can complement the required reading of these essays, "Pinoy Henyo" a game that will introduce the terms, concepts and principles behind the issue is suggested. The class will be divided into two groups and each will be assigned a list of terms. Each group will take a representative to guess these terms. A representative from each group will wear a hat in which will be placed the term that he or she needs to guess. The representative can ask his or her team mates with clarificatory questions answerable only by a "yes" or "no" until he or she arrives at the correct answer. If the representative is able to answer the question within three minutes, then a point is gained by the group.

For the game to be effective, all the students should have read the set of articles in this section. At the end of the class activity, students should be able to satisfactorily answer these questions.

1. *What are the historical conditions that gave rise to liberalism as a social and economic doctrine?*
2. *What are the social and historical continuities that account for neoliberalism's dominance in contemporary academic and social life?*
3. *What is the relationship between postmodernism and neoliberalism?*
4. *What are the arguments and counter-arguments between neoliberal proponents and their critics in the academe?*

Suggested essays for part 1:
"Neoliberal Economics," Ed Villegas
"Ang Post-Istrukturalismo bilang Bagong Pormalismo at Kanlungan ng Neoliberalismo," Gary Devilles
"Ang Irasyunalidad sa Rasyunalisasyon: Isang Pagsusuri sa Public Higher Education Rationalization Program," Jonnabelle Vidal Asis
"Rationalizing Failures: The Philippine Government in the Education Sector," Ramon Guillermo

II. Neoliberal Education in the Nation's History

Not a few of the articles traces the neoliberal character of education in the Philippines to the nation's colonial history and its status as a neocolony. Lumbera's article draws attention to the American colonial objectives of exploitation through education at the turn of the century. The vestiges of such a relationship are still manifest not only in the continued underdevelopment of the nation but especially in the perpetuation of such colonial hold through the return of English as a language policy that threatens to be implemented under the impending Gullas Bill and EO 210. This observation is shared by Campoamor in his essay. He draws attention to the role of the shifting language policy and the country's problematic position as a neocolony. He interprets the Gullas Bill as a manifestation of the state's political and economic complicity to a market-specific kind of education. Remollino, on the other hand, pursues the same angle in his analysis of the various administration policies on education since the post-war era. He draws attention to Marcos' education policies, Aquino's Education Commission, Ramos' Education 2000, and Estrada's establishment of the

Philippine Commission on Educational Reform (PCER); and he observes their shared submission to neocolonial interests. He expounds on the 1998 Philippine Education Sector Study (PESS), funded by the Asian Development Bank and the WorldBank - two US-led multilateral institutions - which prescribed a detailed masterplan that is behind the current re-orientation of state universities and colleges towards specialization and self-reliance; and the emphasis on math and science courses at the expense of the humanities and social sciences in the curriculum. Guillermo's first essay also identifies the hand of IMF-World Bank Policies in the Philippine government's resort to privatization schemes as educational reforms.

The problematic relationship that exists between the Philippine education system and its former colonial master is further manifested in history textbooks according to Gealogo. In his essay, he observes this ambiguity in the absence of a single intepretation of American colonial period in the various textbooks that were published over the decades.

This set of essays discloses the colonial roots of education in the country. They also highlight the Philippine educational system's "continuing past" by bringing to light its market-driven and IMF-WB-prescribed orientation.

Activity 2 – Excerpt from Rizal's El Filibusterismo

To deepen the understanding of the unchanging nature of the Philippine education system, a chapter from Rizal's El Filibusterismo *can be used as supplementary reading. The specific chapter that can be used from Rizal's novel is Chapter 12 on "Placido Penitente." In this chapter, Rizal draws attention to the ills that plague the colonial education system and which continue up to present times. At the end of the activity, the students should be able to answer the following questions:*

1. *What are the indications of the colonial character of the Philippine education system?*
2. *Through what colonial mechanisms is this system perpetuated and maintained in current times?*
3. *What are the arguments for and against Filipino as official language policy?*
4. *Why is it important for us to adhere to the constitutional designation of Filipino as an official language in our schools?*

Suggested essays for part 2:
"Edukasyong Kolonyal: Sanhi at Bunga ng Mahabang Pagkaalipin," Bienvenido Lumbera

"Philippine Education in the Neocolonial Period," Alex Remollino
"Pedagogical Role of English in the Reproduction of Labor," Siao Campoamor II
"History, Colonialism and the Textbooks," Francis Gealogo

III. Features of Neoliberal Education in the Philippines

Apart from essays which historicize our analysis of the Philippine education system, this volume also includes a number of articles that describe the various contemporary features of neoliberal education in the country. Broken down to specifics, the neoliberal agenda manifests itself through the policies of privatization and deregulation that both private and public institutions of learning are subjected to. Olea's and Arao's essays tackle these issues using current empirical studies. They both make a case for the continuing crisis of the Philippine education system where students and their families suffer the rising cost of tuition and other fees and their teachers endure lower wages and contractualization.

For Del Rosario-Malonzo, Salvador, and Chua, these policies are not incidental to the education sector alone. In fact, they share the view that the neoliberal orientation of the Philippine education system complements the labor requirements of the global economic order. According to Del Rosario-Malonzo, the Revised Basic Education Curriculum (RBEC), implementation of which is funded by the World Bank, equips students with skills that are needed by labor in a globalized economy. Salvador, on the other hand, scores this system for relegating young women to "cheap, semi-skilled, and docile" labor. Chua discloses the intricate web of shared interests between USAID, the American funding agency that promotes US interests, and big business like the Ayala Foundation, in defining the orientation of the Philippine education system. On the one hand, USAID achieves its objective of restructuring Philipppine state and society and "make the country more conducive for US businesses." On the other hand, Ayala Foundation creates a labor pool from youth leaders through the trainings they fund.

Knowledge of these contemporary features of neoliberal education will arm both educator and student with critical information that would allow them to understand the specific milieu and the wider socio-historical condition of their existence.

Activity 3 – Class Debate
For this section, staging a class debate among students is suggested. The objective of the debate is to gauge the level of awareness of students and based on this, their capacity to form convictions. The class will be divided into two groups and each will take either a positive or negative stance on the suggested debate topic. A suggested debate topic would be "Be it resolved that: Tuition free increases are necessary to maintain the quality of education in schools." The instructor can choose other debate topics, of course, and it is encouraged that issues that are closer to the students' experience are chosen. The following guide questions should be posed to the students at the end of the exercise:

1. *Why do we say that the Philippine educational system is in criss?*
2. *How is the Philippine education system oriented towards global labor market demands?*
3. *Whose interests do these neoliberal reforms promote?*

Suggested essays for part 3:
"Pribadong Tubo sa Tersaryong Edukasyon," Ronalyn Olea
"Deregulation at the Expense of Quality Education," Danny Arao
"Economics of Philippine Education: In Service of the Global Market," Jennifer del Rosario-Malonzo
"Docile Minds, Commodified Bodies: Young Women in the Context of Globalization and Neoliberal Education," Joan M. E. Salvador
"Corporatizing Public Education in the Philippines: The Case of USAID and the Ayala Foundation," Peter Chua

IV. UP Case Studies

A number of articles focus on the University of the Philippines. Ordoñez's essay traces the colonial character of the institution from its establishment up to the present. From responding to the need to train skilled and efficient public servants for the American colonial bureaucracy, to producing the technocrats that would serve Marcos during the dictatorship; the University has always played a major role in preserving the status quo despite its reputation as a hotbed of nationalism. Over the years, the implementation of the neoliberal agenda in education has slowly transformed the State University into a self-reliant "globally-competitive" academic institution especially with the recent 300% tuition fee increase.

The progressive block of faculty, students, and workers had to deal with the neoliberal assault from all fronts. Guillermo provides a

preliminary assessment of the Revitalized General Education Program (RGEP) - a measure that transformed the general education program of the University into a "marketplace of ideas." Under this program, students have the choice to determine their GE courses and he observes the weakening of the critical and nationalist components in the GE curriculum. Cabrera, on the other hand, relays the experience of UP employees as they deal with "reorganization, streamlining, clustering, multi-tasking and cross-posting" given the decreasing state subsidy. The commercialization of UP education is concretely manifested by the establishment of science and technology parks sponsored by big business in the University campus as discussed by Tapang's paper. Asa chronicles the struggle of organized students as they fight these neoliberal encroachments and struggle for an increase in state subsidy under a pseudo-progressive University administration.

These essays make UP a case study and provide useful resources that can be made a basis for comparison with the conditions in other state colleges and universities which are faced with the onslaught of such neoliberal educational "reforms."

Activity 4 – Case Studies

Educators may assign students to undertake case studies that probe the conditions of students, faculty and staff in their respective schools. The class may be divided into groups and these groups will conduct interviews, focus group discussions, and other research activities with the assigned sector of their school. They will then be asked to report the stories they collected in a plenary session in which all the groups will be asked to piece together the collective situation of students, faculty and staff. The end-product is an instant situationer of their own school. The objective of this activity is to identify the shared situation of UP with other institutions of learning including their own. At the end of this exercise, the students should be able to address the following questions:

1. *What role did UP play in promoting American colonial interests in its establishment?*
2. *In what ways has the neoliberal agenda altered the university experience for the students, faculty and staff of UP?*
3. *Are there similarities between the situation of the students, faculty, and staff of your school with UP?*

Suggested essays for part 4:
"Neoliberalism in the U.P.," Elmer Ordoñez
"Ang Revitalized Education Program (RGEP) ng Unibersidad ng Pilipinas-Diliman: Edukasyong Nakamodelo sa Pamilihan," Ramon

Guillermo
"Sitwasyong Empleyado sa Edukasyon," Clodualdo Cabrera
"Contextualizing Science and Technology Development: Critiquing the UP Science and Technology Parks," Agham
"Pseudo-Progresibong Pragmatismo sa Usaping Pagpopondo sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas," RC Asa

V. Alternative Models of Education

A set of articles also offers a discussion of the prospects and limitations of alternative models of education. Lanuza presents the struggle of an indigenous people's school in Zambales as it deals with the official bureaucracy for education of the state. He also laments the limitations of these efforts for cultural integration in the face of the continued domination of the elite. Magaling and Santos draw our attention to the dangers of the encroachment of big business in education with the establishment and marketing of an educational channel on local cable TV. These essays present a few of the limitations of those that present themselves as alternatives to mainstream education efforts.

There are also a few essays included in this volume that offer prospects for change towards a transformative kind of education. Raymundo finds it necessary for every educator to recognize the "marketisation" of the current education system. From such an awareness, it is possible for educators to realize a "transformative education," that is reflexive of their critical role as knowledge-producers. Queaño pursues the same objective by sharing his own experience in teaching classes in literature. Instead of following the established canons and methods in teaching literature, he exhorts educators to expose the ideological content of texts. Abad, on the other hand, calls for the need to pursue the struggle for a Filipino language policy in the face of current attempts to modify this in favor of globalization's labor requirements.

Finally, Tolentino's essay introduces us to the prevailing hegemonic culture that envelops not just the educational system but also informs the ideological imperatives that drive middle-class dreams and aspirations that provide much of neoliberalism's subjective logic. His essay prompts us to consider the fact that what we are dealing with is not limited to the institutional failure of the state bureaucracy; neither is it just a question of resolving economic backwardness. Instead, what his essay and all the others

essays propose is the need for comprehensive social transformation - the kind of transformation that the subject of Guda's essay intimate.

This final set of essays provides the educator with an idea of the limitations and possibilities of alternative models of education. The struggle against neoliberal education for a transformative kind of education can only be won by a critical and vigilant education sector.

Activity 5 – Biography/Essay-Writing
For the final student activity, students may be asked to write their own short biographies, taking into consideration their current location in the social order as students in a neoliberal regime. C.Wright Mill's The Sociological Imagination *is a useful resource. In writing their essay-biographies, the students will essentially answer the question: how is my life related to my society's history and current condition; and what can be done to change the situation? The essay will then be exchanged with their assigned partner who will be asked to react in the form of a letter. In effect, apart from their essay-biographies, students will also exchange letters to each other containing their reaction to and critique of each other's work. Some guide questions follow:*

1. *As students, how do you relate your biography to the kind of society you are part of?*
2. *What are the limitations in some of the current efforts to reform the education sector?*
3. *What are some of the advocacies that the education sector can assume to combat the neoliberal agenda?*
4. *What kind of societal change is necessary to effect a nationalist, scientific, and mass-oriented education?*

Suggested essays for part 5:
"The Struggle for Cultural and Ethnic Justice in the Age of Neoliberal Capitalism: The Case of Indigenous Education of Aetas of Botolan, Zambales," Gerry Lanuza
"Ang Neoliberal na Edukasyon sa Media," Maricristh Magaling at Soliman A. Santos
"The Symptom Called Marketization," Sarah Jane Raymundo
"On Teaching Literature," Nonilon Queano
"Neoliberalistang Pagpaplanong Pangwika: Tungo sa Komodipikado at Episyenteng Pagpapahayag," Melania Lagahit Abad

"Kulturang Popular at Pakiwaring Gitnang Uri," Rolando B. Tolentino
" 'A para sa Armalayt': Ilang Tala Hinggil sa Rebolusyonaryong Edukasyon mula sa Panandaliang Bisita sa isang Sonang Gerilya sa Bikol," Kenneth Roland A. Guda