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## **Ilocano Responses to American Aggression, by Scott**

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## **Book Reviews**

**ILOCANO RESPONSES TO AMERICAN AGGRESSION, 1900-1901.**  
By William Henry Scott. Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1986. xiv,  
253 pp.

William Henry Scott is well-known to the readers of this journal both for his important articles which have appeared here, and for the several major books in Philippine history he has published over the past two decades. Scott has established himself as an expert on the pre-Hispanic history of the Philippines, on Filipino society at the time of the Spanish contact, and on the history of the Cordillera peoples. In recent times he has published a number of articles on aspects of the nationalist movement in Ilocos, particularly on Isabelo de los Reyes and Gregorio Aglipay, and on the events of the Revolution of 1896 in Ilocos. He now gives us, in the volume under review, a history of the Filipino-American war in Ilocos, written neither from the point of view of the aggressors, nor, at least directly, from that of the national leadership of the First Philippine Republic, but from the viewpoint of the people of Ilocos.

This is not to say that the book is merely a local history of the war, of interest only to Ilocanos. Quite the contrary; though Scott does not attempt to any great extent to relate events in Ilocos to those in other parts of the country, nor does he engage in the discussions which have taken place over the past three decades on the interpretation of the Revolution as a whole, he has in fact done something much more valuable. In describing the "Ilocano responses to invasion and aggression" during these two years, he has given us our first published case study of the actuality of the Revolution in one region of the country. Scott also explicitly disclaims any intention to write a military history of the period, and has rather organized his book thematically — the enemy, the defenders, the supporters, the "enemy within", the Katipunan, the occupation, the rhetoric, the surrender. In a concluding chapter, "the chronology," he gives a detailed recording of the significant events, by which the reader can tie together diachronically the story which has been told thematically in the preceding chapters.

Scott's book may be appreciated on several levels. For those interested in the history of the Ilocos provinces, it is a vivid and careful history of life in Ilocos during the war. For those who wish to study a classic anti-imperialist guerrilla war waged over the eighteen months from the American invasion in November 1899 to the surrender of all major Filipino leaders in May 1901, the thematic organization of the book will provide an enlightening case study. For all those who enjoy a history well written, solidly based in extensive documentary sources, sympathetically but dispassionately told by a historian who has an eye for the significant detail, and who sees the human persons hidden in documentary phraseology, this is a good story. Scott has dug deeply into two major sources — the Philippine Revolutionary Records in the National Library for the documents of the Philippine Republic, and Record Group 395 in the U. S. National Archives for the even fuller reports from every American military post. But he has also looked at private letters and reminiscences of American soldiers, sometimes in scarcely literate English, as well as Ilocano documents of various kinds, written in a rhetoric very different from that of the official documents. Scott's flair for finding the apt quotation to sum up a situation better than pages of commentary is what makes his book a good story as well as accurate history. Such, for example, is the quotation which sums up the dogged determination of the Filipino forces to defend their motherland in the face of overwhelming odds, taken from the chatty old-age reminiscences of a former American private conversing with his army buddy:

I says, 'Thought you told me we could whip the whole thing in two weeks.' He says, 'Haven't we licked them every time that we had a fight?' I says, 'Yes, but the damned fools won't stay whipped.'

It was only when General J. Franklin Bell, in an early anticipation of the reconcentration policy which was to make him notorious in Batangas later, began the systematic evacuation of the barrios into the towns, thus depriving the guerrillas of both food and other supplies, that the end came. Within a few weeks' time all the major Filipino guerrilla leaders in Ilocos surrendered — Tinio, the Villamor brothers, Aglipay, Joaquin Alejandrino, and others of lesser category.

Scott's is the first modern in-depth study of the Filipino-American war in a circumscribed region. Though the alert historian will find here indications of Scott's ideas on the relation of the events he narrates to such broader generalizations of Revolutionary historiography as those of Agoncillo, Constantino, Iletto, Guerrero, and this reviewer, he limits his conclusions to the Ilocos war which he has taken as his subject. Some earlier generalizations are verified in Ilocos, others quite clearly not.

I find verification here in Ilocos for my general assertion in my *Revolutionary Clergy* of the major role played by the Filipino clergy in keeping the resistance alive. At the same time Scott's picture shows that I had under-

estimated how important that role was for Ilocos. He likewise makes much clearer the crucial importance of Fr. Gregorio Aglipay in preserving union amid the severe frictions between Ilocanos and Tagalogs, especially after the murder of Antonio Luna.

However, I think that Jose Ma. Sison, who wrote the foreword to the book from his imprisonment in Fort Bonifacio in 1985, quite misreads Scott in saying that he has shown "that the assassination of Antonio Luna was not explicitly a divisive factor among the revolutionary forces in the Ilocos (p. vi)." In fact, Scott does show that the Ilocano resistance to the Americans was loyal to the Philippine Republic, and by no means simply the work of Tagalog imposition by Tinio. He also shows, as Sison rightly claims, that the resentment over Luna's murder and other causes of friction between Tagalogs and Ilocanos did not become "an effective divisive factor." But it seems quite clear from Scott's narrative that the reason the divisive factors did not become "effective" was precisely the strenuous and charismatic efforts of Aglipay, whose fierce primary loyalty to the national government of Aguinaldo weighed so heavily and persuasively with his fellow-Ilocanos — priests, laymen, military, civilians.

On another controverted point of Revolutionary historiography, it is clear that at least in Ilocos, socioeconomic class was not a dividing line between resistance and acquiescence to the American invaders. Sycophancy and nationalism, betrayal and heroism, were found in all classes, and at times families were split on the position to be taken. But Scott finds that though in the beginning there was anti-Tagalog sentiment among some, the generality of the Ilocano population of all classes under *ilustrado* leadership supported the resistance to the inevitable end.

The sixth chapter, entitled "The Katipunan," deserves some special attention. In fact it deals not only with the revived Katipunan of 1900, but also with the Guardia de Honor and the organization known in Tagalog as the Catipunan nang Sagrada Familia. These latter two were mass religious organizations originally founded under church auspices for pious purposes, which later fought both the Malolos government and the Americans indiscriminately, or, in the case of a splinter-group headed by Crispulo Patajo, even on the side of the Americans and against the Filipino army of Tinio. Though the chapter contains much new information, the precise nature of these various organizations with their often contradictory attitudes, remains unclear, as does the real extent of the revived Katipunan and the relations of all these groups to the main body of the organized Filipino resistance. It seems to me that the facts presented by Scott are not fully explained by any of the divergent explanations of such movements given in the previous writings of Sturtevant, Iletto, or of this reviewer. It is here that one wishes Scott had entered into the discussion of the more general problems of the Revolution, as he is certainly in a better position to interpret the Ilocano resistance in a broader perspective than is anyone else.

However, perhaps that would be to ask for a different book than Scott intended to write. As it is, we have here a work of careful scholarship, which has made a major contribution to the historiography of the Revolution. It makes clear that all generalizations made till now by historians of the period still need verification from similar regional studies based on the documentation here and in the United States. Though historians have made use of Record Group 395 in the U. S. National Archives before, as well as of the Philippine Revolutionary Records in the National Library here, no one has so effectively combined the two major sets of records before on such a large scale.

This important book is accompanied by useful maps of the Ilocos provinces and of Vigan itself. An appendix contains the originals of some of the more important Ilocano documents used in the text.

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DALUYONG. By Lazaro Francisco. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1986. 340 pages.

*Daluyong* was the last novel of Lazaro Francisco, and was serialized in the popular magazine *Liwayway* in 1962. A few weeks before its publication, the following quotation appeared in *Liwayway* to announce the novel's imminent publication:

Sa dagat magsisibangon  
Matataas na daluyong —  
Kagitla-gitlang ugong  
Ang lupa'y malilinggatong  
Halos tabunan ng alon.

These lines taken from the *pasyon*, image nature's fury as it threatens to annihilate the world.

It is unfortunate that this quotation did not appear in the reprint of the novel that the Ateneo de Manila University Press published last year, for these images of violence and death provided the counterpoint to the images of grace and reconciliation which shaped the *pasyon*, a religious text that has been inscribed in the people's consciousness. In the context of Francisco's long and distinguished career as a committed writer, this allusion to the apocalypse could have helped explain the novelist's increasingly pessimistic view on the possibilities of change in an unjust system.