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## **The History of Acquisition: Foundation for Misunderstanding**

John L. Robinson

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learned in group experiences and they are a basic part of the structure of the individual personality. The most important aspects of learning are not verbal. It is learning by doing, or better perhaps, learning by living the attitudes learned in terms of common activities. This learning is often reinforced by verbal communication as well, but mere verbal communication without this deeper stratum of learning by living will be of little practical effect.

It is therefore important to know how to analyze the situation we would like to influence in terms of its strategic elements and this is where the social sciences can be of help to the communications experts. Possibly, we priests tend to overestimate the importance of verbal communication. Our own education has been highly verbal and this tends to make us over-intellectualize and see things too much in terms of abstract categories. This can lead us to failure to comprehend the real attitudes of people and to overestimate the manifest content of verbal communication.<sup>1</sup>

Too often programs introduced with what seem to be good verbal reasons may work in concrete situations to elicit quite unintended responses unless there is a real understanding of the variables involved in the concrete situations.

Perhaps I have said enough already to indicate what I feel are the challenges facing all of us who are interested in communications in this area of the world. Basically, it is going beyond the surface level in which we tend to reinforce old attitudes. To go deeper, however, those engaged in the field of communications and the social scientists must work hand in hand in figuring out ways of building successful learning situations into the programs of the various media.

JOHN F. DOHERTY

## *The History of Acquisition: Foundation for Misunderstanding*

In democratic nations the attitudes of the masses weigh heavily in the councils of statesmen. Many of these attitudes have their origin in the classrooms of public and private educational institutions, from grammar to graduate school. These attitudes and opinions can eventually sway the course of a nation. It is imperative to find the source of these attitudes if one is to fathom the reasons behind current and future American policy concerning the Philippines, or for

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas O'Dea, "Changing Attitudes Toward Economic Cooperation," (New York: Fordham University, Mission Institute, 1959), p. 15 (Mimeographed).

that matter, any other nation. One of the chief sources can be found in the various histories of the American acquisition of the Philippines. These books have greatly influenced Americans for many years. A study of the volumes generally available, now and in the past, to the American scholastic community can provide an insight into the thinking behind American diplomatic postures.

Individuals are seldom inclined to loquacity in connection with particularly unpleasant episodes in their lives. The same principle seems to apply to American historians dealing with the acquisition of the Philippine Islands. In contrast to the Civil War, for instance, about which uncounted volumes have been published, this imperialistic venture has had few chroniclers. Like the Civil War, this was a tragic incident, but unlike that national trauma, it was not heroic. Thus it has received scant attention in the historical literature of the United States. No Catton has come forward to recreate the savage struggle; no Freeman has painted magnificent portraits of its protagonists. The telling of the tale has been confined chiefly to short entries in histories encompassing larger areas. Often the authors of these volumes have made no careful research of the period but have relied on secondary sources for their information, sources often written by American officials too deeply involved in the occurrences to present an unbiased and objective account.

Unfortunately, most of the accounts contain no analysis of the suppression of the so-called insurrection. The impression is given that a benign Providence gently dislodged the Philippine apple and the United States, Newton-like, deduced the law of beneficial colonialism. Few historians indicate that quite a bit of tree-shaking was involved.

This paper is an effort to delineate the varied tacks assumed by the historians of the era. The spectrum is wide, ranging from those who accuse public officials of crass, premeditated, imperialistic domination to those who believe that the Kiplingesque burden was shouldered quite unwillingly and unwittingly by an innocent and charitable nation. It is hoped that a careful statement of the several viewpoints may help in establishing an objective and accurate evaluation of a somewhat confused era.

One group of historians feels, in general, that the United States was justified in its seizure of the Philippine Islands. Of course some in this segment are not as generous as others in praising the American action. The most adamant spokesman for this apologist group is Dean C. Worcester, a high government official in the Philippines from 1901 to 1913. He finds no pre-war intent of seizure on the part of the United States; the Americans were simply meeting moral obligations by moving into the Philippines. Therefore, Worcester states,

the Filipinos treacherously initiated the Filipino-American war.<sup>1</sup> This came as a complete surprise to the United States military forces in Manila, for the Americans, Worcester insists, had given the Filipinos absolutely no indication of approval of Philippine independence and did not even realize the Filipinos wanted independence until the Filipino-American War began.<sup>2</sup> Of course the Americans destroyed no republic, but merely a military oligarchy; moreover, the Filipino government did not rule well and had not the support of the mass of people.<sup>3</sup> In the prosecution of the war the Americans committed few atrocities, in contrast to the Filipinos who were indeed cruel and resorted to many barbaric measures.<sup>4</sup> Throughout his lengthy volume Worcester displays scant admiration for independent Filipinos, and a patronizing attitude is frequently discernible. Nevertheless, his book shows extensive research; it is packed with extended quotations, though all in support of his views.

Another official who attempted to justify the colonial policy of the United States, although his writings are considerably less vehement than those of Worcester, is Charles Burke Elliott, a former member of the Philippine Commission. Elliott vindicates the seizure on the grounds that the Philippines was Spanish territory legally ceded to the United States by the Treaty of Paris. Hence the United States rightfully suppressed Filipino resistance as a legal and necessary measure; there was "no other reasonable choice."<sup>5</sup> Obviously, altruistic motives prevailed over commercialism; it was the clear duty of the United States to seize the Philippines.<sup>6</sup> Elliott agrees with Worcester that no promises of freedom were given to the islanders.<sup>7</sup>

In general agreement with these views is George A. Malcolm, for many years a member of the Philippine Supreme Court and author of *The Commonwealth of the Philippines*. After completely ignoring the fact that the Filipino armies had almost completely banished the Spanish from the archipelago, a situation conveniently disregarded by the apologist faction, Malcolm dismisses the bloody "insurrection" in three sentences.<sup>8</sup> Passing on to more pleasant sub-

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<sup>1</sup> Dean C. Worcester, *The Philippines, Past and Present* (New York, 1914), 147.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 281.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Burke Elliott, *The Philippines to the End of the Military Regime* (Indianapolis, 1917), 459.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 376.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 420.

<sup>8</sup> George A. Malcolm, *The Commonwealth of the Philippines* (New York, 1939), 65.

jects, he states that the imperialistic policy was rejected by McKinley in a "characteristically tolerant spirit."<sup>9</sup>

This posture is also assumed by G. Nye Steiger in his *History of the Far East*. Though he admits that commercialism was the chief motive for seizure, he quickly passes on to a recital of American reforms, leaving the more unpleasant genesis of the regime to others.<sup>10</sup>

Three diplomatic historians agree in essence with the Worcester school. Carl Russell Fish, writing in the *American Historical Series*, suggests that the international situation demanded American seizure as the only alternative to chaos.<sup>11</sup> John Bassett Moore, author of *The Principles of American Diplomacy*, agrees basically with Fish, and seems unaware of the intricacies of the entire situation. John W. Foster does not even consider the legality of the seizure or Filipino claims and rights in *American Diplomacy in the Orient*, and like his two colleagues makes no mention of the Filipino-American War.

John H. Latané adds the weight of his scholarship to the apologist cause, stating that the Filipinos did not want national independence.<sup>12</sup> He exonerates the United States of imperialistic forethought by saying McKinley did not decide to keep the islands until after the negotiations at Paris were in full swing.<sup>13</sup> Yet a few pages later Latané implies that McKinley made his decision before the peace talks began.<sup>14</sup> This type of inconsistency is not entirely unknown among historians of America's imperialistic era.

Still another colonial official, David P. Barrows, who was high in the ranks of educators in the halcyon days of American rule, wrote an inoffensive history of the Islands chiefly for Filipino consumption. He avoids unpleasantness on both sides and treads middle ground for the most part, but his sympathies are with the apologist school.<sup>15</sup>

In contrast to these apologists is a group of historians who, while admitting less than altruistic American motives, fail to recognize Filipino rights. Perhaps the most scholarly and informative publication of this camp is *The Philippines and the United States* by Garek A. Grunder and W. E. Livezey. These two authors provide an

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>10</sup> G. Nye Steiger, *History of the Far East* (New York, 1936), 666-667.

<sup>11</sup> Carl Russell Fish, *American Diplomacy in American Historical Series* (New York, 1907), 419-420.

<sup>12</sup> John H. Latané, *America as a World Power in American Nation Series* (New York, 1907), 88.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>15</sup> David P. Barrows, *History of the Philippines* (New York, 1905).

admirable reconstruction of the cataclysmic events of the era. Clearly distinguishing the various commercial, religious and diplomatic forces at work, they conclude that a combination of nationalism and imperialism motivated the seizure, a sort of manifest destiny which "declared for dollars and deferred to duty."<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, they fail to mention the accomplishment of the Filipino armies before the coming of American troops. Their extensive discussion of the pacification of the islands is one-sided, many significant items unfavorable to the United States being omitted. These are perhaps the only two flaws in an otherwise excellent book.

A. Whitney Griswold has contributed an outstanding volume on American diplomacy in which the Philippine seizure is examined. Griswold lays the blame for involvement squarely on the shoulders of the jingoistic quartet of Roosevelt, Lodge, Mahan and Beveridge.<sup>17</sup> McKinley succumbed to their preachment, reenforced by commercialism, the international situation, moral considerations and the grandiose visions of the American public.<sup>18</sup> But Griswold gives no space to Filipino rights or the darker aspects of the Filipino-American War, certainly a crucial omission.

Similar views are expressed by Nathaniel Pfeffer in his *The Far East*. According to Pfeffer, the highly articulate quartet identified by Griswold demanded an empire and initiated the seizure which, involving as it did "accident, caprice, frivolity, irresponsibility, diplomatic adolescence, and some sharp practice," reflected "no credit upon American."<sup>19</sup> Yet this is almost the extent of Pfeffer's mention of the seizure; he declines, as does Griswold, to discuss the Filipino-American War or the legal claims and accomplishments of the pre-American Philippine government.

Filipino hostility to United States overlordship is ignored by Julius W. Pratt. He makes only the barest mention of the Filipino-American War and the islanders' rights. He too lays blame at the imperialistic doorstep of Roosevelt and his cohorts.<sup>20</sup> In general, however, Pratt's book is an outstanding contribution to the field of American colonial history.

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<sup>16</sup> Garel A. Grunder and W. E. Livezy, *The Philippines and the United States* (Norman, 1951), 50.

<sup>17</sup> A. Whitney Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York, 1938), 11.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-17.

<sup>19</sup> Nathaniel Pfeffer, *The Far East* (Ann Arbor, 1958), 180-181.

<sup>20</sup> Julius W. Pratt, *America's Colonial Experiment* (New York, 1950), 59.

Finally, we may include in this group former Governor F. B. Harrison who attributes the seizure to the international situation.<sup>21</sup> He alone of the group recognized the effective existence of the Malolos government of the Philippine Republic.<sup>22</sup>

In any study of Philippine-American relations the curious odyssey of Foster Rhea Dulles, eminent contemporary historian, must be noted. In 1932 Dulles, in *America in the Pacific*, described the Philippine episode as "one of the sorriest chapters in American history."<sup>23</sup> United States officials with commercial and imperial motives paramount led the Filipinos into believing that the American government would recognize the national independence of the Philippines.<sup>24</sup> But in 1954, in the *American Nation Series*, Dulles quickly passes over the seizure and its implications.<sup>25</sup> The whole tenor of this book indicates a departure from his earlier work. In *The Imperial Years*, written in 1956, Dulles completes his about-face. He blames the Filipinos for revolting against legitimate American rule.<sup>26</sup> In this latest volume he seems reluctant to criticize United States policy and eager to fasten guilt on the Filipinos. Dulles' sources for all three books are substantially the same, so that it is difficult to ascertain the reasons for his change of mind.

The historians who sharply censure the United States for the Philippine seizure are certainly not lacking in academic stature. Such men as Thomas A. Bailey, Samuel Flagg Bemis, Walter Millis, Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager have written disparagingly of the oriental expansion of the United States. Bailey in his *Man in the Street* makes the cutting observation that "as the rich and undeveloped resources of the archipelago become more apparent, the capacity of the Filipinos for self-government became less apparent."<sup>27</sup> He claims, further, that a simple promise of independence at some future time would have prevented the bloody Filipino-American War.<sup>28</sup>

Substantially the same views are shared by Bemis who holds McKinley responsible for the whole affair. "After his victory at

<sup>21</sup> F. B. Harrison, *The Corner-Stone of Philippine Independence* (New York, 1922), 31.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>23</sup> Foster Rhea Dulles, *America in the Pacific* (New York, 1932), 256.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 222, 211.

<sup>25</sup> Dulles, *America's Rise to World Power, New American Nation Series* (New York, 1954).

<sup>26</sup> Dulles, *The Imperial Years* (New York, 1956), 175.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas A. Bailey, *The Man in the Street* (New York, 1948), 195.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.

Manila Bay," says Bemis, "Dewey could have sailed right along home, and it is a pity he didn't."<sup>29</sup> After bowing to imperialism and commercialism the Americans used "shameful and unnecessary" brutality in pacifying the Islands.<sup>30</sup> Morison and Commager also are critical of the imperialistic venture in which the United States did in the Philippines exactly what it had condemned Spain for doing in Cuba.<sup>31</sup>

A more extensive exposition is given by Grayson L. Kirk of the University of Wisconsin, who points out that America had no legal right to the Philippine Islands according to recognized international law at the turn of the century.<sup>32</sup> Even before the illegal seizure McKinley had his eye on the Philippines; a letter from Henry Cabot Lodge is cited as evidence of this.<sup>33</sup> In this excellently written book Kirk blames the United States for the Filipino-American War and condemns the harsh, barbarous methods used in breaking Filipino resistance. Such an imperialistically motivated scheme could scarcely reflect credit on the United States, according to Kirk.

Even more searching than Kirk's is Moorfield Storey's volume on the expansionist years. This former president of the American Bar Association and one-time judge in the Philippines collaborated with M.P. Lichauco, now Philippine ambassador to Britain, in writing an excoriating condemnation of the Philippine seizure. Storey points out that a small group of imperialists began planning the annexation of the islands in 1897.<sup>34</sup> When the Spanish-American War broke out the United States officials in the Far East promised independence to the Filipino rebels against Spain.<sup>35</sup> The mass of Filipinos were loyal to the rebel government convened at Malolos; thus the Americans found it necessary to slaughter great numbers in order to break the government's influence and control.<sup>36</sup> He quotes a U.S. Congressman on the situation in Northern Luzon: "They never rebel in northern Luzon because there isn't anyone there to rebel."<sup>37</sup> Storey's

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<sup>29</sup> Samuel Flagg Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York, 1955), 467.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 468.

<sup>31</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic*, 2 vols. (New York, 1956), II, 338.

<sup>32</sup> Grayson L. Kirk, *Philippine Independence* (New York, 1936), 18.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>34</sup> Moorfield Storey and M. P. Lichauco, *The Conquest of the Philippines by the United States* (New York, 1926), 36.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter 8.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.



book is indeed depressing, and a similar feeling is experienced after reading Maximo M. Kalaw's *The Case for the Filipinos*. This publication by a Filipino lawyer substantially in agreement with Storey's, is well documented and presented somewhat in the style of a legal brief.<sup>38</sup>

One of the most interesting books in the entire historiography of the period was written in 1957 by a man intimately concerned with the incidents under discussion, Emilio Aguinaldo. Admittedly his views may be partial; but they are fairly free from bitterness and vituperation. Occasional strained attempts at personal justification can be recognized and perhaps forgiven. Aguinaldo, recognized leader of the rebels against Spain, agreed to cooperate with Dewey and other American officials only after they had assured him the United States had no designs on the Philippines.<sup>39</sup> At first the Americans did not want the Islands, but as commercial and imperial advantages began to be evidenced the Yankee grasp began to tighten, and Aguinaldo points out the successive steps to annexation.<sup>40</sup> Aguinaldo indicates, as did many of the most vocal imperialists, that the Philippines might have been partitioned by Germany and Japan had not the United States seized all the Islands in the "accident of history."<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, he does not feel this was ample justification for annexation. He recognized the futility of resistance to the imperial flood tide while he led the Filipino forces, but he felt the Filipinos could do no less than fight their defensive battle of honor.<sup>42</sup> Aguinaldo's book is certainly vital in supplying a more comprehensive view of the era, and considering his former position and his long friendship with the United States since the Filipino-American War, the volume is unique in American history.

The most complete and authoritative book dealing with the seizure has recently been written by Leon Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*. Wolff's exhaustive research techniques and literary talents have been brilliantly combined to produce a work unexcelled in the historiography of the period. Wolff, while delineating the imperialistic pressures and desires which prompted the seizure, skillfully tells the story in its chronological setting, judging the United States by the criterion of the late 19th century. Throughout the book it is evident that Wolff, though not condoning, looks at the events with a perspective more in line with the actual time situation of the seizure. He emphasizes that 1900 model glasses must be used in view-

<sup>38</sup> Maximo M. Kalaw, *The Case for the Filipinos* (New York, 1916).

<sup>39</sup> Emilio Aguinaldo and V. A. Pacis, *A Second Look at America* (New York, 1957), 51.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 58-60.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

ing the scene.<sup>43</sup> In general, Wolff agrees with the conclusions reached by Storey, Bemis and the others of the latter group, but the value of his book lies in its completeness and its studies and sane observations of the highly emotional events. Having been written for popular consumption, it is not footnoted in the academic style; nevertheless, his quotations are accurate and used in correct context. The bibliography is inclusive; particularly valuable sources are indicated. Again, Wolff's is probably the outstanding effort in the field.

In light of the diametrically opposed views traced in this paper, it is evident that the burden of judgment must rest with the individual student. However, a few critical suggestions are in order. The reader must direct a somewhat captious eye toward those authors too closely connected with the events described; an American official vitally enmeshed in the colonial system could hardly be expected to be free from all prejudice. Nonetheless, we must not summarily dismiss their efforts. Additionally, when reading those volumes whose authors are more distantly removed from the events, one must investigate carefully the sources used. Often an author when researching a proportionally small element of his subject, such as the Philippine seizure in an over-all diplomatic history, will use secondary sources of somewhat dubious value. Then there is to be remembered the "forest and the trees" concept; the Philippine Islands were not unaffected by world events. What the United States did in the islands vitally influenced international power balances, a fact often difficult for anti-imperialists to appreciate.

It is hoped that future histories encompassing the era will give a better balanced treatment of the situation. American historians confronted with Marxist aberrations should not succumb to the same temptations on the opposite end of the scale. Morison's "What happened and why"? admonition might well be observed by all historians of America's imperial years.

JOHN L. ROBINSON

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<sup>43</sup> Leon Wolff, *Little Brown Brother* (New York, 1961), 305.

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