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„The issue of collective trauma and its lasting legacy: Manila and the Philippines in World War II“

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Abstract EN

This thesis applies the theory of collective trauma to examine the experience of the Philippines in World War II. Collective trauma is defined by ideas taken from international theory as well as social and cultural psychology. In order to illustrate collective trauma, Manila serves as a specific case study. A key element in demonstrating the traumatic impact is the use of primary sources in the form of diaries. The investigation of the events from December 1941 until March 1945 is divided into the three stages of World War II in the Philippines. Each subchapter in the main part analyses the perspective of the three complex actors: The Philippines, the United States and Imperial Japan.

The first stage uncovers the shock of the invasion in the capital and the beginning of the Japanese occupation. The involvement of the United States and the view of the perpetrator of collective trauma, the Japanese Empire, are discussed as well. In the second stage, the continued experience of mass violence for Manila and the Filipinos is described. This includes the complex situation in Philippine society with collaboration on the one side and active or passive resistance against the Japanese occupation on the other side. Once again, the activities of the United States and Japan are analyzed. The third chapter focuses on the last months of the Philippines under Japanese occupation with its various atrocities such as the Battle of Manila and mass starvation. The role of the United States and Japan are taken into account.

In the conclusion, the implications of the collective trauma and its influences on the present-day Philippines are highlighted. The national Philippine identity, civil society, domestic and to some degree even international politics show evidence of an ambiguous legacy for the country. Further research can shed more light on this legacy. The thesis brings awareness to the fate of an Asian city in World War II next to the better known European cases.

Abstract DE

In dieser Arbeit wird die Theorie des kollektiven Traumas angewandt, um die Erfahrungen der Philippinen im Zweiten Weltkrieg zu untersuchen. Kollektives Trauma wird dabei durch Ideen aus der internationalen Theorie sowie der Sozial- und Kulturpsychologie definiert. Manila dient als spezifische Fallstudie um das kollektive Trauma zu veranschaulichen. Ein Schlüsselelement zur Veranschaulichung der traumatischen Auswirkungen ist die Verwendung von Primärquellen in Form von Tagebüchern. Die Untersuchung der Ereignisse von Dezember 1941 bis März 1945 ist in die drei Phasen des Zweiten Weltkriegs auf den Philippinen unterteilt. Jedes der drei Unterkapitel im Hauptteil analysiert die Perspektive der komplexen Akteure: Die Philippinen, die Vereinigten Staaten und das kaiserliche Japan.

In der ersten Phase werden der Schock über die Invasion in der Hauptstadt und der Beginn der japanischen Besatzung beleuchtet. Auch die Beteiligung der Vereinigten Staaten und die Sichtweise des Verursachers des kollektiven Traumas, des japanischen Kaiserreichs, werden erörtert. In der zweiten Phase wird die anhaltende Erfahrung der Massengewalt für Manila und die Filipinos beschrieben. Dazu gehört die komplexe Situation in der philippinischen Gesellschaft mit Kollaboration auf der einen Seite und aktivem oder passivem Widerstand gegen die japanische Besatzung auf der anderen Seite. Erneut werden die Aktivitäten der Vereinigten Staaten und Japans analysiert. Das dritte Kapitel konzentriert sich auf die letzten Monate der Philippinen unter japanischer Besatzung. Massenhafte Hungersnöte und Gräueltaten wie die Schlacht von Manila 1945 bilden den Abschluss der Fallstudie. Auch Rolle der Vereinigten Staaten und Japans wird dabei berücksichtigt.

In der Schlussfolgerung werden die Folgen des kollektiven Traumas und seine Auswirkungen auf die heutigen Philippinen dargestellt. Die nationale Identität, die Zivilgesellschaft, Innen- als auch Außenpolitik zeugen zu einem gewissen Grad von einem widersprüchlichen Erbe für die Philippinen. Die Arbeit macht auf das Schicksal einer asiatischen Stadt im Zweiten Weltkrieg im Gegensatz zu den bekannteren Fällen Europas aufmerksam.

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I. Setting the stage: An Introduction to collective trauma

- A three dimensional approach to the collective trauma in the Philippines

Fifty-four Japanese sky monsters, flashing silver in the bright noonday, were flying in two magnificently formed Vs. Above the scream of sirens the church bells solemnly announced the noon hour. Unprotected and unprepared, Manila lay under the enemy planes [...][1]

These words are taken from a book by Carlos Romulo, a major of the Philippine army and famous politician who would later became president of the UN General Assembly. It describes one of the many Japanese bombardments Manila suffered during World War II.
The following thesis is an investigation into this dramatic period: The Philippines during December 1941 till February 1945. The aim is to shed some light on the collective trauma and its lingering effects on the country. A constant reference point is Manila, the political center and cultural hub of the county: With the concrete perception of this major Asian city as a main stage of war and occupation, the broader influences on the Philippines are to be illustrated. How has the traumatic experience influenced the Philippines?

To begin with, it is important to connect the already existing research of collective trauma and establish a framework for this thesis. In the case of the Philippines, its experience in World War II has already been characterized as a trauma[2] with episodes of the war vividly present in the country´s collective memory. To this very day, many issues still lead to controversy and strong emotions such as the fate of

[1] Carlos P. Romulo, *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company Inc., 1943), http://archive.org/details/isawfallofphilip0000romu. 30.
[2] David Joel Steinberg, *The Philippines: A Singular and a Plural Place*, 3. ed., Nations of the Modern World: Asia (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994).

Manila and other atrocities committed during the Japanese occupation.[3] If one walks through the center of the capital and visits its museums, the tragic years of 1941 to 1945 are visible through monuments, memorial plaques and paintings.

For the definition of collective trauma as such, three scholars, who have worked on collective trauma, are going to be employed. This interdisciplinary approach is going to unite social and cultural psychology as well as international relations. Gilad Hirschberger, a renowned social psychologist and professor at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel, provides a clear definition of this core concept.

He describes collective trauma "*as a cataclysmic event that shatters the basic fabric of society. Aside from the horrific loss of life, collective trauma is also a crisis of meaning*."[4] From this perspective, national crises surpass merely historical facts: They become ground zero for both victims and perpetrators to engage in a "*dynamic social psychological process that is primarily dedicated to the construction of meaning*."[5] Even though the nightmarish events experienced directly by individuals have faded away, following generations are still confronted with the loss and have to find meaning in and from the past. This "*cataclysmic event*" shattering the very fabric of society surely defines the events of December 1941 in Manila and the Philippines. As the main part aims to illustrate, the entire occupation and its catastrophic end would leave behind a country confronted with loss of life but also meaning.

Hirschberger takes examples ranging from the Holocaust to Korea´s brutal experiences under Japanese rule to illustrate this process of finding meaning again after it is lost. He concludes that "*collective trauma* [can be seen] *as a genuine experience with real consequences for subsequent generations*."[6]

Another dimension of collective trauma can be taken from the book *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* by Jeffrey C. Alexander and Neil J. Smelser. While the general definition of trauma offered by Alexander and Smelser is similar to the one discussed by Hirschberger, cultural trauma "*refers to an invasive and overwhelming*

[3] Ricardo T. Jose, "War and Violence, History and Memory: The Philippine Experience of the Second World War," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 29, no. 3 (2001): 457–70, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23653960. 458.
[4] Gilad Hirschberger, "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning," *Frontiers in Psychology* 9 (2018), https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01441. 1.
[5] Hirschberger. 2.
[6] Hirschberger. 11.

event that is believed to undermine or overwhelm one or several essential ingredients of a culture or the culture as a whole."[7]

Examples are the Great Depression with its tremendous social changes or the Protestant Reformation and its fundamental challenge against Catholic culture.[8] In this case of the Philippine experience under Japanese occupation, there is also a dimension of cultural trauma: the complete censorship in press or media and the absence of freedom of expression are the most obvious factors. The education system under the Japanese control and the widespread propaganda of Pan-Asianism also attacked more fundamental beliefs of Philippine society. A deeper sociocultural layer, which was targeted by the Japanese was the religious sentiment of the Filipinos in form of the Catholic Church. The ideas of democracy introduced through the United States were also challenged by the dictatorial one party system established by the Japanese puppet government. In the material sense, the cultural trauma comes especially true, when thinking of the utterly destroyed capital: Manila was destroyed beyond recognition and unfortunately its historical substance never rebuilt. The museums and its content burned down during the Battle of Manila were beyond the reach of recovery.

Finally, the field of international relations is essential for the interdisciplinary framing of this research. Here, collective trauma has been a subject of debate with a compelling perspective coming from Adam B. Lerner.

Published in 2022, Lerner wrote the intriguing book "*From the ashes of History: Collective Trauma and the Making of International Politics*", which has morphed out of his dissertation. In his book, Lerner makes the case for the critical importance of collective trauma in international relations theory.

He stresses out that "*the echo of mass violence that permeates word politics* [is] *collective trauma* [which] *can shape the enduring understandings of self and other that delineate the international arena's primary actors"* and not merely the psychological effects on individuals.[9]

To prove his claim, Lerner illustrates the history of trauma, the Greek word for "wound": From its early forms of "shell shock" for veterans of World War I till the

[7] Jeffrey C. Alexander et al., *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (CA: University of California Press, 2004), https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=306051&site=ehost-live. 38.
[8] ibid.
[9] Adam B. Lerner, *From the Ashes of History: Collective Trauma and the Making of International Politics*, 1st ed. (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2022). 11.

creation and diagnosis of what now is known as posttraumatic stress-disorder, the trauma studies have surpassed the realm of psychology and entered into international theory.

In order to address criticism and the shortcoming of his theory, Lerner admits an inherent paradox of collective trauma: What he calls the "*multilevel crisis of representation*" can be understood as the fluid gap between the effects of mass violence on individuals and the rippling effect it has on collectives such as the state.[10] From this gap, tensions arise in different forms such as between the genuine traumatic experience and its representation by political elites. The question remains: How can a psychological phenomenon become a defining factor in international politics?

This bridge to the international sphere comes through Lerner´s emphasis on the connection between collective trauma and identity. To establish this connection, identity must be seen as a vitally constituting force of actors in the international system. Building on this premise, Lerner develops a "*narrative identity approach*" that shifts the identity discourses of nation-states into focus. A main source of these identity discourses comes from the experience of collective trauma:

> To the extent that international politics organizes mass violence between groups, it serves as a forum that produces collective trauma. In turn, as this trauma is narrated and collectivized, it shapes key identities, especially those relating to the nation and the state.[11]

This idea resembles Hirschberger´s loss and subsequently dynamic process of finding of meaning in the aftermath of collective trauma. In the following subchapter on the lasting effects of World War II on the Philippines, this discussion on narrative identity is going to be resumed.

Lerner also offers a practical approach, when it comes to the reading of primary sources: When working with sources of collective trauma, the two extremes are to engage in a moral relativism or to fall into ideologically motivated and short sighted closure of the research subject. Only in "*the process of bearing witness*" and the acceptance that (collective) trauma often hides behind figurative language enable scholars to avoid falling into one of the extremes.[12]

[10] Lerner. 46-51.
[11] Lerner. 91.
[12] Lerner. 61.

If applied to the primary sources of the Philippine Diary Project, which are frequently referred to in this paper, this perspective of bearing witness becomes clearer. An American teacher described in her own words the sudden invasion of the Philippines: "*What hellish fear that puts into one's soul.*"[13] The figurative speech in this short diary entry reveals a traumatic impact and must neither lead to be seen as a "pure" fact nor lead to falsely emotional and partial conclusion.

The difficult task to bear witness of the collective trauma is also apparent in the following example: "*In reprisal, the Japanese burned down the towns of Agoo and Tubao, killing thousands of innocent residents.*"[14] This reaction to the guerilla warfare waged by US-Filipino troops is a factual statement that belies the mass violence and suffering behind it. Bearing witness to the atrocious acts described briefly in this sentence means also to include some form of commentary such as "*empathic confrontation.*"[15] Thus, the author of this thesis decided to concentrate almost exclusively on the mass suffering of the Filipino (and American) side. The extreme brutality of the massacres cannot fully be expressed perceived through language. This is why there is not going to be a detailed description of the mass violence. The empathic confrontation employed by the author tries to focus on the emotional expressions of shock and horror. The Japanese Empire as the perpetrating force is not in the center of attention, when it comes to collective trauma. This intentional omission is done mostly due to feasibility and lack of Japanese primary sources connected to World War II in the Philippines. Of course, violence was not limited to one side alone but in the context of this research, Japan as the third actor takes the role of a foreign invader. This is also how the Japanese were genuinely perceived by the majority of Filipinos.

As an additional support to frame this thesis, it is helpful to take Lerner's approach on how to characterize the state. Instead of characterizing states as billiard balls or tectonic plates in the international system, Lerner proposes an unusual idea of state consciousness:

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[13] Ethel Thomas Herold, "Diary Entry," The Philippine Diary Project, December 10, 1941, https://philippinediaryproject.com/1941/12/10/december-10-1941-8/.
[14] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry," The Philippine Diary Project, October 28, 1942, https://philippinediaryproject.com/1942/10/28/october-28-1942/.
[15] Lerner, *From the Ashes of History*. 62.

"I have suggested modeling the international system via analogy to a middle school dance – a thin social environment with complex, incompletely formed actors who nonetheless demonstrate irreducible unitary qualities, especially discernible in top-down analysis."[16]

Lerner admits the weak spots of this characterization but argues that anthropomorphizing states in such a manner opens up the possibility to extend research in international relations. States as "*adolescents in puberty have only problematic senses of self, the unitary agentive voice with which they speak belies tremendous internal contestation and uncertainty*."[17] This helps scholars to develop a "*top-down perspective* [that] *emphasizes unitary external actions that are not easily reducible to component parts*."[18] Of course the life-and-death reality of the Philippines in World War II has nothing in common with a middle school dance and yet it helps to differentiate the actors in question. At first, it is easy to distinguish three different uniform state/actors: the USA, Imperial Japan and the Philippines itself.

Therefore, it is much more complex when looking closely within these actors. Especially the Philippines had this "*problematic sense of self with tremendous internal contestation and uncertainty*." The urgent call for resistance, the pressure to collaborate or simply to desire to survive are equally important components of what made up the Philippines. The Philippines was not only occupied, but it also had two governments: A legitimate one residing in Washington and a Japanese-sponsored one in Manila. Collaboration with the Japanese came from the top but also from ordinary citizens, while the majority remained hostile against the occupying force. This was destined to create a split in Philippine society, long after the war had ended.

The United States also faced internal struggles, while its external actions proved to be rather unitary. Yet, there is the ambiguous, self-preserving interest that led to massive collateral damage at the expense of Filipino civilians in the Battle of Manila. This stood against the reputation and effort to be a liberator from Japanese oppression.

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[16] Adam B. Lerner, "What's It like to Be a State? An Argument for State Consciousness," *International Theory* 13, no. 2 (July 2021): 260–86, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971919000277. 282.
[17] Lerner. 279.
[18] ibid.

Japan´s state consciousness appears to the most unanimous due to its totalitarian nature but even Imperial Japan had its internal tensions between the proclamation of benevolent motives for the sake of the Philippines and the harsh reality of exploitation and cruel day-to-day treatment.

Lerner´s state consciousness in combination with his notion of collective trauma offers a suitable way to analyze the dramatic period of the Philippines in World War II. This is even more important because all three actors were on the same disputed territory. Therefore, this thesis does not only try to take a look at the close interaction between the three state actors, but also takes a look *inside* the state. This helps to reveal deeper dimensions of the collective trauma unfolding.

- Structure and further methodology

This thesis tries to illustrate the collective trauma experienced by Philippine society during World War II. The perspective of Manila is used as a starting and end point to show, how such an event becomes ground zero for influencing an entire nation. For clarification, this subchapter lays out the structure of the thesis and connect it to the methodology. This should help to guide and equip the reader before launching in the actual main part.

In its core, this thesis is a case study of collective trauma with the example of the Philippines in World War II. This introductory chapter presents the central theme of collective trauma in the three different dimensions discussed earlier. Social and cultural psychology as well as international relations. With this framing in mind, the question is: How does this concept relate to Manila and the Philippines in World War II? The framework offered in this introduction sets the stage for the empirical case investigated in the main part. The argument proposed is that the theory of collective trauma can be applied to the Philippine experience of World War II. The data provided by a range of reliable primary and secondary sources helps to support this claim.

With respect to the structure of the main part, it is important to discuss limits of time and space in this research. The time frame investigated is going to be structured along major military events that took place in the Philippines during World War II. This will be done in a chronological order. Starting with the Japanese attack on the Philippines in 1941, the first main chapter ends with the official surrender of Filipino-Us troops in 1942. The following chapter discusses the Japanese occupation period until the return of American troops in 1944. In the last chapter, the reconquest of the archipelago by the US army until the infamous Battle of Manila is discussed.

It is worthwhile to note that the time period observed contains only approximately 3 and a half years. Chapters II and IV only encompass roughly 6 months. Chapter III on Japan´s contested control of the Philippines contains 2 years and 5 months and is therefore the longest. Information crucial for the understanding of the thesis but not directly in this timeframe are limited to relevant statistics and important events connected to the war. Any additional information is found in the

appendices such as a timeline of events, important figures of the three actors involved, as well as documents and maps.

This thesis also does not look into the post war period but tries to build a connection with the Philippines of the present. Therefore, the conclusion leaves the period from 1945 till the presidency of Rodrigo Duterte almost exclusively uncommented.

Secondly, the research is also limited to a geographical area. In the middle of this, Manila serves as a constant reference point throughout the entire main part. Other parts of the Philippines are only discussed, when they relate to the capital and are of nationwide importance such as the return of American troops on the southern island of Leyte. This limitation is chosen to give a focus on the experience of a city: Manila is in the center of attention. The main island and region Luzon, where Manila is located, is necessarily included in the research. Yet, this does not mean that other regions of the country have not experienced the war and its traumatic effects. The other two main regions, the Visayas island group in the middle of the Philippines as well as Mindanao, have had similar experiences of mass violence. Other cities such as Cebu, the capital of the Visayas and second biggest city in the Philippines, suffered bombardments and the cruelty and violence of the Imperial Army was commonplace throughout all the country. Also resistance in form of guerilla warfare against the Japanese was a nationwide phenomenon.

Narrowing down on Manila and Luzon is not merely done for the sake of feasibility but also genuinely focus on a concrete city and its region. The purpose is to make room for the reader to witness the fate of a city. Together with the limited time frame of three and a half years, this helps to reconstruct the impact of the war. Manila is both a representation for the entire country and a special case due to the intensity of violence and destruction it experienced.

This mass violence and collective trauma is analyzed in three chapters to bring a more nuanced understanding of the issue. Each of these chapters is divided by the perspective of the three complex actors involved in the conflict: the Philippines, the United States and the Japanese Empire. The Filipino perception and its activities is going to be the first, followed by its US ally and the invading Japanese Empire. As discussed earlier, the boundary between these three actors is often unclear or at least

internally contested. Especially in the case of the Philippines, its two governments and a divided population controlled by a foreign regime. Simultaneously, the country is closely tied to the United States. To avoid any unnecessary repetition, many events are only described in the primary and most important perception of the Filipinos. Alongside the major military events of World War II in the Philippines, the violence and hardship of the war remain the single thread uniting all three actors. As mentioned earlier, the Japanese Empire is seen and treated as the perpetrator of this collective trauma. Its agenda and ambitions are discussed to give context to the behavior in the Philippines.

The interdisciplinary dimension is structured through the incorporation of the ideas developed by Adam Lerner. This is mainly achieved by the application of Lerner's theoretical framework of collective trauma. As discussed earlier, his idea of state consciousness helps to reveal the ambivalent situation of the three protagonists. This perspective inside the state looks especially at the Philippines from the political elite to the ordinary people.

Additionally, historical anthropology is going to be employed to deepen the gravity of the collective trauma. Historical anthropology is an umbrella term, yet this thesis includes one important style called the "Annales" School developed in France in the beginning of the 20th century. The center concept is called "the History of Mentalities*"* and "*considers the attitudes of ordinary people toward everyday life*." [19] When analyzing the Philippines under Japanese control, this discipline helps to develop the thesis question. Whether it be ordinary civilians, guerilla fighters, the collaborators or US and Japanese soldiers' experiences: Considering the attitudes and experiences of ordinary people offers an insightful perspective on collective trauma and its effects on society.

To illustrate the attitude of ordinary people, this thesis will rely on a number of primary sources, especially in forms of diaries and memoirs such as the Philippine Diary Project. This open source website, which is managed and owned by no other than the grandson of wartime president Manuel Quezon, has gathered and digitalized a great number of accessible personal notes written in connection to the Philippines.

[19] Patrick H. Hutton, "The History of Mentalities: The New Map of Cultural History," *History and Theory* 20, no. 3 (1981): 237–59, https://doi.org/10.2307/2504556. 237.

Primary sources are used in the main part include witnesses from all walks of life such as politicians, soldiers, clergy, entrepreneurs or teachers. These first-hand eyewitnesses come exclusively from Filipino or American citizens. As these two groups shared essentially the same fate, personal accounts of Americans are used in the Filipino part as well and vice versa. In regards to the selection of the primary sources, personal accounts are chosen when talking about the experience of violence. The often hundreds of diary entries by different people per week were filtered therefore by their discussion of violence and suffering. Including these sources is the key element to connect the theoretical part of this introduction with the case study in the main part.

- An ambiguous legacy for the Philippines: Collective trauma and its lingering effects

In the conclusion, this case study aims to draw a wider picture: The "ambiguous legacy" – a phrase coined by David Steinberg, specialist on the Philippine history – for the Filipinos is taken into account. That a war as devastating and catastrophic as World War II has lasting effects on individuals and societies can be seen as a commonplace observation. It is undeniable that every country involved in this global conflict experienced some form of traumatizing mass violence.

Interestingly, many historians specialized in Philippine history such Alfred McCoy have argued that the "*Japanese occupation was a violent and disruptive period, but it in no way altered the dominant economic and political patterns*" of the country.[20] Despite the destructive power of the war, he argues in unison with many other scholars for overarching continuity in the country. A separate discussion of what I call the "continuity argument" and problems in historiography is found in the appendices.

In this argumentation, the Japanese occupation would mark merely a fateful "*interregnum*" in the Philippine history: The traditional elite including even those parts, which had collaborated most closely with the Japanese, resumed or continued to hold powerful positions in society.[21] Reconciliation was achieved with a general amnesty, even though the issue of collaboration left the country in a difficult position to reconcile and shattered the unity and power of the once successful Nacionalista Party.[22] But even despite the scale of involvement, which included two sons of exiled vice president Sergio Osmena, the Second Philippine Republic was later officially recognized as a legitimate government.

With its Japanese adversaries, Filipino elite also managed to reconcile via creating a "*narrative of Christian forgiveness*" and the renunciation of overpriced

[20] Alfred W. McCoy, *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1985). 195.
[21] Grant K. Goodman, "The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines: Commonwealth Sustained," *Philippine Studies* 36, no. 1 (1988): 98–104, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42633066. 104.
[22] Steinberg, *The Philippines*. 104.

reparation payments from Japan.[23] Last but not least, the Philippines finally gained full independence from the United States in 1946. From then on, it maintained a fairly stable relationship with its former colonial ruler despite issues such as the collateral damage during the Battle of Manila. It may be argued that, on the surface, the Philippines had recovered nationally and internationally fairly well.

But the significance of collective trauma is not addressed adequately from such a perspective. David J. Steinberg, who´s basic characterization of World War II as a trauma for the Philippines gave the initial idea of framing this research with collective trauma, draws another conclusion. He describes the consequences for the country as a cancer, especially in the social sense: The "*collapse of law and order, the taint of collaboration, the confusion of allegiance, starvation and deprivation, and the chance for quick profit*" during the war are the main cause for today´s culture of corruption.[24]

In regards to international theory, the narrative identity approach and its connection to collective trauma laid out by Lerner is as essential to linking past and present events. When looking at certain notions in the Philippines nowadays, the salience of narrative identity surrounding the legacy of World War II is evident: In 2022, the Philippine House of Representatives discussed a bill that sought to dedicate no less than fifty percent (!) of the entire higher education in Philippine History to World War II. The goal was to promote patriotism and national identity in remembrance of the resistance to Japanese occupation by the Philippine Army and guerilla.[25] Eventually, the approved bill was passed with majority and a different wording of covering "*a reasonable percentage of the mandatory Philippine History subject.*"[26] A leading politician behind this educational reform is the grandnephew of Carlos Romulo, quoted in the beginning of this introductory chapter. This connection

[23] Sharon W. Chamberlain, *A Reckoning: Philippine Trials of Japanese War Criminals* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2019), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvfjcxp3. 171-172.
[24] Steinberg, *The Philippines*. 108.
[25] Mike Baños, "Pros and Cons Chime in on HB No. 9850," *Metro Cagayan de Oro* (blog), October 3, 2021, https://www.metrocdo.com/2021/10/03/pros-and-cons-chime-in-on-hb-no-9850-an-act-integrating-a-comprehensive-study-of-philippine-history-during-world-war-ii-into-the-higher-education-curriculum/.
[26] Philippine House of Representatives. An Act Integrating A Comprehensive Study Of Philippine History During World War II Into The Higher Education Curriculum, H. No. 5719, 19th Congress.

spanning over two generations or eighty-four years, is not the only evidence indicating a lasting effect of World War II. Is also reflected in the Philippine politics nowadays.

Another recent example is found in the controversial presidency of Rodrigo Duterte. In 2019, September 3 was declared a national holiday during his term in order to commemorate the surrender of the very last Japanese troops in 1945.[27] Contrary to this decision, the Duterte administration dismantled a statue in memory of the Filipino women forced into sexual slavery during the Japanese occupation. This came only days ahead of a scheduled Summit by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Through the Japanese dominated ADB, a lot of investment comes to the Philippines. While the bank denied any connection, the Japanese government openly called for the removal of the statue.[28]

The interest in civil society has also risen with various books and movies on World War II published in recent years. One example is a movie about Jose Abad Santos, a famous politician, who unlike most of his colleagues refused to collaborate and was executed by the Japanese. Also a look at the publishing date of many books on the war period in the Philippines also reveals an unbroken interest in academia. "War and Resistance in the Philippines" by James K. Morningstar is only one example and one of the most referred to secondary sources of this thesis. Initiatives such as Memorare Manila 1945 are active in remembering the victims of the largest massacre committed by the Japanese Army. Another organization is the Philippine World War II Memorial Foundation: Its aim is to build a museum and library mainly to remember Anti-Japanese resistance. While all these developments do not explicitly mention collective trauma, it can be identified as one of the underlying factors.

[27] "Duterte Declares September 3 a Working Holiday to Commemorate Yamashita Surrender," Philstar.com, accessed February 17, 2023, https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2019/02/19/1895050/duterte-declares-september-3-public-holiday-commemorate-yamashita-surrender.
[28] Raissa Robles, "'Comfort Women' Statue Goes Missing in Philippines," South China Morning Post, February 14, 2021, https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3121702/comfort-women-statue-missing-philippines-japans-wartime-legacy.

In a short interview concerning the thesis question, vice president of the Memorial Foundation Ms. Desiree Ann C. Benipayo answered the following: "*Not one Filipino family was spared the death of a loved one, or some form of suffering, starvation, and atrocities. To this day when the dust of war has settled, and physical wounds have healed, the effects of the last war can still be felt economically, socially, and psychologically.*"[29] On the surface, material, physical and psychological issues may seem to have subsided but according to Benipayo the long term effects are still impacting the Philippines.

This leads back to the intended research and investigation to illustrate the impact World War II had on Manila and the Philippines. From the first Japanese bombardments shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 until the horrors of the massacres in Manila in 1945, this chapter of Philippine history offers the opportunity to take a new perspective on the concept of collective trauma. Additionally, the focus on the capital provides the description of the fate of a major Asian city in the Pacific War. Through the lenses of collective trauma, this brutal experience is also embedded and intertwined in a national history. Approaching from collective trauma, this part of Philippine history can uncover possible lasting effects of the war crisis on today´s country. The author does not disagree with scholars specialized in Philippine history on the fact that on the political, social and economic level, the Philippines showed a great level of post war continuity. Nevertheless, the issue of collective trauma is not addressed adequately in the continuity argument.

The understanding of deeper or unconscious consequences of World War II on the Philippines may help to open a new avenue of thinking about the difficult legacy left behind for the country. This is achieved through application of theories discussed in this chapter and the usage of primary sources.

Finally, it is through these sources that the fate of a city is reconstructed. What happened to Manila in the dramatic years of 1941-1945 is almost unknown to Western readers. Bearing witness for this Asian capital through personal accounts can help to bring awareness to this tragically captivating piece of history.

[29] Desiree Ann C. Benipayo, interview via email with the author, April 27, 2023.

II. First stage of the War: The Japanese Invasion December 1941 – May 1942

- The Filipinos: First months under Japanese attack and occupation

This chapter concerns the perspective of Filipinos ranging from the legitimate government to the collaborators, active resistance, and normal civilians. This includes the manifold first reactions and experiences to the Japanese attack. While the scope of this research necessarily involves events taking place across the Philippines, Manila is going to be time and time again placed at the center of attention.

Before launching into the actual events of World War II, a short summary of the pre-war Philippine demography and economics equips the reader with relevant background information. The years under Japanese control present a certain rupture in information about the economy and population. Therefore, data before the occupation reveals important insights. In a 1939 census, the total population of the Philippines was numbered 16,000,303 with the following racial composition: The absolute majority of 15.7 million was referred to as "*brown*", 141.8 thousand as "*yellow*" and only 19.3 thousand as "*white*", while the mixed, black or other ethnicities formed the rest.[30]

The Philippine economy before the Japanese occupation had seen steady growth due to investment in health care, education, infrastructure, and agriculture by the American colonial administration.[31] Yet the colonial administration "*was far less successful in constructing a framework that would insure superior long-term growth"* because the Philippine economy was unfittingly tied to the United States.[32] In 1941, the country was headed by the Commonwealth of the Philippines, an administrative body governing from 1935 to 1946. It was meant as a transitional government before full independence from the USA. Headed by President Manuel Quezon, the country still

[30] United States Department of Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. 1941.

[31] Richard Hooley, "American Economic Policy in the Philippines, 1902–1940: Exploring a Dark Age in Colonial Statistics," *Journal of Asian Economics* 16, no. 3 (June 1, 2005): 464–88, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asieco.2005.04.007. 478-79.

[32] ibid.

belonged de facto and de jure to the United States with many American troops stationed on the islands.

While the threat of war had been looming over the Philippines because of mounting tensions between the Japanese Empire and the United States, the beginning of World War II still came as a traumatic shock:

Only hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese air forces bombed their first targets in the Philippines on December 8, 1941. In a statement issued on the same day, President Quezon prepared his country for the crisis ahead: *"The zero hour is here. Every man and woman must be at his or her post to do the duty assigned him or her.* (…) *Let us place our confidence in God who has never forsaken our people."*[33] Personal accounts of this day reveal the level of shock and surprise. The housekeeper of Quezon, Aurea Labrador wrote in her diary that nobody really had expected that it would come this far.[34]

As the first Japanese bombardments fell in the middle of the night, residents in the capital were torn from sleep by the shelling and sirens as the city went into complete blackout.[35] The next day was marked by mass panic as many citizens tried to flee from Manila to surrounding cities, while the Japanese air raids stroke the Philippine naval base in southern Manila.[36]

The events were now unfolding at unprecedented speed: Under the command of General Masaharu Homma, the Imperial Japanese Army unleashed a full-blown invasion with different task forces preparing to land on the islands. Within a few weeks, the overwhelmed joint Filipino and US troops only managed to hold ground on the fortified Bataan peninsula and the island Corregidor in Manila Bay.

The remaining month of December was a series of defeats for the joint Philippine-American forces and a restless attempt to organize substantial defense: Some schools

[33] Manuel L. Quezon, "Statement: President Quezon on the Outbreak of the Hostilities between the United States and Japan, December 8, 1941," Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, December 8, 1941, https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1941/12/08/statement-president-quezon-on-the-outbreak-of-the-hostilities-between-the-united-states-and-japan-december-8-1941/. December 8, 1941.
[34] Aurea Labrador, "Diary Entry," December 9, 1941.
[35] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry," December 8, 1941.
[36] Basilio J. Valdes, "Diary Entry," December 9, 1941.

were converted into military bases, where Filipino cadets and volunteers received intensive all-day military training.[37]

In terms of preparation for the intensifying crisis, the Philippine capital prepared for the worst: "*Manila is shaping up for a real war, evacuation is still in progress, even the Walled City* [=historic city center] *is being evacuated of the non-essentials. People are going to the provinces as fast as they can thus making room for the defenders in Manila*."[38] Military defeats were not the only attacks on the morale of Filipinos and Americans alike: When presidents Quezon was to deliver a nationwide speech on the radio, the Japanese interrupted the transmission in a successful use of psychological warfare: Instead of a speech by the president, the only remaining broadcast was a "*pro-Japanese station (in English) which roared in clearly stating many American ships had been sunk, that U.S. was ready to give up...*"[39]

Meanwhile, President Quezon, who decided to stay loyal to the United States, transferred his residence to Corregidor on Christmas Eve. From there, he and his part of his cabinet resumed duties until he fled to Australia via submarine in February.[40] Around Christmas Day, it became clear that the capital had to be given up by the joint Philippine-US troops. Therefore Manila, known as the "Pearl of the Orient" for its beauty, was declared an "open city" by the Americans, which meant "*its complete demilitarization, the removal or destruction of all military installations, and a hypothetical freedom from bombing.*"[41]

The aim to avoid the destruction of Manila by leaving the city without any defense, was not achieved. In the days following open city declaration, the Japanese continued to bomb several targets in the city, many of them not military objectives.[42] Aware that fleeing the country to avoid capture by the Japanese was a likely scenario, Quezon had appointed the so-called Civilian Emergency Administration.[43] It was

[37] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry," December 11, 1941.
[38] Lucy Hardee Olsen, "Diary Entry," December 12, 1941.
[39] Elizabeth Vaughan, "Diary Entry," December 16, 1941,
[40] Valdes, "Diary Entry," December 24, 1941.
[41] Teodoro M. Locsin, "Diary Entry," December 25, 1941,
[42] Juergen Goldhagen, Hans Hoeflein, Hans Walser and Roderick Hall., *Manila Memories: Four Boys Remember Their Lives before, during and after the Japanese Occupation* (Exeter: Published for Old Guard Press by Shearsman Books, 2008). 33-38.
[43] "Executive Order No. 335, 1941," Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, accessed December 13, 2022.

headed by Jorge B. Vargas, who was responsible for guaranteeing the safety of all Philippine citizens. His responsibilities also included handing over Manila, for which he was appointed as mayor.[44] The last Filipino-American troops abandoned Manila shortly before New Year´s Eve in a hurry, leaving behind an unprotected and vulnerable population.[45]

In the two days until the arrival of Japanese troops on January 2 1942, the social cohesion in Manila began to show fragmentation. The stress factors caused by the sudden bombardments, the frantic manner in which the city was abandoned by the Philippine army as well fires spreading throughout Manila and no police protection had "*completed the demoralization of the civilian population*."[46] The result was a massive wave of looting and general lawlessness with unarmed law enforcement either powerless due to disarmament or participating in it.[47] A prevalent fear among Manilans was to suffer the same fate as Nanking with hundreds of thousands slaughtered civilians. This fear was not yet realized with the actual takeover by the Japanese Army in 1942. Witnesses described the capture as peaceful and that the presence of soldiers helped to bring an end to most of the lootings.[48]

One of the first actions by the Japanese military governors was to order the Civilian Emergency Administration to lead a provisional government named Philippine Executive Commission (PEC). Most members of the PEC had been important political figures under the exiled government.[49] The entire government was restructured and fundamental reforms such as in the educational section decreed. These reforms will be discussed in the subsequent chapter on the Filipinos.

Manila began a new chapter of its history with the Japanese occupation, while not so far away in Manila Bay the retreating US Filipino troops had gathered on the Bataan peninsula for the last defense of the Philippines.

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[44] Luis Francia, *A History of the Philippines: From Indios Bravos to Filipinos*, 2019. 181.
[45] Eriberto Misa Jr, "Diary Entry," December 31, 1941.
[46] Labrador, "Diary Entry," January 1, 1942.
[47] Teodoro Agoncillo and Milagros Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*, 4th ed. (Quezon City: R.P. GARCIA Publishing Co., 1973). 457-458.
[48] Labrador, "Diary Entry," January 2, 1942.
[49] Sven Matthiessen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines from the Late 19th Century to the End of World War II*, volume 53 (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2016). 142.

The next four months were a fierce battle over Bataan and the island Corregidor, where a lot of politicians from the Quezon administration had sought shelter. Corregidor, relatively small in its size, possessed a widespread tunnel system called "Malinta", which was safe from artillery and air strikes.

Basilio Valdes, Secretary of National Defense under Quezon, described the worsening circumstances of the almost exiled government in his diary. The president himself was suffering from health issues such as asthma worsened by the humidity of the tunnels.[50] Moreover, almost daily discouraging news from Bataan was brought. Finally, on February 20th, the government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines was evacuated from Corregidor via a US submarine, amid tears for Valdes as his fighting soldiers were left behind on Bataan.[51]It took the Quezon administration until the end of March to arrive in the safety of Australia, whereas the situation in the Philippine capital developed rather ambiguous. While the Japanese propaganda tried to portray the Empire as the liberating and benevolent friend of the Philippines, the reality proved very differently. Japanese sentries demanded bows from every citizen and "offenses" such as not bowing properly earned slaps in the face.[52] While most Manilans tried to return to their ordinary way of life, scenes of abuse and humiliation such as being stripped naked and tied to poles entered the public picture:" *Some sentries are odious* […] *He* [one of the sentries] *slapped the man, got the cigar and burned the man's face with it. Saw another naked woman tied to a post*."[53]

Moreover, Japanese soldiers brought more extreme violence to the subjugated Filipinos: The sexual abuse of women all over the country.[54] Men rushing out in defense of the victims were often killed, while others decided to join the active resistance across the archipelago as a way to take vengeance on the Japanese for their crimes.[55] Manila was treated mercifully in comparison to a lot of provinces where the

[50] Valdes, "Diary Entry," January 22, 1942.
[51] Valdes, "Diary Entry," February 20, 1942.
[52] Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*. 463.
[53] Buencamino, "Diary Entry," January 6, 1942.
[54] James Kelly Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2021). 21.
[55] Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*. 462.

Imperial Army had suffered losses. There, reports of retaliation against the civilian population highlighted torture, rape, and killings.[56]

The fierce battle on and around the Bataan peninsula continued for several weeks before the Japanese could declare victory. On April 9 eventually, the radio "Voice of Freedom" broadcasting from Malinta Tunnel announced the tragic end for the US-Filipino troops:" *Bataan has fallen. The Philippine-American troops on this war-ravaged and bloodstained peninsula have laid down their arms*."[57]

This brought the Philippines under Japanese control and led to another collective traumatic experiences: The 80, 000 Filipino-US surrendered soldiers on the Bataan peninsula were forced to march dozens of kilometers into internment camps. What became known as the Bataan Death March and the subsequent inhumane treatment in the internment camps left about 60 000 soldiers, mostly Filipinos, dead. A soldier, who captured the horrifying event in his diary, described how the route to the camps was littered with the dying and dead:" *We walked and walked… from sunrise to sunset and then till midnight… till dawn… without food, without water. Many dropped. Others dead. Some were killed. It was the survival of the fittest.* […] *the fields were full of craters. Hundreds of exposed corpses rotted in the fields* […]"[58]

The fate for those soldiers, who reached the internment camps, continued to be deadly. Camp Capas, the destination for captured Filipinos, became the scene of a tragedy caused by the loss of "*social and moral balance*": Thousands of sick and starving soldiers died due to maltreatment and corruption inside the Philippine army, when medicine and food was sold by doctors.[59] In the end, most survivors of Capas and the other concentration camps were promised freedom in exchange for labor in mines and other fields of Japanese exploitation.[60]

The attitude of the civilians became apparent quickly with support for the vanquished. One way to express support was the hand gesture of the V-sign. Standing for victory

[56] Felipe Buencamino III, "Diary EntryJanuary 19, 1942.
[57] "The Fall of Bataan," Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, accessed November 25, 2022.
[58] Felipe Buencamino III, "Diary Entry," April 10, 1942.
[59] Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*. 458.
[60] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 103.

and used commonly under American soldiers, it became an act of solidarity.[61] Captured Soldiers during the infamous march witnessed many acts of compassion such as bystanders giving them water. Often deadly consequences followed: Some Filipinos were beaten to death by Japanese soldiers for merely making the victory sign.[62]

All this mass violence and the everyday behavior by the Imperial Army demonstrated after its victory sparked and incentivized hostility. Active resistance formed and resorted to guerilla warfare. Most of the active resistance was led by soldiers from United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFE) or the Filipino Commonwealth Army, who had not surrendered and managed to evade Japanese forces. One notable example was the Marking´s Guerilla, named after its leader and active close to Manila. The group became famous through the Filipino-American journalist Yay Panlilio, who joined the unit. In her autobiography, she recounts the bloody skirmishes in the Philippine woods in the weeks shortly after the Fall of Bataan – a reality that would continue for the entire occupation.[63]

Independent resistance came also from the Chinese population: A number of left and right leaning groups formed in the wake of the Japanese invasion in 1941. The Philippine Chinese Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Force (Hua Zhi) was the most important one and was closely linked to the communist "Hukbalahap".[64] The "People's Army to Fight Japan" (Hukbong ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon) or simply known as the Huks was very active and successful with its rapidly growing organization in central Luzon, the main island.[65]

Another aspect of resistance formed to combat the strict censorship imposed by the Japanese. Most newspapers and radio stations in Manila were shut down, while only a minority continued to operate under strict conditions.[66] Within weeks after the

[61] Jeremiah L Bonilla, "How Filipinos Opposed the Japanese Occupation (1942–1954)" 4 (2019): 9. 17.
[62] Quoted after Bonilla, (2019) 17.
[63] Yay Panlilio, *The Crucible : An Autobiography by Colonel Yay, Filipina American Guerrilla*, accessed March 9, 2023. https://web-p-ebscohost-com.uaccess.univie.ac.at/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzMxMTk2Nl9fQU41?sid=3916f9a5-0cd9-4efa-a92d-66cde409b74d@redis&vid=0&format=EB&lpid=lp_1&rid=0. 26-28.
[64] Li Yuk-Wai, "The Chinese Resistance Movement in the Philippines during the Japanese Occupation," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 23, no. 2 (1992): 308–21, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20071455. 312-315.
[65] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 33-34.
[66] Florinda Mateo, "The Philippine Guerilla Movement and Counterpropaganda During World War II," *A Philippine Journal of Communication, Media, and Society*, 2006, 75-76.

Japanese gained control over the Philippines, a number of guerilla newspapers came into existence. Famous examples are the New Era by Manuel Buanafe, which was based in Manila. Additionally, "Matang Lawin" (Hawk´s Eye) and the Liberator were published and distributed on Luzon close to the capital.[67]Concerning illegal radio stations, a popular example was the Voice of Juan de la Cruz, broadcasted by a teenager named Carlos Malonzo and his friends in Manila. The radio station existed a few months before Malonzo and companions were captured and executed.[68]

In the meantime, the economic situation of the country deteriorated. The Japanese had confiscated agricultural property and tools, while rice production – the primary staple food for vast parts of the population – declined more and more. Victor Buencamino, Vice-President and Manager of the National Rice and Corn Corporation and now food administrator under the Civilian Emergency Administration, noted his fears down in a diary. In addition to the fact that the Philippines was already dependent on basic food imports, the country found itself now under the troublesome conditions of an ongoing war and hundreds of thousand Japanese soldiers to feed. While Buencamino tried his best to maintain food security, he was well aware that sensitive food shortages and starvation were a probable future scenario.[69]At the same time, unemployment was staggeringly high with even high qualified jobs affected. One unlikely example was that of lawyers: In the opinion of the Japanese Empire, professions regarding law were not necessary in advancing its ambitions for the Philippines. [70]

Within less than half a year, the first stage of World War II had changed the political, economic and social circumstances of the Philippines in radical and disturbing ways. After the sudden invasion and its traumatic imprint on society, the consolidated occupation under the Japanese was about to continue the various hardships for the country.

[67] John A. Lent, "Guerrilla Press of the Philippines, 1941-45," *Institute of Asian Studies* 8, no. 2, (1970): 262-263.
[68] Elizabeth Enriquez, "The Filipino Broadcasters on Overseas Propaganda Radio in World War II," *Plaridel - A Philippine Journal of Communication, Media, and Society* 10, no. 1 (2013): 53.
[69] Buencamino, "Diary Entry," January 24, 1942.
[70] Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*. 454-455.

- The United States involvement: Withdrawal and surrender

This section deals with the involvement of the United States of America in the Philippines. The fate of these two countries during World War II is intertwined and can hardly imagined being separately. Certain events such as the Bataan Death March, which have discussed in the previous chapter in detail, are only mentioned to avoid unnecessary repetition.

After more than forty years of presence and colonial rule on the archipelago, the US saw itself in war with the Japanese Empire. A few hours following the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7 (8th of December local Philippine time), Japanese bombers destroyed half of the entire American air force stationed in the Clark Field Base near Manila.[71]

Just as the Filipinos, desperation was the first reaction of the American residents: Some voiced their confusion of the slow reaction to the Japanese attack such as an American nurse:" *It was nine hours after Pearl Harbor that the enemy bombed and destroyed nearly all of our planes on the ground at Clark Field. But why were our planes on the ground? Why? Why? We asked each other in bewilderment*."[72] The journals of US soldiers and civilians in these days reveal a high level of shock: The general tone among soldiers was no different, with some mistaking them false alarm and the attack on Pearl Harbor as only a rumor.[73]This shocking surprise of the Japanese attack was echoed also in the "Day of Infamy" Speech by US President Franklin Roosevelt, where he pointed out how unexpected the attack was despite mounting tensions:

> Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan [...] the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.[74]

[71] Peter Duus and John Whitney Hall, *The Cambridge History of Japan 6 : The Twentieth Century*, 6th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). 346.
[72] Tressa Cates, "Diary Entry," December 8, 1941.
[73] David L. Olbert, "Diary Entry," December 8, 1941.
[74] Franklin Roosevelt, "Joint Address to Congress Leading to a Declaration of War Against Japan (1941)," National Archives, September 22, 2021, https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/joint-address-to-congress-declaration-of-war-against-japan.

While the air raids on US air and naval force bases continued, the diary of General Assistant Chief of Staff Lewis C. Beebe showed the overwhelming situation for American troops in the Philippines: Responsible to guarantee the transport of food and ammunition supply of the army, he "*forgot to mention*" the four invasion task forces of the Japanese landing on various parts of the main island of Luzon, not too far from the Philippine capital.[75]

From the perspective of US civilians in Manila, the weeks leading up to the arrival of Japanese forces were that of growing uncertainty and fear. Most tried to continue with their day to day life and simultaneously prepared for the worst by stocking food.[76]A disparity between the hope for a victory against the invasion forces on the one side and the reality on the other side can be attributed to the enormous lack of information available to most civilians and soldiers alike. The rumor of reinforcements or defeat of the Japanese was prevalent among people. An American entrepreneur living in Baguio, a major city north of Manila, wrote in his diary that Christmas Day was celebrated in the false hope of a US victory, but he was interned by Japanese forces together with his family on December 28th.[77]

The main reason for this fast defeat of American troops was found in the "Germany First" principle followed by the Roosevelt administration, which meant that almost all efforts were concentrated on Europe and not Asia.Another reason for the fast Japanese advance and wasted time in wake of the attack has been linked to a fatal miscalculation by the key figure on the American side, General Douglas MacArthur. As the commander of the USAFFE, MacArthur had anticipated a Japanese invasion but several crucial weeks too late.[78] Living in Manila with his family for years, he had formed personal ties with the country and its people. Manuel Quezon and vice president Sergio Osmena had been friends with MacArthur before becoming leading politicians.

In his autobiography, MacArthur described not only the great affection he developed for Manila and the Philippines but also his disappointment by Washington to fail supporting the USAFFE with the necessary means to protect its Philippine partner.

[75] Lewis C. Beebe, "Diary Entry," December 12, 1941.
[76] Gladys Savary, "Diary Entry," December 15, 1941.
[77] Robert Renton Hind, "Diary Entry," January 31, 1942.
[78] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*. 179.

Reflecting on the worsening situation for soldiers and civilians alike, "*the bitter memories and heartaches*" would never leave him.[79]

As described in the previous chapter, Manila was captured by the Imperial Army on January 2 1942 after being declared an Open City by MacArthur. The takeover itself was described as rather unspectacular but the testimonies of American citizens in the following days showed the abuse by Japanese troops. Carl E. Rice, senior public servant, recounted his experience of severe beating by Japanese patrols the day after the occupation.[80] In the case of the military situation, the remaining USAFE troops gathered on Bataan and on Corregidor for last defense of the Philippines. With the situation getting worse each day, General MacArthur left Corregidor and the Philippines in March, after making his now famous declaration "I shall return". On April 8th, the inevitable surrender of Filipino-American troops was declared.

In the meantime, the Japanese military governors ordered the internment of practically all US civilians. Life in the civilian internment camps such as Santo Tomas in Manila during the first months of the occupation seemed rather normal as diary entries of the prisoners show. The treatment by prison guards was respectful, while the Japanese placed importance in educating the internees to celebrate the birthday of the Emperor and the victorious Imperial Army in Bataan. The Fall of Bataan brought a painful defeat, which was reflected in the demoralization of its imprisoned citizens: "*When we gazed at pictures of our captured USAFFE forces, the ache in our hearts was almost more than we could bear*."[81] The devastating circumstances for Americans living in the Philippines was about to continue.

In the aftermath of its defeat in the Philippines, the US and its allies were not concerned about recapturing the islands but more focused in halting the rapid advance of the Japanese army. For the time being, the priority was to defend Australia from an invasion[82] while the Philippines were almost out of reach and control. While the Bataan Death March marked the end of the first stage of World War II in the

[79] Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, Blue Jacket Books (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2001), http://archive.org/details/MacarthurGeneralDouglasReminiscencesbOk.xyz. 150.
[80] Carl E. Rice, "Diary Entry," January 3, 1942.
[81] Tressa Cates, "Diary Entry," April 29, 1942.
[82] General Staff United States Army, "Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific, Volume I," accessed November 26, 2022, https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/macarthur%20reports/macarthur%20v1/index.htm. 23-24.

Philippines, the Americans were still heavily involved in the country. Not only were many US citizens and prisoners of war left under the Japanese occupation, but a lot of guerilla units across the country were led by American soldiers as mentioned previously. This limited engagement in the second phase of the war is going to be discussed in the following chapter on the United States involvement.

- The Japanese Empire´s invasion and first steps to consolidation of power

In the following section, the first phase of the war is explored from the perspective of the invading Japanese Empire. Especially motives and steps taken by the Japanese to establish power in the Philippines are discussed.

As discussed previously, the surprising nature of the Japanese attack in December 1941 and the Germany First Principle led to a successful advance of Imperial troops on the Philippine islands. On January 2nd, less than a month after the first bombardments, Manila was under Japanese control. The capture of the Philippine capital as a "*symbol of Western preeminence in Asia*" was a highly important victory for the Japanese.[83] This was followed by the surrender of Filipino and American troops in Bataan on April 9th. The commander in charge, General Homma, seemed indifferent to the atrocities committed by his troops during the invasion.[84]

With this surrender, the Japanese Empire was destined to be the new but contested ruler of the archipelago for almost three years. The Japanese followed two main objectives: First of all, the political integration of the new territory into the rapidly growing empire and secondly the economic development and exploitation of its resources.[85] These goals were later united under the formation of the so called "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" (GEACPS) or *Daitōa Kyōeiken* in Japanese. The GEACPS was an organization that understood itself as the liberator from Western oppression; in the case of the Philippines, this meant freedom from the United States, a prosperity under Filipino nationalism.[86]

These selfless ambitions that were genuinely believed by some Japanese theorists and politicians,[87] were highly contrasted by the behavior of troops stationed in the country: Systematic sexual violence by the Japanese Army known under the

[83] Duus and Hall, *The Cambridge History of Japan*. 347.
[84] Joseph Connor, "Butcher of Bataan: Masaharu Homma's Troops Committed Countless Atrocities in the Philippines.," *World War II* 37, no. 1 (June 1, 2022): 38–48, http://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?p=AONE&sw=w&issn=08984204&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CA702426080&sid=googleScholar&linkaccess=abs. 45.
[85] Duus and Hall, *The Cambridge History of Japan*. 302.
[86] Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*. 453.
[87] Matthiessen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines from the Late 19th Century to the End of World War II*. 222-225.

euphemistic term of "Comfort Women" also found its way to the subjugated Filipinas. Many were forced into prostitution, while the Japanese controlled media advertised for work in the various clubs and brothels springing up during the occupation.[88] Public figures speaking up against this practice were silenced such as Bishop Wilhelm Finnemann, who was tortured and secretly executed.

Therefore, the primary concern of Japanese officials seemed more about the "*public's image of their armed forces*" and not the treatment of civilians under their control or even the well-being of their own troops.[89] A psychological study of the Imperial Army highlighted that only a small fraction of soldiers were held accountable for their crimes, while physical abuse by military superiors towards their subordinates was part and parcel to indoctrinate unquestioned obedience.[90]

The case of the Japanese Military or Secret Police "Kempeitai" is another example of the enormous discrepancy between the official propaganda of benevolence and the reality for ordinary Filipinos. Playing *"a crucial role in the administration of the Philippines*", this organization was not only assigned to combat guerilla activities but also to protect the Philippine population even against the minor acts of humiliation such as slapping without a reason.[91] Instead of fulfilling this obligation, the Kempeitai became one of the most feared organizations during the occupation and its headquarters in Fort Santiago, the old Spanish castle of Manila, earned an abominable reputation among the Filipinos. Only in some cases did the Kempeitai manage to prevent assaults on civilians.[92]

Turning to political incorporation, Prime Minister Hideki Tojo came for a state visit to Manila on May 5th. While the Japanese victory on Bataan was at hand, Tojo delivered a speech in front of a large crowd emphasizing new political ties between the Philippines and Japan.[93] To achieve the political integration, the Japanese could rely on a considerable part of the local elite. Politicians of the former government

[88] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 32.
[89] Janice Matsumura, "Combating Indiscipline in the Imperial Japanese Army: Hayao Torao and Psychiatric Studies of the Crimes of Soldiers," *War in History* 23, no. 1 (2016): 79–99, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26059743. 98.
[90] Matsumura. 90-91.
[91] Matthiessen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines from the Late 19th Century to the End of World War II*. 174-175.
[92] Victor Buencamino, "Diary Entry," January 21, 1942.
[93] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 40.

under president Quezon were sought out consciously and convinced to give their support to guarantee a smooth transition into the Japanese led GEACPS.[94] Together with the Philippine Executive Commission military governor Homma administered the country in the first phase of the war.

In order to spread to idea of the GEACPS, two hundred men from the Propaganda Corps of the Japanese Army arrived in Manila 1941 with the following duties: "*to engage in propaganda campaigns for the local people and enemy soldiers in the would-be occupied areas, report to the Japanese at home the state of the Southern Area so as to keep up morale and heighten the fighting spirit of the Japanese soldiers.*"[95]

In the bigger picture, the new ideology of Pan-Asianism was introduced to the Philippines. As described above, this Japanese concept advocated the unity and emancipation of Asian people in contrast to Western imperialism.[96] Another aspect to subdue the Filipino identity, was to bring the Catholic Church under Imperial control. For this goal, the Bishop of Tokyo was brought to Manila to convince Archbishop Michael Doherty to cooperate with the Japanese. This meeting was described as rather fruitless considering the damage already caused by the imprisonment or murder of priests and nuns or the fact that the Japanese had converted the University of Santo Tomas, the oldest university in Asia, into a prison camp.[97]

Regarding the economic promises, the main objective of Imperial Japan was the exploitation of its new territories: Among other occupied countries, the Philippines in the GEACPS was used to contribute to the massive need of raw materials for the Japanese war efforts. Benefit for the occupied Philippines was not a priority of the Japanese military administration.[98]

Thus far, the Japanese Empire had made their first step towards establishing power in the Philippines. With its surprising invasion, the Imperial Army had won the Philippine archipelago not without committing first atrocities. This stood in harsh

[94] Matthiessen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines from the Late 19th Century to the End of World War II*. 95-97.
[95] Motoe Terami-Wada, "The Japanese Propaganda Corps in the Philippines," *Philippine Studies* 38, no. 3 (1990): 279–300, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42633191. 281.
[96] Matthiessen, 146.
[97] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 33.
[98] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*. 182.

contrast to the official propaganda that advocated the Japanese as a benevolent power. The second stage of the war is going to deal with the solidified occupation in Manila and the Philippines. In the next chapter on Japan, the efforts to implement its Pan-Asian ideas and achieve its economic and political goals are going to be discussed.

III. Second Stage of the War: The Philippines under Japan´s control May 1942 – October 1944

- The Filipino struggle: Resistance, collaboration and life under the occupation

With the Japanese invasion, Philippine society experienced an unparalleled wave of mass violence wreaking havoc on the morale and social fabric of the country. After overcoming this first shock, the collective trauma continued on different levels in the following two and a half years until the return of US troops in October 1944. The following chapter moves on to consider the longest period of World War II from the Philippine perspective.

After the Japanese gained full control over the country in May 1942, the Philippines witnessed a transitory phase of political assimilation and collaboration. In the capital, parts of the political elite accepted the new situation: "*Pragmatic above all else, a significant portion of the elite – fourteen out of twenty four senators and thirty five out of ninety eight representatives – collaborated with the Japanese command, to ensure retention of their political and economic power*."[99]

In an effort to reeducate and control the Filipinos, a fundamental educational reform was decreed by the Japanese. Teachers had to undergo strict examination to be accepted in the reopened school system that emphasized national history and Filipino language; a positive side effect of this reform was that for the very first time in its history, Filipinos were allowed to teach their own history.[100] Besides this, an order to teach the Japanese language nationwide with publications such as "*Japanese made easy: a simplified grammar with* practical *exercises for Beginners*" in Manila 1942 was put into practice.[101] The enthusiasm among the native population was low as enrollment in the new school system dropped drastically; a professor also noted the traumatic impact on the youngest of society: "*Instead of the 900 students we used to*

[99] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*. 181.
[100] Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*. 454-155.
[101] Philip Parker, *Manila: Webster´s Timeline History, 1175 - 1970* (San Diego: ICON Group International, 2009). 144.

have, we now have only 90 […] *The students are noticeably serious. The uncertainty and torment surrounding them has left its mark on their personalities*."[102]

A milestone in the collaboration was the replacement of the multi-party system by a one party system. In December 1942, "the Association for Service to the New Philippines", also known by its Filipino acronym Kalibapi, was called into existence under the supervision of the Japanese military governors. The Kalibapi united nationalist Filipino ideas with the broader concept of Pan-Asianism of the GEACPS and was meant to satisfy the Philippine independence movement and integrate the country under Japanese supervision.[103]

As mentioned previously, the Japanese sponsored government could rely on the support of a number of prominent political figures. Personalities from the Philippine-American War such as Emilio Aguinaldo and Artemio Ricarte took part in the collaboration often for various personal and political reasons.[104] Officially, the Kalibapi was led by Jorge Vargas with Benigno Aquino, Benigno Ramos and Pio Duran as other notable members. Aquino served under the legitimate government of Quezon, while Ramos had founded a split-away movement called the *Sakdalistas* (sakdal=accuse in Filipino) after a disagreement with Quezon. Ramos also founded the *Makabayang Katipunan ng mga Pilipino* (=Patriotic Association of Filipinos) or simply Makapili, a militant arm of collaborators. Together with Duran, a radical pro Japanese Pan-Asianist, he shared a hostile sentiment against the Americans.[105]

The arguably most important political event during the occupation took place in late 1943: To win the support of the Filipino people, independence was to be granted earlier than promised by the USA. This promise was realized with the inauguration of the Second Philippine Republic on October 14 1943.

Now formally independent, the nominated president of the new republic was Jose P Laurel, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The newly drafted

[102] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry," July 16, 1942.
[103] Sven Matthiessen, "Re-Orienting the Philippines: The KALIBAPI Party and the Application of Japanese Pan-Asianism, 1942–45," *Modern Asian Studies* 53, no. 2 (March 2019): 560–81, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X17000294. 569.
[104] Satoshi Ara, "Emilio Aguinaldo under American and Japanese Rule Submission for Independence?," *Philippine Studies: Historical & Ethnographic Viewpoints* 63, no. 2 (2015): 161–92, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24672333.
[105] Matthiessen, "Re-Orienting the Philippines." 568.

constitution moved in an autocratic direction with the president having much more power than the legislative and judicial branch of the government.[106]

This government was, of course, only independent on paper as the military presence and the Japanese control in all parts of politics, media and culture remained intact. For instance, all ministries had assigned Japanese "advisors" in them, who virtually controlled and reported everything.[107] The role of the Second Philippine Republic including President Jose Laurel was ambiguous, but the general depiction as only pure opportunism by the collaborators does not seem to hold ground in the case of Laurel. The newly inaugurated president would rather have chosen the exile but was ordered by Quezon personally to remain in Manila and cooperate with the Japanese in order to protect the Philippines from harm.[108] His Inaugural Address also showed a hidden position, when he mentions Bataan alongside other historical battles by the Filipinos in their struggle for freedom and concludes with a call to work towards genuine independence without mentioning the Japanese Empire: "*Every drop, every trickle of individual effort shall be grooved into a single channel of common endeavor* […] *hurdling all difficulties and demolishing all barriers in the way of our single purpose and common determination to make our independence stable, lasting and real.*"[109]

In contrast to this position, however, the general collaborationist discourse appeared to be hollow. The speeches of other representatives of the Second Republic such as Jorge Vargas continually praised the Japanese virtues and emphasized the thankfulness of the Filipino population to be included in the Japanese Empire.[110] Considering the massive violence during the invasion and the daily humiliations and cruelties suffered by many Filipinos, this was not only devoid of reality but undermined a common understanding of national identity narrative. Only some politicians such as Claro Recto voiced their anger for the violence suffered by

[106] Matthiessen. 142.
[107] Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*. 453.
[108] Agoncillo and Guerrero. 450.
[109] ABS-CBN, "Inaugural Address of President Jose P. Laurel, October 14, 1943," ABS-CBN News, June 27, 2022, https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/27/22/inaugural-address-of-president-jose-p-laurel-october-14-1943.
[110] Vicente L. Rafael, "Anticipating Nationhood: Collaboration and Rumor in the Japanese Occupation of Manila," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 1, no. 1 (March 1991): 67–82, https://doi.org/10.3138/diaspora.1.1.67. 71.

Philippine population. The daily humiliations for law-abiding citizens of being slapped by Japanese sentries was a point for contention.[111]

On the other side of the Pacific, the exiled government under President Quezon was now residing in Washington DC, where it resumed its duties with the following principle tasks: to uphold the Filipino morale as far as possible, to convince the US administration to change its *Germany First* agenda to the war with Japan, work towards a faster independence and to prepare for the construction of a post-war Philippines.[112] He had to do this all in declining health, as he was suffering from tuberculosis.

As discussed in the previous chapter, communication with the occupied Philippines was immensely restricted limiting the possibility for Quezon to achieve the first goal. Despite this fact, the president used the available means to distribute "*several speeches to the Philippines assuring them of the impending liberation, and urging Filipinos not to lose hope and fall for Japanese propaganda*."[113]

What became clear was that the occupation brought a political duality between the legitimate government in exile and Japanese collaborators. It exposed an internal state of confusion or mixed loyalties that challenged the very identity of the country. The "*Japanese occupation revealed the vulnerability of the Filipino oligarchy and thus made painfully obvious the rift between class and national interests that had been previously repressed*."[114]

A result of this internal identity crisis and split through the Philippine society is seen in the reactions to the collaboration, which are going to be discussed in the following. Generally, the Philippines presents a special case when it is compared to the other countries under Japanese control in World War II: Resistance in the form of guerilla movements was not only the largest in Southeast Asia but it also had "*support of virtually the entire population, and the Japanese proved incapable of stifling them despite savage repression.*"[115] Even with all efforts to proclaim themselves as the

[111] Alfredo G. Parpan, "The Japanese and the Philippine Church, 1942-45," *Philippine Studies* 37, no. 4 (1989): 451–66, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42633149. 461.
[112] Ricardo T. Jose, "Governments in Exile," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 8, no. 1–2 (March 1, 1999): 179–93, https://doi.org/10.1177/011719689900800110. 184-185.
[113] ibid.
[114] Rafael, "Anticipating Nationhood." 69-70.
[115] Steinberg, *The Philippines*. 102.

liberator from American domination, the Japanese Empire could only win parts of the political elite and a relatively small minority of normal Filipinos to their cause.[116] This power vacuum was filled by the guerilla movements, which were characterized by a great heterogeneity of actors and motivations: Ethnic Chinese resistance, communist Huks and US or Philippine Army led partisan troops operated next to outlaws and other groups with less noble motives.[117] As an American soldier and guerilla leader described it, the situation was that of "*chronic discord"* and resembled the "*solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short*" State of Nature coined by Thomas Hobbes.[118]

The guerilla movement was not unchallenged: The above mentioned Mapakili or colloquially also called Sakdals were the active domestic answer to everyone opposing the Japanese. The Makapili´s task in the cooperation was not primarily military force but rather an intelligence service to the Japanese. Thus, these groups of collaborators consisted of informants among the civil population and organized in so called "*neighborhood associations*". These associations were nothing but "*a widespread surveillance network*" in order to track down any resistance to the new rulers of the Philippines.[119]

As pointed out earlier, most Filipinos were supportive of the Anti-Japanese resistance but reasons for the collaboration were exceedingly convincing. According to Yay Panlilio, most collaborators were "*nothing more than discontented farmers* [who] *had labored in an economic slavery*."[120] This unearthed social inequality can be seen as one of the main drive for the internal division, which highlighted the differences of elite interests and interests of the rural population.[121] While a large part of the elite cooperated with the Japanese wholeheartedly, the occupation had left the already impoverished peasantry without a stable social order.

Instead they were left in between the blurry front lines of a traumatizing guerilla war and collapsing economic conditions: The continued occupation brought

[116] ibid.
[117] General Staff United States Army, "Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific, Volume I." 300-301.
[118] Robert Lapham and Bernard Norling, *Lapham's Raiders: Guerrillas in the Philippines, 1942-1945* (University Press of Kentucky, 1996), https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5hjzz1. 103.
[119] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*. 183.
[120] Panlilio, *The Crucible : An Autobiography by Colonel Yay, Filipina American Guerrilla*. 45-46.
[121] Rafael, "Anticipating Nationhood." 69-70.

hyperinflation and economic depression to the country. Because it was almost worthless, the Japanese-issued Philippine Peso was dubbed "*Mickey Mouse*" money, while ordinary people resorted to a simple "*buy-and-sell*" based economic system. [122]

Next to the failing economy, it was the issue of food security that spiraled the country downwards. The Japanese Empire was more concerned about extracting and exporting food from the Philippines, while being confronted with an utterly damaged transportation system.[123] Additionally, it was the massive need to feed occupying soldiers on the archipelago, which numbered 250,000 troops stationed at its height.[124] Together these factors resulted in growing food scarcity during the occupation.

While the second stage of World War II and the Philippines was marked by political consolidation on the top, the crisis was increasing in pressure at the bottom. In the middle of all of this, was Manila: In early 1943, its population nearly doubled because of the hunger, which drove people into the Philippine capital.[125] The city provided relative peace and security for its inhabitants from the violence of outlaws and brutal Japanese retaliations, whereas in the countryside terror and banditry often reigned.[126]

Nevertheless, collective trauma continued in various forms of assault on the population of Manila. In an effort to uncover and suppress any Anti-Japanese sentiment, raids were conducted by the occupiers:" [T]*he military police is conducting an intensive search* […] *tracing every nook and corner for possible signs of communications, collaboration or relationships with the enemy*."[127] People suspected of participating in the resistance against the Japanese Empire were brought to the headquarters of the military police Kempeitai in Fort Santiago. The reputation of the fort grew into an infamy as most of the thousands of suspects never returned from the torturous interrogations.[128] The mass violence set deeper and more subtle levels of consciousness inside the Philippine society in motion. The primary example was the

[122] Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History of the Filipino People*. 459-460.
[123] Francis K. Danquah, "Japan's Food Farming Policies in Wartime Southeast Asia: The Philippine Example, 1942-1944," *Agricultural History* 64, no. 3 (1990): 60–80, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3743634. 77-78.
[124] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*. 182.
[125] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 81.
[126] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry," August 1, 1942.
[127] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry," July 22, 1942.
[128] Panlilio, *The Crucible : An Autobiography by Colonel Yay, Filipina American Guerrilla*. 165.

frequent public slapping for not bowing correctly. This was not merely humiliating but it also attacked a central sociocultural trait of the Filipino people known as "hiya", which translates roughly to shame. Hiya – a deeply ingrained embarrassment – was always felt when Japanese soldiers exerted violent disciplinary measures on normal citizens.[129]

Even though the Japanese occupation lasted for a relatively short period of time, a cultural dimension of this traumatic period in Philippine history became apparent: After 350 years of Spanish and American colonization, the Philippines had adapted to a value system that was suddenly challenged by the ideas of Pan-Asianism.[130] This Pan-Asianism was introduced through the already discussed educational reforms and Japanese controlled media, but also encompassed the control of national and religious sentiment.

Next to the previously mentioned collaborationist Kalibapi party, which attempted to submit the national aspirations of independence and self-determination, the religious life of the Filipinos was another area the Japanese attacked. Juan Labrador, a Spanish clergyman and university rector in Manila, observed that Japanese officials despised the church but were aware of its importance to controlling the Philippines. Therefore, subtle restrictions aimed to undermine the religious constitution without losing even more support among the Filipino population.[131] This can be seen also as an important factor when it comes to the passive resistance against Imperial Japan. A main factor for disobedience and distrust against the new ruler can be found exactly in the shared religious and cultural traditions of the Philippines: "*In the Japanese Occupation the religious, i.e., Christian, background serves as a built-in roadblock against Japanese blandishments of collaboration."*[132]Culturally, the democratic values of four decades under American rule had left their impact on the mindset of the Filipino people.[133]

When looking at the reactions of the Filipinos to the challenge imposed on their value system, the gravity of cultural war during the occupation became visible: While

[129] Rafael, "Anticipating Nationhood." 78.
[130] Steinberg, *The Philippines*. 103-104.
[131] Juan Labrador, "Dairy Entry," August 9, 1942.
[132] Parpan, "The Japanese and the Philippine Church, 1942-45." 455.
[133] ibid.

many Filipinos had joined the guerilla units across the country, others found more subtle ways to express their discontent with the occupation. Theaters are one prominent example of this. Officially forced to promote Japanese benevolence, the stage was turned into a platform of subversive messages.

A play named "Dawn of Freedom" illustrated this vividly:

> The villain of the story was a Filipino guerilla and the hero was a Japanese officer who persuades him to surrender. The director, who was not particularly pro-Japanese, could not simply accept the script and he came up with the idea of casting one of the most popular actors of the time, Leopoldo Salcedo, as the guerilla. Every time Salcedo would utter his defiance to the Japanese, the audience cheered. [134]

Comics proved to be another artistic way to express the real sentiments of the general public: The scarcity of common goods along with the random confiscations by Japanese soldiers was criticized behind metaphors and a humorous façade.[135]

The issue of food scarcity intensified with the proceeding war, which was favoring the Japanese Empire less and less. Contributing to the hunger was also the successful armed resistance movement from the rural areas, which were contested or often even dominated by anti-Japanese guerilla. Groups such as the Huks frequently attacked granaries and the already damaged transport system in the countryside.[136] Guerilla activity was not limited to the countryside: In close proximity to Manila, various units such as the Hunters ROTC (=Reserve Officer Training Corps) and the Marking Guerillas united as the Fil-American Irregular Troops under American guidance.[137]

Japanese authorities engaged increasingly with food confiscation towards the end of the war, when the Imperial Army tripled its garrison in the Philippines. Additionally,

[134] Motoe Terami-Wada, "Philippine Stage Performances During the Japanese Occupation," *Philippine Studies* 29, no. 1 (1981): 77–88, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42632573. 86.
[135] Jeremiah Bonilla, "How Filipinos Opposed the Japanese Occupation (1942–1954)." *Horizons 4*, 1 (September 2019) Last accessed 8 June, 2023. https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/4cf8aa4a-f907-4f5e-9462-9844412b7b79/content 14.
[136] Danquah, "Japan's Food Farming Policies in Wartime Southeast Asia." 74–79.
[137] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 55.

rural landlords fled to the apparent safety of the city, which brought even more instability.[138]

Only a few weeks before the return of the American forces and close to the end for the Japanese occupation, the Philippines suffered a political loss: On August 1 1944, war time President Quezon died after his struggles with tuberculosis. "*It won't be long now*"[139] was one of his last sentences on his deathbed after receiving news of further advancements towards the Philippines by MacArthur. Vice president Sergio Osmena was now official head of state for the exiled Philippine government.

To conclude this section, the occupation of the Philippines from 1942 till 1944 continued to be the overwhelming situation, which had befallen the country since the Japanese invasion. One the one side, political assimilation of the elite and collaboration with Imperial Japan consolidated. On the other side, the majority of Filipinos resented the Japanese and formed active as well as passive resistance against the oppression. These internal conflicts were fueled and accelerated by the continuous mass violence of the occupiers and growing precariousness of food supplies in urban areas such as Manila.

[138] Rafael, "Anticipating Nationhood." 69.
[139] Emigdio Cruz, "When President Quezon Broke into Tears, 1947," *The Philippines Free Press Online* (blog), 1947, https://philippinesfreepress.wordpress.com/1947/08/01/when-president-quezon-broke-into-tears-1947/.

- The United States and its continuous support

As described in the previous chapter on the involvement of the United States, the fall of Bataan had temporarily shifted the focus from the Philippines to halting Japanese advances from reaching Australia. What follows is an account of the American perspective on the years 1942 until 1944.

According to official US Army reports, three phases can be identified to characterize American engagement on the islands until the campaign to reconquer the Philippines in October 1944: First of all, a period of reestablishing communication with the remaining troops as well as gathering information about the enemy; secondly, the establishment of regional sections to coordinate the guerilla movements; lastly, "*the merging of all guerrilla activities with the actual invasion of the Philippine Islands.*"[140] In practice, this meant rebuilding the highly limited communication with US troops left behind in 1942: At some point, only a single radio station existed in order to stay in touch the widespread and isolated troops all over the islands.[141]

While the general attention on Europe by the Roosevelt administration made this already difficult, the heterogeneity of the guerillas proved also an issue: All resistance was Anti-Japanese but "*often divided among themselves* [and] *separated into intractable rival factions engaged in a bitter struggle for power. There was no established demarcation of authority and no defined chain of command*."[142] In other words, this not only meant confrontations with independent and ideologically completely different groups such as the communist Huks but also competition among the US led guerillas.[143]

The remains of the USAFE had to combat not only the Japanese but also general lawlessness during the occupation. Guerilla units such as the one of Robert

[140] General Staff United States Army, "Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific, Volume I." 297.
[141] General Staff United States Army. 299.
[142] General Staff United States Army. 302.
[143] Thomas R. Nypaver, "Command and Control of Guerrilla Groups in the Philippines, 1941-1945" (School of Advanced Military Studies United States Army Command and General Staff College, June 2017). 26.

Lapham in a province north of Manila, fought the banditry flourishing in the power vacuum left behind by the Japanese and the overwhelmed Philippine security forces.[144]

Another aspect of American involvement during the second stage of war, concerned the imprisonment of virtually all US citizens by the Japanese. While the guerilla warfare waged by US military personnel was just beginning, the internment camps had proven deadly for most American soldiers: In August 1942, the death toll in Camp O´Donnell, the destination for most Bataan Death March survivors, was reported to be 30 000.[145]

Concerning the civilian internment camps, life inside was characterized by harsh conditions: At least 5000 Americans next to nationals from other Allied countries were held in prison camps across the Philippines.[146] Most of them were concentrated in the Santo Tomas and Bilibid prison camps in Manila, but also in other camps such as in Camp Holmes in Baguio City. A short diary entry offers a glimpse into the overcrowded and dire circumstances for the internees:" [W]*e hope again, as we hoped all of 1942* […] *our teeth crumbling, our bodies lacking Vitamin B, still lacking toilet paper and using septic tanks for 517 which were intended for 250. As Dr. Hall says, this camp has 18th-century sanitation.*"[147]

With the continuation of the occupation, the extreme food shortages also affected the conditions for the US guerilla: American soldiers were plagued by hunger, disease and awaited a cruel death in case they fell into the hands of Japanese troops.[148] After overcoming the communicational and organizational structure problems, the guerilla units became more efficient, when the resistance movement was integrated into regional sections in June 1943. While the puppet government had not yet been inaugurated, frequent contact through various radio stations had been reestablished mainly in the southern parts of the archipelago. [149]As the American return was becoming realistic scenario again, the pressure on US citizens increased drastically.

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[144] Lapham and Norling, *Lapham's Raiders*. 78-79.
[145] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry," August 28, 1942.
[146] Frances B. Cogan, *Captured : The Japanese Internment of American Civilians in the Philippines, 1941-1945* (Athens, Ga: University of Georgia Press, 2000), https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=442314&site=ehost-live. 1-2.
[147] Natalie Crouter, "Diary Entry," January 1, 1943.
[148] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 99.
[149] General Staff United States Army, "Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific, Volume I." 303.

Towards the final stage of the war, the number of imprisoned civilians grew, when all remaining "*enemy aliens*" were brought into the prison camps. This included the previous grudgingly accepted clergy.[150] In 1944, the aim had shifted again: Orchestrated under the leadership of General MacArthur and the Allied Intelligence Bureau, the guerilla movements were in the disposition to coordinate attacks and help pave the way for the recapture and liberation of the Philippines.[151]

The previous section has shown how the limited activities by the United States since the surrender in April 1942 developed until the return of the American Army to the Philippines in 1944. Additionally the fate of soldiers and civilians alike have been discussed.

[150] James T. Carroll, "Sentenced to Death – Destined for Life: Catholic Religious and Japanese Occupation," *American Catholic Studies* 113, no. 3/4 (2002): 57–74, http://www.jstor.org/stable/44195161. 66.
[151] General Staff United States Army, "Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific, Volume I." 302-304.

- The Japanese Empire establishing the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"

The section below describes the activities of the Japanese Empire after gaining control gaining control of the entire Philippines. Especially the attempts to win over the Philippines are going to be discussed.

Before invading the Philippines, the General Staff of the Imperial Army was optimistic: A defeat of US forces would eventually be followed by the support of the Filipino population.[152] With the fall of Bataan and the relative stability in vast parts of the islands, the Japanese had two and a half years to incorporate the new territory into their Pan-Asian project of the GEACPS.

One of the major instruments to implement the Pan-Asianism was the Kalipabi party, which aimed to bring the Filipinos politically on board. The Kalibapi was formed on the anniversary of national hero José Rizal's death, after all other parties had been dissolved. This highly symbolic date was supposed to link Filipino nationalist sentiment with Pan-Asianism.[153] As the party speaker Benigno Aquino stated in his speech, the GEACPS "*was portrayed as the fulfilment of Rizal´s legacy*" that served as an aspiration for the Filipino people to follow Rizal's model of self-sacrifice. [154]

Despite these efforts of the regime, the party was never really successful, mainly due to the Westernized mindset the Filipino people had developed.[155] Additionally, omnipresence of arrogant and cruel behavior by Japanese soldiers contributed to the lack of support. At the height of its power in 1943, the Kalibapi had reached 550 000 members but was never "*deeply rooted in Philippine society as a national body.*"[156] Considering a population of roughly 16 million people, this was a significant portion of the Philippine society. Nevertheless, the party was seen more as

[152] Matthiessen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines from the Late 19th Century to the End of World War II*. 89.
[153] Matthiessen, "Re-Orienting the Philippines." 569-570.
[154] ibid.
[155] Matthiessen, "Re-Orienting the Philippines." 579.
[156] ibid.

a network in order to monitor and control the population, while the Makapili served as spies and ruthless auxiliary enforcers of Japanese rule.[157]

The work for the propaganda corps proved challenging as well: On one occasion, the propaganda corps saw the vision of the GEACPS as an idea too "*difficult to explain*" to the ordinary people: Instead they opted to point out simple racial differences between Americans and Filipinos to win them for their ideology.[158]

A main outlet for the Japanese propaganda was the "Tribune." Based in Manila and formerly one of the biggest newspapers with high circulation among the population, the newspaper shifted its focus with the arrival of propaganda corps. In 1943, the primary focus of the Tribune was to convince the general public of "*the inevitability of a Japanese victory and stimulating greater cooperation with the military administration.*"[159] In 1944 when a Japanese defeat was already in sight, the propaganda shifted into condemning the "*fence sitting*" or resistance supporting the Filipino population. The Japanese encountered difficulties also by a considerable language barrier. Officially the English language was banned, but it remained the common language throughout the occupation because most Filipinos did not speak Japanese and vice versa.[160]

In cultural terms, the range of measures to form the new Philippines under Japanese guidance varied. This included the large scale educational reform to more basic approaches such as renaming all streets and places remembering the American past with new Japanese names.[161] A fundamental aspect was to bring the Philippine religiosity into alignment with the ambitions of the Japanese Empire. In order to achieve this goal, archbishop Taguchi from Osaka was sent to Manila with the task to curb the predominant influence of American and European priests in the Catholic clergy and reform the resented tax exemption of the Church.[162]

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[157] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*. 183.
[158] Terami-Wada, "The Japanese Propaganda Corps in the Philippines." 300.
[159] Ricardo T. Jose, "The 'Tribune' During the Japanese Occupation," *Philippine Studies* 38, no. 1 (1990): 45–64, https://www.jstor.org/stable/42633163. 53.
[160] Rafael, "Anticipating Nationhood." 72-73.
[161] Frank Ephraim, *Escape to Manila : From Nazi Tyranny to Japanese Terror* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=581518&site=ehost-live. 100.
[162] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 61.

In November 1943, the Japanese Empire hosted the Greater East Asia Conference in Tokyo and invited Jose Laurel as the Philippine head of state as well. The solidarity, which developed between the two countries during World War II, can be mainly "*understood as part of Japans ideology*[163]" of the GEACPS. However, the Japanese intellectuals and propagandists also shared something with their US predecessors. The idea of benevolent assimilation stayed and also the "*mission of bringing prosperity to the Philippines but* ["but" italicized in the original text] *with the help of Japan*."[164]

While the Greater East Asia Conference in Tokyo meant to demonstrate political power and unity, the decline of the Japanese Pan-Asian project had already begun with a series of military defeats. The first turning point was reached with the defeat at the Midway, an atoll halfway through the Pacific, and in Guadalcanal on the Solomon Islands in 1942. With the losses of New Guinea and the Marianas in 1944, the Philippines became "*the last major geographic roadblock that stood between American forces and the Japanese homeland*."[165]

In the last months prior to the American return to Philippine soil, the atmosphere in occupied Manila was that of deep mistrust: The hostile Filipino population sparked fear and rumors of possible coups among Japanese officials.[166] With the actual invasion by the US army, this mistrust the Japanese military and the Filipino population would deepen even further.

In summary, the Japanese Empire had failed to realize its project of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Military defeats in the Pacific have changed the prospects quickly and Japan found itself more and more in the defensive. The Philippines as the last geographical hurdle against an invasion by the USA on the Japanese islands is going to be discussed in the last chapter.

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[163] Takamichi Serizawa, "Japanese Solidarity Discourse on the Philippines during the Second World War," *Philippine Studies: Historical & Ethnographic Viewpoints* 63, no. 1 (2015): 71–100, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24672308. 92-93.
[164] ibid.
[165] James Scott, *Rampage: MacArthur, Yamashita, and the Battle of Manila*, First edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2018). 32
[166] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 124.

IV. Third Stage of the War: America´s return and Japanese defeat October 1944 – March 1945

- The Filipinos in the final bloody months of war and occupation

The section that follows discusses the final months of the occupation in the Philippines. The arrival of the US army with legitimate Philippine president Osmena on the southern island of Leyte in October 1944 marked the onset of decline for the Japanese occupation. This short timeframe was characterized by intensified hardship and mass violence for the Philippines.

Soon after the landing, the US started to conduct airstrikes on the Philippines. Pressured by the Japanese, the puppet administration under Laurel declared war on the United States and martial law to maintain order domestically. This slowly but surely triggered the fall of the Second Philippine Republic and its relative authority:" *With the advent of the American air raids, the republic lost power. Officers and men of the Constabulary* [=Philippine police forces] *began to desert in large numbers, with their weapons; other government employees did not report for work, choosing to evacuate to safer areas. Government control began to collapse*."[167] The public security deteriorated even more.

Once again, Manila became the target for bombardments, but this time by the US and this led to a different mood among the inhabitants. Residents joyfully waved at planes circling over the city and celebrated the destruction of Japanese ships.[168] Despite a poster campaign and other propaganda attempts in the city tried to highlight the "*barbarism of the American bombers, inciting the people to air their indignation*", the real anger was directed towards the regular abuses by the Imperial Army.[169]

[167] Jose, "Governments in Exile." 189.
[168] Felipe Buencamino III, "Diary Entry," September 22, 1944-
[169] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry," September 26, 1944.

With the defeat turning more and more imminent for the Japanese and efforts to win over the Filipinos increasing in futility, public beatings and even executions in the capital were a common sight. People in the vicinity were gathered by soldiers and forced to watch the brutal executions with examples of victims having their eyes carved out, their private parts smashed with a club or being skinned alive.[170]

The intensifying violence was targeted towards any alleged guerilla fighters and sympathizers: Those accused of Anti-Japanese activities were brought to the infamous Fort Santiago for interrogation and often extreme torture. One example suffices to reveal the level of mass violence perpetrated in the old fort: In a case of complete negligence, four hundred Filipino prisoners choked to death in widespread overcrowded dungeons.[171] The mass violence unleashed on completely innocent people led to even more Filipinos joining the guerilla; the American return was expected more than ever with illegal radio stations popular in the capital: "*Conversation now-a-days is nothing but of Jap atrocities. The greatest propaganda agency for America is not the Voice of Freedom or KGEI or Free Philippines but Fort Santiago.*"[172]

Furthermore, so called punitive expeditions were carried out in the provinces with strong guerilla activity. Massacres against civilians in the surrounding provinces of Manila occurred more frequently with virtually everybody regardless of age or gender targeted and treated as a guerilla fighter.[173] The active resistance reacted with increased violence: In a wave of assassinations, collaborators of every position ranging "*from bankers and newspaper owners to policemen and even a provincial governor*" were often left mutilated in the streets of Manila as a warning.[174]

In terms of food security, the situation was extraordinarily desperate in the capital, where prices of ordinary goods had already been unattainable before. The scarcity turned gradually in to mass starvation, when the entire food distribution system began to collapse simultaneously with the advancement of US forces towards Manila.

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[170] Goldhagen, *Manila Memories*. 70.
[171] Chamberlain, *A Reckoning*. 27.
[172] Felipe Buencamino III, "Diary Entry," November 12, 1944.
[173] Chamberlain, *A Reckoning*. 33-36.
[174] Scott, *Rampage*. 66.

This is illustrated by the reports in November 1944: By then, the death toll forced city mayor Leon Guinto to organize "*pushcarts to remove the dead from the streets and sidewalks. By December the corpses of the dead were carted away in trucks every day.*" [175] The height of mass starvation was reached around Christmas Eve, when it was "*estimated that deaths due to chronic hunger in city* [were] *around 500 daily*."[176] The situation was also aggravated by the continuous US bombardments inflicted on the city. Next to the psychological pressure of the air raids, some bombs missed their targets, which resulted in deaths among civilians.[177]

Alongside these nightmarish conditions, the social fabric tore once more and Manila drowned in soaring crime rates: In order to survive, people turned to looting, robbery, prostitution and other crimes in the overcrowded city.[178] Meanwhile, the advancement of the US army towards Manila entered its final phase, when an enormous invasion force landed in Lingayen Golf on January 9, 1945: With 175 000 new men, the recapture of the capital was now realized from north and south.[179] The city was by then left basically without any guidance as the administration of the Second Philippine Republic had evacuated before Manila was enclosed by the US army. Laurel and part of his cabinet were evacuated and later forced to move to Japan, despite the wish to stay in the Philippines.[180]

The way to Manila was also paved by the guerilla fighters, who had been integrated into facilitating the land invasion on Luzon and received the American forces at the outskirts of Manila on February 3.[181] The overall effect of guerilla activity cannot be underestimated: It "*inspired a wider resistance by the general population throughout the islands*", "*discouraged meaningful collaboration*" and made it difficult for the Japanese to extract goods necessary for its war machinery. [182]

[175] Daniel F. Doeppers, *Feeding Manila in Peace and War, 1850–1945*, New Perspectives in Southeast Asian Studies (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016). 325.
[176] Felipe Buencamino III, "Diary Entry," December 21, 1944.
[177] Felipe Buencamino III, "Diary Entry," November 16, 1944.
[178] Scott, *Rampage*. 73-75.
[179] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 143.
[180] Jose, "Governments in Exile." 190.
[181] Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944*. 144.
[182] Morningstar. 147.

Upon this date, the last and most violent episode of the war came to the capital. The arrival of American troops started a month long intense urban warfare with the Japanese garrison left in Manila. Caught in between the US-Filipino and Japanese troops was a large number of civilians. Outnumbered and outgunned, the Imperial Japanese Army decided to commit numerous atrocities against civilians.

This traumatic dimension of the fateful days in Manila 1945 has been investigated minutely and encompasses large massacres inside churches, hospitals, public buildings or the Fort Santiago. In the midst of the battle, people seeking shelter were burned alive, stabbed to death or decapitated, while women and children suffered acts of extreme sexual violence.[183]

Survivors, who were streaming into the safe parts of the city, brought news of the horrors. The priest Juan Labrador, talking to the eyewitnesses, tried to capture the unspeakable mass violence suffered by Manilans in words:

> The accounts are so terrifying and so macabre that my spirit was filled with infinite bitterness, and I wept with tears of pain and indignation. From the sadness and sympathy arose an impotent anger against the infernal forces which vented its desperation and hate among the civilian populace. So many families of acquaintances and friends exterminated. So many mutilated. So many who escaped the Japanese hell lost everything but their lives. The hospitals –the few old ones which still remain, and a number of improvised ones– are filled with the wounded, whose hands or feet or body are perforated with bullets or shrapnels. Many are searching desperately for their lost loved ones. Manila is a picture of sadness impossible to describe.[184]

The horrors suffered by Manilans cannot be expressed by offering gory details of the massacres conducted by the Imperial Army. In this way, only the personal account of Labrador shall bear witness to convey the gravity of violence that was inflicted on the city in February 1945.

In the end, the civilian death toll was at least one hundred thousand, approximately a tenth of Manila´s inhabitants.[185] A similar number of civilian survivors were wounded[186], while the US army lost up to one thousand men only and the Japanese sixteen thousand. A dimension of ambivalence was added by heavy use

[183] Scott, *Rampage*.
[184] Juan Labrador, "Diary Entry,"February 18, 1945.
[185] Scott, *Rampage*. 51.
[186] Daniel F. Doeppers, *Feeding Manila in Peace and War, 1850–1945*. 328.

of artillery from US troops leading to the second highest cause of death among noncombatants. The Battle of Manila had lasted only from February 3 until March 3.

Next to the incomprehensible loss of human life stood the priceless loss of cultural goods. Among the estimated 90% of destroyed buildings in the historical city center were a lot of administrative buildings and museums such as "*the Philippine National Library and Museum´s collection of 550,000 books and pamphlets along with 2500 paintings, carvings and sculptures* (…) *the Scientific Library´s 320,000 texts and the 20,000 volumes in the Supreme Court Library*"[187] and many more.

A general sentiment was repeated after the Battle of Manila: The city, once known as the Pearl of the Orient, even though it "*could be rebuilt, it would be never the same. The destruction was simply too much, too complete*."[188]

The extent of destruction and loss of human lives caused by the battle has brought the Philippine capital in the ranks of most destroyed cities in World War II, most especially in the Pacific War between the United States and Imperial Japan. Officially General MacArthur declared liberation of the Philippines on July 4, but with the Battle of Manila the last significant and arguably most traumatic episode in the Philippine experience of World War II was over.

In the aftermath, not only Manila but the entire country was left in ruins: It is estimated that approximately one million Filipinos lost their lives despite an annual growth rate throughout reaching 18,472,755 in 1946.[189] The health conditions of the general public also suffered severely with widespread diseases and malnutrition among the population.

The impact of the war on the economy was enormous: Production of basic goods such as rice in 1946 shrank seriously in comparison to pre-war time.[190] National infrastructure was utterly destroyed throughout the islands with a total damage of public and private property estimated over 10 billion dollars. [191] In other words, the Philippines was back in economic "*infancy*" with a GDP that *"by war's end was*

[187] Scott, *Rampage*. 427.
[188] Scott. 429.
[189] *Facts about the Philippines* (Manila: Philippine Association, 1957). 64.
[190] *Facts about the Philippines*. 24–25.
[191] Scott, *Rampage*. 427.

reduced to 30 percent of the pre-war output level. The country also experienced the worst inflation in its history."[192]

In this dire situation, it became clear that the Philippines found itself in a situation with all conditions for suffering of a collective trauma: "*A society emerging from a major war, suffering from diminished economic resources, experiencing rampant internal conflict, or having shaky social solidarity is more trauma prone than others that are more solid in these respects.*"[193] When looking at the conditions stated by Alexander in the quote above, the Philippines fulfilled them certainly. Emerging from the highly destructive war, the violent death of countless civilians stands unparalleled in the first place.

The war had also brought about widespread devastation to infrastructure, agriculture, and industries, leading to a decline in economic resources with a long-lasting impact on the nation's ability to rebuild its economy. The diminished economic resources added to the hardships faced by the population, including the already existing poverty. Concerning the social solidarity, the Philippines experienced a complex situation with the issue of collaboration and a general lawlessness rampant during the occupation.

The conclusion aims to draw the connection between this clearly collective trauma and the Philippines of the presence.

[192] Gerardo P. Sicat, "'Economic Rehabilitation after World War II — Philippine Republic in Infancy,'" Philstar.com, April 10, 2019, https://www.philstar.com/business/2019/04/10/1908626/economic-rehabilitation-after-world-war-ii-philippine-republic-infancy.

[193] Alexander et al., *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. 36.

- The United States and its return: Collateral damage during the Battle of Manila

In the final stage of World War II, the US had reconquered most of the Japanese territories in the Pacific and Southeast Asia with the intention to attack the Japanese homeland itself. The Philippines was once more an important battlefield between the two belligerents.

The initial plan by MacArthur to liberate the Philippines was formed in early 1943[194] but it would take almost two more years until the general could fulfill his promise of returning to the islands. October 20 1944 became an historic date in military history when "*the largest mass of naval assault craft and warships ever concentrated in the Pacific sailed boldly into Leyte Gulf*."[195] Indeed, the Battle of Leyte has been widely described as the biggest naval battle in history. Prior to the American return, MacArthur had stressed the moral obligation to protect Filipino civilians from any unavoidable loss and destruction.[196] Even though the US Army had the upper hand militarily, the campaign to reconquer the large archipelago took several weeks until troops reached Manila.

However alongside the return of American troops, the situation inside the internment camps worsened every week as personal accounts show: "*Our adult death rate was climbing, and many of the older ones who had no supplementary food were dead or on the critical list*."[197] Cause of death for so many internees was "beri beri", a disease caused by malnutrition and an extreme lack of vitamin b.

The fate of American soldiers was similar with only a small percentage of men, who would survive the end of the war in 1945. A captured officer noted shortly before his own death that "*of about 20,000 captured on Luzon, only about 3000 remain* […] *always underfed and overworked and always treated in a cruel insulting manner*."[198]

[194] General Staff United States Army, "Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific, Volume I." 167.
[195] General Staff United States Army. 197.
[196] General Staff United States Army. 190-191.
[197] Tressa Cates, "Diary Entry," October 30, 1944.
[198] Carter B. Simpson, "Diary Entry," October 10, 1944.

With the US forces drawing closer to Manila and bombings intensifying, the situation in the capital became almost unbearable for its residents. An American woman, who had evaded internment through her marriage with French man, recounted the last days: "*It is this waiting that kills me* […] *We are filled with fear and anxiety for those inside the prisons, we agonize over the starving natives, and mingled with all that, we have a worrying tinge or two about our own fate.*"[199] On February 3rd, the waiting slowly came to an end when American troops arrived and conducted a bloody urban warfare against the rest of the Imperial Army in Manila. Two days later, the internment camps were finally liberated, ending the suffering after more than three years in captivity.

It took one month until the liberation was realized with America generally regarded and celebrated as the liberator from the brutal Japanese occupation. Yet, the Battle of Manila also left behind resentment against the US army.[200] The heavy use of American artillery combined with the relentless Japanese soldiers entrenched in the historical center of Manila, cost the lives of one hundred thousand civilians. About thirty to forty thousand victims are believed to have died as American collateral damage.[201] Winning back Manila was of highly symbolic value as a newspaper column commented: After the crushing defeat in 1942, the liberation of the Philippine capital was seen as a psychological and strategic turning point in the war between Japan and the United States.[202]

While General MacArthur tried to reduce the impact on the city and its inhabitants as much as possible, other military officials argued for even heavier use of artillery and bombing to limit deaths among US soldiers.[203] Another reason for a negative feeling towards the US was due to the irreplaceable loss of cultural heritage in the battle of Manila. This mixed feeling for some Filipinos about the role of the United States in liberating Manila continued after the war had ended.[204]

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[199] Gladys Savary, "Diary Entry," January 23, 1945.
[200] H. W. Brands, *Bound to Empire: The United States and the Philippines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). 209-210.
[201] Peter C. Parsons, "The Battle of Manila – Myth and Fact" (Ortigas WWII Library, 2008), https://www.battleofmanila.org/Parsons/The%20Battle%20of%20Manila%20-%20Myth%20and%20Fact%20-%20Peter%20Parsons%207.1%20130205.pdf. 13.
[202] Laurence E. Salisbury, "Importance of Manila," *Far Eastern Survey* 14, no. 4 (1945): 41–43, https://doi.org/10.2307/3022273.
[203] Scott, *Rampage*. 394.
[204] David Haward Bain, *Sitting in the Darkness: Americans in the Philippines* (Boston, Mass. u.a.: Houghton Mifflin, 1984). 117.

In combination with the first two chapters on the involvement on the United States, the strongly intertwined fate of the two countries became clear. This is especially true, when it came to collective trauma. The American and Filipino perspective highlighted the same experiences of its citizens, soldiers and civilians alike. However, the Battle of Manila has brought up a controversial topic to the US-Filipino relation.

- The Japanese Empire in retreat and defeat

The Japanese Empire had seen a slow but steady collapse of its vast territorial expansion in Southeast Asia and the Pacific region, long before the arrival of American forces in Leyte on October 20 1944. Especially after the loss of New Guinea and the Mariana islands, the critical demand for oil to support the massive war machinery was heavily affected.[205]

General Tomoyuki Yamashita, who served as the last military governor, was ordered to defend the Philippine archipelago from American advancement. His military skills with the spectacular conquest of Singapore and Malaya in the beginning of the war, had earned him the nickname "Tiger of Malaya". As the eventual defeat of the Japanese Empire seemed unavoidable, his object to defend the strategically important Philippines was meant to merely save time for homeland Japan to prepare itself for an American invasion.[206]

This crumbling empire was reflected in the level of confusion of the Japanese soldiers. Dozens of thousands of troops were hastily shipped to Manila and the rest of the country: "[S]*everal Jap ships have been able to land troops in Manila. Newly arrived troops looked haggard, weary and hungry. Some were asking for food from passers-by and many were asking if this was Australia*."[207] The US army landing on Leyte was especially demoralizing for soldiers and civilians, who had believed in a Japanese victory up until the last moment: When newspapers finally announced the return of American troops, it came as a complete surprise to some Japanese civilians in Manila.[208]

The Japanese Army was not only unable to halt the US advance into the southern parts of the Philippines but also cut off any supply for Yamashita and his troops.[209] Additionally, the Filipinos were now more hostile than ever against their oppressors, once American troops reached the Philippine capital on February 3rd.

[205] Scott, *Rampage*. 31-32.
[206] ibid.
[207] Felipe Buencamino III, "Diary Entry," November 10, 1944.
[208] Felipe Buencamino III, "Diary Entry," November 16, 1944.
[209] Scott, *Rampage*. 91-93.

Aware that the city was going to fall back into Allied hands, the Japanese General staff had withdrawn most of its troops: While Yamashita had ordered the remaining Japanese troops in the city to destroy infrastructure such as bridges to hamper the advance of MacArthur and then leave the city, the responsible naval officer Sanji Iwabuchi disobeyed. Instead, Iwabuchi began to prepare the city center and surrounding neighborhoods for an ultimate showdown. It was also under his direction that the numerous massacres were committed against civilians. The reason for his momentous decision to disobey and lead the city into battle is found in a hurt sense of pride due to a failure in his military career. [210]

Now, the never genuinely realized benevolent intention was replaced by boundless violence as a retrieved diary of an unidentified Japanese soldier highlights. On February 9, he "[b]*urned 1000 guerrillas to death*" – probably in Fort Santiago.[211] Documents such as this one were used as evidence in the war crime trials following the Battle of Manila.

With Manila back under American control, the short but tremendously impactful Japanese occupation had largely ended, even though Yamashita and the remaining Japanese troops continued to hide in the mountainous north of Luzon until the total surrender of Japan in August 1945.

This last section has briefly reviewed the perspective of Imperial Japan in the last stage of World War II in the Philippines. In this last phase, Japan was concentrated on saving time and prepare its own territory for an US invasion. The Philippines were reduced to a geographical hurdle and with the decision of a single military official, the already brutal occupation ended with the Manila Massacre in February 1945.

[210] ibid.
[211] Unidentified Japanese Soldier, "Diary Entry," February 9, 1945.

V. Conclusion

- Linking the past with the present

This thesis illustrated the collective trauma experienced by Philippine society during World War II from the perspective of Manila as the center of attention.
In its essence, a case study of Philippine history in World War II was formed. It applied a threefold definition of collective trauma established by the scholars Lerner, Hirschberger or Alexander. This angle helped to not only develop the understanding of collective trauma with the vivid example of Manila but it also aimed to unearth its possible lasting effect on the Philippines.

Evidence of the lasting effects were already discussed in the introduction. Surrounding the concept of identity as a narrative by Lerner, certain responses in the wake of collective trauma become more understandable. This narrative can take on different shapes but always with far reaching consequences: In her article "Acting out and working through: trauma and (in)security," Kate Schick discusses how states in the international system react after a shattered sense of security. Traumatizing collective experience can form the national narrative in the three different forms of "*heroic soldier, good and evil, and redemptive violence*."[212] While the question of national identity narratives is directly not part of the research, the previously mentioned educational reform by the Philippine House of Representatives points toward the first of these national narratives.

[212] Kate Schick, "Acting out and Working through: Trauma and (in)Security," *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 4 (2011): 1837–55, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23025578. 1854.

To take a Filipino voice into account, the historian Alfonso Aluit provides an answer on the legacy of World War II. In an article, which was quoted in the educational bill passed by the House of Representatives, he states the following:

> The war as a political and military story has been adequately discussed by historians and analysts, but the scars of war etched on the national psyche have become part of the Filipino character. The debasement of the public morality and the confusion over questions of what is ethical, and the brave but often unfocused refusal to countenance foreign intrusion, has become part of the Filipino personality. Any effort to gain insight into the Filipino will have to consider these points.[213]

For Aluit, it was first of all the general confusion and loss of public morale under the pressure of hunger and violence that had a lingering effect on his country. Secondly, the organized response of active and passive resistance against the Japanese left a lasting imprint on the Philippines. The common enemy helped to unite most Filipinos like no other event before and was therefore a genuinely national experience. This observation aligns with the investigation undertaken in the main part of this thesis.

Three complicated actors were involved in this research: The Philippines, the United States and Imperial Japan. The emphasis was, of course, on the Philippine perception in between the two great powers. It is essential to point out that the research looked at the interaction between those actors and within them. Occupation, collaboration and resistance often made it hard to distinguish the parties involved. Taken to the extreme, it can even be argued that the Philippines was not a real actor during the occupation as it had lost its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Even before, it was politically connected to its former colonial ruler the United States. At this point, it is worthwhile to recount the findings of the main part.

In the first stage of the war, the sudden and overwhelming invasion deeply shocked to the residents. One key word echoed and present in this phase was that of "collapse", especially when it came to Manila. The following war crisis contained various episodes of collective trauma including frequent bombardment of cities such as Manila and the Battle of Bataan with its atrocities. In the daily life of many Filipinos, physical and sexual abuse and humiliation became commonplace. This was not left

[213] Alfonso J. Aluit, "World War II in the Philippines," *The Philippines Free Press Online* (blog), April 9, 2000, https://philippinesfreepress.wordpress.com/2000/04/09/world-war-ii-in-the-philippines/.

without a reaction. Widespread and persistent guerilla activity and a mostly anti-Japanese population was the result of the invasion. Nevertheless, a considerable part of Philippine society chose to collaborate with Imperial Japan. This collaboration included the political and social elite. For the United States, the invasion was not less traumatic. Thousands of soldiers perished or were captured, while American civilians suffered in internment camps. The Bataan Death March is listed among the worst defeats in US history. The Japanese Empire as the third state involved in this conflict could claim victory and start with this as its mission to "free" Filipinos. From the onset of invasion, Japan was mostly dealt with as the perpetrator of the mass violence and therefore limited to this role.

The second stage lasted for almost two and a half years, after the Japanese were able to establish control over most Philippine territory. This occupation period split the Philippines deeply. Under the cultural and religious pressure and the cruel treatment by the Imperial Army, the majority of Filipinos remained hostile against the Japanese. Despite efforts to win over the Filipino people with a formal independence and a formally sovereign government, the guerilla movement remained active and ordinary citizens voiced their resentment through more subtle forms of resistance. The co-existence of the collaborationist Second Philippine Republic and the legitimate government highlighted this internal division and identity crisis on a political level.

In Manila, the tense situation was exemplified by the horrendous reputation of Fort Santiago. Thousands of suspected guerillas were tortured and killed in the old fort. Meanwhile in the countryside, chaos and war reigned with many people seeking refuge in the relative safety of the city. On a deeper level, the occupation also constituted an attack on Filipino identity and self-awareness.[214] While most Filipinos often reacted courageously in passive or active ways towards their oppressors, the other part profited from the collaboration with the Japanese. This immense split in society was especially apparent when looking at the political elite taking advantage of the situation and the majority opposing the Japanese.

[214] Matthiessen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines from the Late 19th Century to the End of World War II*. 9.

While the United States were reduced to autonomously acting guerilla units, the Japanese were able to assert a contested form of control on the islands. Its benevolent promises made through the GEACPS belied the cruel reality under which new allies such as the Filipinos would suffer. This discrepancy between Japanese propaganda theory and the practice of soldiers on the ground was an interesting finding that became visible through the analysis in the main part.

In the final stage of the war, hunger turned into mass starvation and large scale massacres were committed against the Filipino population. Besides the physical violence and collapse of law and order, this extreme hunger was the major collective experience of the Filipinos. It intensified to horrendous number of deaths from starvation with the return of American troops in October 1944 and the silent collapse of the Japanese-sponsored government. It is important to stress the significance of active and passive resistance, which helped to terminate the Japanese oppression. Despite life threatening risks, most Filipinos showed defiance in one form or another.

Finally, the overall experience of collective trauma concluded in Manila: The capital´s last chapter culminated in a violent and atrocious battle fought between American and Japanese troops. With a completely devastated city and one hundred thousand dead civilians, World War II had come to a bloody end. In the case of the United States and its interconnected fate with the Philippines, a bitter taste was left behind: With the collateral damage during the Battle of Manila a certain level of ambivalence became part of the liberation. The Japanese Empire as the perpetrator of mass violence was defeated. Its fruitless attempt to implement its Pan-Asianism in the archipelago during this rather short time span was over.

While the direct impact of World War II in Manila and the Philippines had ended, some of its effects would last beyond the immediate costs.

According to Benipayo, vice president of the Philippine World War II Memorial Foundation, especially the experience of extreme hunger by 1943 also left a mark for subsequent generations: "*By 1943, the Filipinos were starving. This had a psychological effect on those that survived the war - our parents and grandparents' generations. My own mother would have a "second" pantry, an upstairs cabinet where she hoarded canned goods.*"[215] She also argued the following concerning the economic bankruptcy in the post war period: Given the extent of the destruction, the Philippines was left mainly on its own to recover its completely devastated economy without enough substantial help from former allies or Japan. Not only Manila but most other cities and regions of the country saw destruction due to the war between Japan and the United States.[216]

Several questions raised with the investigation remain to be answered for future research. One issue is the reconciliation inside the Philippines and its links to the issue of collective trauma. As discussed in the introduction, there is a consensus among historians that the political and social structure remained almost the same before and after the war. Despite massive collaboration especially of the political elite, the Philippines remained largely stable. The author of this thesis suggests that research conducted in the future can add valuable insight in understanding domestic Philippine politics, when collective trauma is addressed.

Another of these areas of investigation are the bilateral relations between the three actors and the complicated aftermath of World War II. The overall relation between the Philippines and Japan has normalized with economic and political ties forged and even strengthened amid the tensions with China. In the direct aftermath, the trial and execution of war criminals such as Homma brought some sense of justice.

In the more recent past, however, there are findings to the contrary. While Filipinos nowadays hold favorable views on Japan with only 22 % reporting mistrust,[217] some issues still spark great controversy. As mentioned in the introduction, the issue of sexual violence against Filipino women during the occupation led to a

[215] Desiree Ann C. Benipayo, interview via email with the author, April 27, 2023.
[216] ibid.
[217] "Pulse Asia Survey: Filipinos Trust US the Most; China, Russia the Least," Philstar.com, accessed May 29, 2023, https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/07/29/2198843/pulse-asia-survey-filipinos-trust-us-most-china-russia-least.

diplomatic incident between the Philippines and Japan in 2018. The decision by the Duterte administration to remove a statue in memory of Philippine comfort women in order to not upset Japanese investors faced a backlash from the Philippine civil society, especially Chinese Filipinos. The statue, planned to be erected in another part of Manila, was stolen shortly after its removal.[218] With wartime atrocities such as vivisections performed on civilians continuing to be brought to public attention,[219] it seems probable that bilateral tensions remain in the future. Even though some ambiguity is still traceable, Japan is now a geopolitical and economic partner. Before embarking on a state visit to the Philippines in 2016, Emperor Akihito expressed his grief over the destruction Manila suffered in World War II.[220]

In regards to the United States, its ambiguous role during the Battle of Manila is overshadowed especially by the personality of Douglas MacArthur, who is "*still a revered figure by many in the Philippines, more than a half-century after his death in 1964 at the age of eighty-four and despite criticism of some that American artillery played a large role*"[221] in the tragic fate of Manila. Negative views on the USA as expressed above can therefore not been seen as the norm as the general public is in favor of the United States.

In terms of the overall structure, the case study helped to reveal another interesting dynamic. With the understanding of state consciousness by Lerner, it was possible to gain some valuable insight into the three complicated actors analyzed. Even though the Philippines can and must be seen as an independent actor, its agency during the war was heavily restricted. The fact that it was occupied by a hostile country with two governments stands next to the observation of an internal division and uncertainty. This aligns with Lerner´s metaphor of the middle school dance: To anthropomorphize states in such a manner, also suits to explain the tremendous split in Philippine society. The interaction with Imperial Japan and the United States may also be seen in light of this approach.

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[218] Robles, "'Comfort Women' Statue Goes Missing in Philippines."
[219] "Vivisection on Filipinos Admitted," The Japan Times, November 27, 2006, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2006/11/27/national/vivisection-on-filipinos-admitted/.
[220] Hitoshi Nagai, "Hiroshima and Manila: Experiences and Memories of Loss in World War II," *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 10, no. 1 (May 2022): 271–86, https://doi.org/10.18588/202205.00a241. 281.
[221] Scott, *Rampage*. 510.

Even though the scope of this study was limited to the analysis of collective trauma, the main part necessarily dealt with the interaction between two great powers, which had turned the Philippines into a battlefield. In the middle of this, the Philippines found itself in a highly complex and delicate situation.

- Further outlook for future research

Returning to the main objective, the research intended to apply the theory of collective trauma provided by three different scholars to the case of Manila and the Philippines in World War II. This multidimensional angle of looking at the Philippines through the lenses of collective trauma is able to reveal a new avenue of thinking about past influences on present developments in the country. The research asserts a tremendous shock echoing through the personal accounts provided by the Philippine Diary Project. These primary sources seen in the light of the three dimensional collective trauma suffered by people in the Philippines help to deepen the understanding of this period. The impact of the war is tragically observed through the diary entries. While most diarists survived the horrors of war at least physically, less entries were made (or at least published) towards 1945 with people struggling to survive or apathetic to the brutal reality around them.[222] This observation is in accordance with the definition of collective trauma provided by Gilad Hirschberger, who characterized the phenomenon as a "*cataclysmic event that shatters the basic fabric of society*."[223] The social fabric of Manila and the Philippines was indeed shattered multiple times.

Regarding the question of cultural trauma, the time period of the occupation was too short for any substantial change. Yet the main part was able to highlight that Philippine society was pressured by the introduction of Japanese Pan-Asianism. This pressure was answered by passive resistance in subtle, artistic ways and the general support for active resistance against the Japanese. Another factor for the resistance in response to the pressure of the occupation was the religious attitude of Filipinos. The loss of invaluable cultural heritage during the Battle of Manila is unquestionable and today´s city center has arguably not recovered from the damage as most financial investment was directed to modern districts in the metropolitan area of greater Manila. Here, the cultural dimension of collective trauma defined by Jeffrey Alexander can bring fruitful findings for future research.

[222] Victor Buencamino, "Diary Entry," December 16, 1944.
[223] Hirschberger, "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning." 2.

In further regards to the interdisciplinarity of this thesis, the Philippines as a whole and its position in the international system can be analyzed through the national identity discourse. The necessary implication of national identity is its connection to collective trauma. Combined, collective trauma and its influence on national identity give understanding on how states relate to each other. Therefore, nation-states as the primary actors in the international system constitute themselves because of collective experiences such as the trauma of war. A shortcoming of this theory, which the introduction addressed, remains: How can the psychological condition of individuals have a substantial and measurable influence on entities such as states? Perhaps, collective trauma as a phenomena in international theory comes to validation only when anthropomorphizing states. When accepting this arguably peculiar idea of state consciousness, the three dimensional trauma approach undertaken in this thesis finds its place in international theory.

In the international realm and mentioned earlier, bilateral relations of the Philippines with Japan and the United States show some but not all of the detrimental impact of the legacy left behind by World War II. In comparison, the countries such as Korea or China are still considerably more influenced by their past experience with Japan. Yet, a reevaluation of the Philippines and its relations with Japan and the USA through the lenses of collective trauma presents an intriguing perspective on the matter.

As Lerner's theoretical framework of collective trauma is quite new to international theory, this issue of collective trauma has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation. Nevertheless, implications and findings to the research surrounding the influence of mass violence may be applied to other countries and the present as well: How will the Ukrainians deal with the collective trauma caused by the Russian invasion? The Ukraine finds itself in a similar position between to great powers. Supported by a coalition of Western countries and under attack by Russia, the suffering of the Ukrainian people of today is going to have a legacy of the future. Generally, mass violence seen as a driving factor for reading states and their behavior can be applied to any country and conflict. In this wider picture, Lerner in combination with other scholars working on trauma can contribute significantly in understanding the international system.

That being said, considerably more work will need to be done to determine if collective trauma plays such an important role in domestic and international politics. In the case of the Philippines, it is also due to the fact that some developments are still ongoing. The educational reform of 2022 discussed in the introduction is still destined to be integrated into Philippine higher education. The reform has since been discussed and criticized. One point of critics was arguing that the educational reform glorifies war while forgetting the immense suffering of ordinary people.[224] Here comes the fundamental paradox of what Lerner has called the "*multilevel crisis in representation*" into the discussion. The politicians, who passed the bill, cannot fully represent and account for the collective trauma suffered by fellow Filipinos. This is not a generational problem but "*between elite politicizations of trauma and their roots in subaltern experiences*."[225] Roman Romulo, who´s granduncle fought bitterly in World War II, may be in fact suitable as a representative of collective trauma. Yet, a certain gap between political representation and the collective experience of mass violence, rippling through the generations, remains. The current developments could lead away from what can genuinely be called the collective trauma and become more of a collectivized myth. Eventually, a closer analysis through the narrative identity approach may show distinctive patterns. If it is applied to the national Filipino identity, it is too soon to tell what effects educational reforms such as this will have. An analysis of the years 1945 until the presidency of Duterte could help to make predictions of the national identity.

This national identity and its importance is also seen in the present challenges of the Philippines: Once again, the country finds itself between two great powers in form of China and the United States in the middle of growing tensions in the West Philippine Sea.

At this point, civil society in the form of initiatives such as Memorare Manila 1945 or the Philippine World War II Memorial Foundation play a crucial role in remembering the tragic national experience and shaping national identity. When properly mourned and contextualized, the lasting legacy of the collective trauma and

[224] John L. Candelaria, "The Dangers of a World War II-Centered Philippine History Subject," *RAPPLER* (blog), September 20, 2021, https://www.rappler.com/voices/imho/opinion-dangers-world-war-2-centered-philippine-history-subject/.
[225] Lerner, *From the Ashes of History*. 49.

its negative impact can be addressed. As the historian Alfonso Aluit claims, the events of 1941 until 1945 have influenced the national psyche, also in positive unifying way. The case study provided in the main part was able to show this overwhelming, confusing and shocking state, which the Filipino people endured.

This can be also seen as the core contribution of the thesis: Bearing witness to the dramatic fate of Manila in World War II. This can help to bring awareness to this forgotten tragedy. Especially for Western readers, who are interested in the Philippines, its history or the concept of collective trauma can find a useful perspective in this work.

The second contribution can be found in the case study framed through the conclusion and introduction: World War II arguably left behind an ambiguous legacy for the Philippines, characterized by trauma, a deep societal split, and lingering effects that continue to shape the nation's politics and civil society. The war inflicted immense suffering and devastation upon the Filipino people, leaving behind scars that persist to this day. The traumatic experiences of occupation, widespread violence, hunger and loss of lives created a collective memory that haunts the Filipino psyche. Additionally, World War II deepened pre-existing divisions within Philippine society, as Filipinos were forced to make difficult choices between collaboration and resistance. Finally, the war's effects are also seen in civil society, as Filipinos grapple with the legacy of wartime atrocities, memorialize their fallen heroes, and seek justice for past injustices. The ambiguous legacy of World War II in the Philippines serves as a constant reminder of the country's resilience, but also highlights the ongoing challenges of reconciling the past and forging a unified future.

This is also in accordance with findings Aluit, who saw a unifying national experience as the positive outcome. For Steinberg, the inherent consequence of the war is found in the negative social conditions such as in form of corruption. In order to maintain academic humility, it must be said that many aspects of the case study would have deserved more attention. The social consequences described by Steinberg are not duly discussed here. The fact that the post war period from 1945 until the turn of the millennia is not included in the research helped to create a reasonable burden of proof and feasibility. Yet, the isolation of the war period and its direct link to the nowadays Philippines also brings an interesting perspective to the question of

collective trauma. This thesis could provide a concrete and concise snapshot of present events connected the World War II. This connection concentrated mainly on the presidency Rodrigo Duterte and his successor Ferdinand Marcos Jr, who became president in June 2022. What president Marcos, son of the ex-dictator Ferdinand Marcos, is going to bring to the country, especially in its regards to national identity and the war, is also too soon to tell. To help recovering the struggling economy, the Marcos administration plans to approve a sovereign investment fund. Critics fear that this fund might bring back massive corruption as seen in the years under Ferdinand Marcos Senior.[226]

For Manila, the influences on the past are still seen in its present appearance. While it never recovered its reputation as the beautiful Pearl of the Orient, it developed from a bombed out skeleton of a city to a vibrant and vivid megalopolis. Now filled with locals and tourists alike, the remembrance of the city´s darkest chapter are made visible for everyone such as in Fort Santiago. The National Museum of Fine Arts – one of the few public buildings rebuilt after the mass destruction – has devoted an entire room to artful expression of the tragic February in 1945. Despite the aliveness of the city, it bears witness of the collective trauma suffered.

From past influences to present challenges at home and abroad, the Philippines fits the description of a famous poem by Carlos Romulo:

"*I am a Filipino–inheritor of a glorious past, hostage to the uncertain future. As such I must prove equal to a two-fold task–the task of meeting my responsibility to the past, and the task of performing my obligation to the future.*"[227]

As this case study tried to show, the collective trauma and handling its lasting legacy are indeed a responsibility for the Philippines and as equally important as its obligations to an uncertain future.

[226] "A Litmus Test for Marcos Admin," inquirer.net, May 31, 2023, https://opinion.inquirer.net/163569/a-litmus-test-for-marcos-admin.
[227] Carlos P. Romulo, "I Am a Filipino," *Kapwa Tagalog* (blog), February 21, 2021, https://kapwatagalog.wordpress.com/2021/02/21/i-am-a-filipino-by-carlos-p-romulo/.

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VII. Appendices

- Issues in Philippine Historiography of World War II since 1945

Since the end of World War II, the process of finding common sense of this era in Philippine historiography has seen all but a straight and easy answer. It has raised the far reaching questions of legacy and identity for the Filipino nation.

There is a consensus among scholars that the Philippines has witnessed “*a remarkable continuity in pre- and post-war society*” in comparison to other Southeast-Asian countries under Japanese control.[228] This is in accordance with Ricardo T. José from the University of the Philippines and other international specialists on Philippine history such as Alfred McCoy from Yale University.

Indeed, a closer look reveals that the political landscape remained largely the same: Only the once powerful Nacionalista party lost its hegemonic position in first elections after the war.

Another argument for continuity concerns the massive collaboration of large parts of the leading class: A general amnesty for all collaborators was granted by president Manuel Roxas (a collaborator himself) in 1948. Roxas could rely on the support from US General Douglas MacArthur, who was an influential figure in the Philippines.

This leads to many questions. One is for example how to characterize the Second Philippine Republic, a puppet government of Japan during the occupation. Teodoro Agoncillo, one of the most prominent Filipino historians of the 20th century, argues

[228] Jose, “War and Violence, History and Memory.” 458.

that the Japanese-sponsored administration "*remained loyal to the people and worked hard to soften the impact of Japanese occupation*"[229], while more recently historians such as Luis Francia tend to see only a very opportunistic part of the elite in the Second Philippine Republic.[230]

Taking into account the fact that opposition to the Japanese was deadly – politicians such as José Abad Santos who refused to cooperate were executed swiftly – and events such as the Rape of Nanking were already well known in the Philippines, the behavior of the political class becomes somewhat understandable.

The process to find meaning from the traumatic past of World War II has proven to be the dynamic process illustrated by the work of Gilad Hirschberger. While anti-Japanese sentiment was predominant in the years after the war, mistrust towards the United States grew with the intensity of the Cold War. Generally, the courage of Filipino soldiers and guerillas has been emphasized. [231]

The focus on the courage of Filipino resistance has been sparked politically once again in 2022, when the Philippine Congress has passed a bill to promote patriotism and national identity by "*preserving for posterity the stories on the great struggle and heroism of Filipino soldiers who fought the Japanese occupational forces during the war*."[232]

In conclusion, historiography also shows that the traumatic experiences of World War II have still not ceded to engage the Philippines in a process to find common ground and meaning. While historiography is part of this thesis, the central question is an analysis of the collective trauma and its legacy on present-day Philippines.

[229] Agoncillo. 4
[225] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*. 181.
[231] Jose, "War and Violence, History and Memory." 458-59.
[232] House of Representatives, "Integrating a Comprehensive Study of Philippine History During World War II into the Higher Education Curriculum" (Philippine House of Representatives), accessed May 10, 2023, https://hrep-website.s3.ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/legisdocs/third_19/HB05719.pdf

- Chronology

This is general timeline of major events in the Philippines during World War II[233], which has been extended and edited by the author of this thesis:

December 7, 1941 Japanese Army attacks Pearl Harbor in Hawaii and Clark Field in the Philippines.

December 8, 1941 First Japanese task forces start invasion of the Philippines.
Filipino and American forces withdraw to Bataan peninsula and the fortified island of Corregidor in Manila Bay.

December 26, 1941 Manila an "open city" is declared an "open city" by the Americans.

January 2, 1942 Japanese forces occupy Manila after bombarding it a few days earlier.

February 20, 1942 President Manuel Quezon is evacuated from the island Corregidor to Australia.

March 12, 1942 General MacArthur leaves the Philippines.

April 9, 1942 Remaining Filipino-American forces surrender to General Masaharu Homma. The infamous Bataan Death March begins.

May 6, 1942 Corregidor surrenders at last. The Philippines is now officially under Japanese control.

October 14, 1943 The Second Philippine Republic (Japanese puppet government) is established with Jose P. Laurel as president.

October 20, 1943 Philippine-Japanese Treaty of Alliance.

November 5 to 6, 1943 Greater East Asia Conference.

August 1, 1944 President Quezon dies in exile.

October 20, 1944 U.S. Army lands on the island Leyte.

October 23, 1944 The Philippine commonwealth is revived and Sergio Osmena declared as its legitimate president.

February 3 – 3 March 1945 Battle of Manila and the death of one hundred thousand civilians.

[233] Yay Panlilio, "Timeline of Events in the Philippines During World War II," in *The Crucible* (Rutgers University Press, 2009), 317–18, https://doi.org/10.36019/9780813548203-041.

February 7, 1945 MacArthur officially announces that Manila is reconquered from Japanese forces despite ongoing fights in the city center.

April 12, 1945 President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies.

July 4, 1945 General MacArthur declares liberation of the Philippines.

September 2 1945, the Japanese Empire officially surrenders after the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

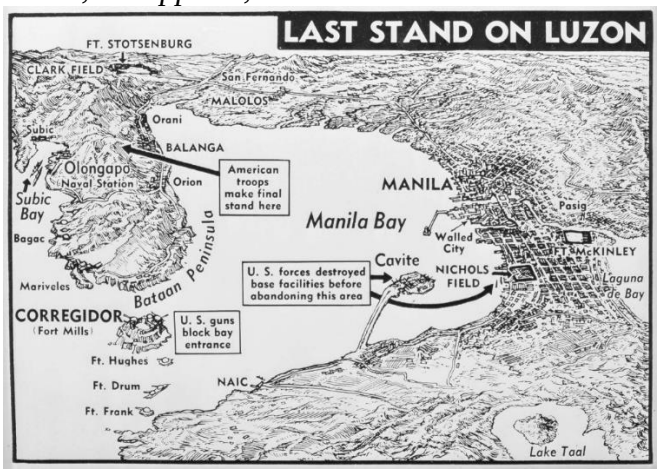
July 4, 1946 The United States officially recognizes the Third Philippine Republic as independent.

- Maps

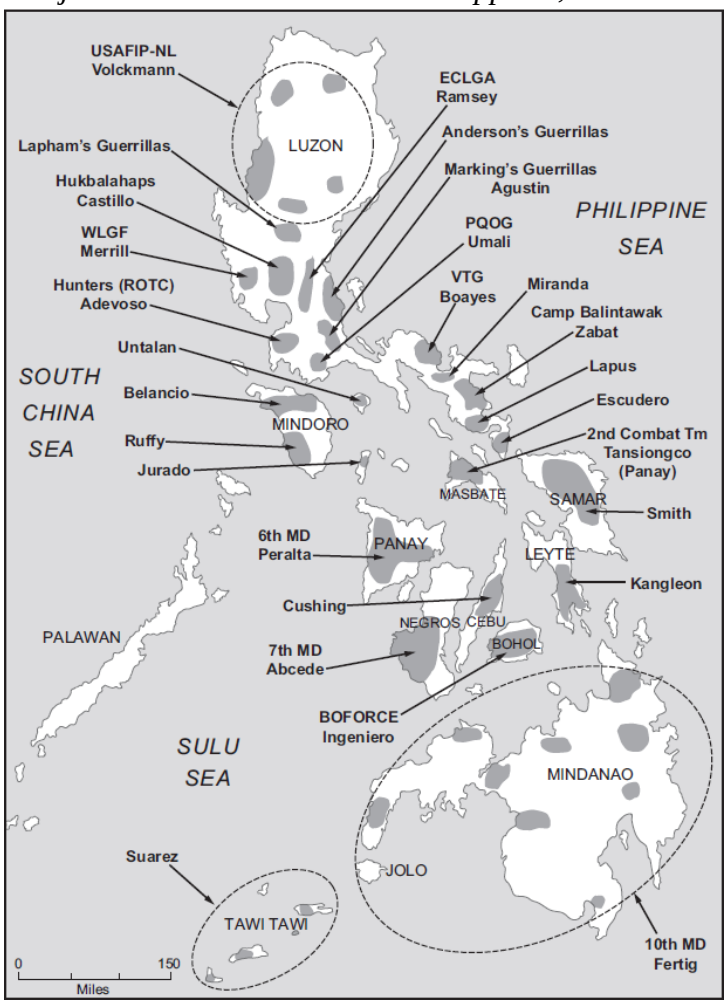
"*Political Map of Luzon*"[234]

[234] Free World Maps, *Luzon Political Map, Provinces and Major Cities of Luzon* (https://www.freeworldmaps.net/), accessed June 5, 2023, https://www.freeworldmaps.net/asia/philippines/luzon/luzon-political-map.jpg.

"*A United States Army Signal Corps map depicting the disposition of U.S. forces in Luzon, Philippines, in 1942*"[235]



"*Major Guerrilla Forces in the Philippines, 1942-1945*"[236]



[235] Encyclopædia Britannica, "Bataan Death March - Definition, Date, Pictures, Facts, Survivors, & Significance," last accessed June 8, 2023. https://www.britannica.com/event/Bataan-Death-March#/media/1/55717/191325.

[236] General Staff United States Army, "Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific, Volume I." last accessed June 8, 2023. 299.

"*The Philippine General Radio Net Developed during the Japanese Occupation, 9 October 1944*"[237]

[237] General Staff United States Army. 326.

- Dramatis Personae

Historical figure(s)

José Rizal is the central national hero of the Philippine revolution and history in general. His famous novels, which criticized the Spanish colonial structure, led to his exile and execution in 1896.

The United States

General Douglas MacArthur played a vital role in the Pacific war, especially concerning the Philippines. His father Arthur MacArthur Jr. had served in the Philippine–American War and later as military governor of the Philippines. This family tie brought himself to the archipelago after fighting in World War I and attending West Point, where he was stationed in Manila. Despite racial prejudice of the time, he befriended with Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmena, who would later become the first two presidents of the Philippines.

Franklin D. Roosevelt from Democratic Party was 32nd president of the United States from 1933 until 1945. He was elected president for four terms. Despite declining health, he lead America through the war together with Britain and the Soviet Union.

Harry S. Truman was the vice president of Roosevelt and the 33nd president of the United States, serving from 1945 to 1953.

The Commonwealth of the Philippines (exiled government) and active resistance

President Manuel Quezon from the Nacionalista party presided the Commonwealth of the Philippines from 1935 until his death in 1944. Second Filipino head of state since Aguinaldo in the revolution in 1896. Quezon was a personal friend of Douglas MacArthur, whom he convinced to help building up the Philippine Commonwealth

Army. His grandson **Manolo Quezon III** is a famous writer and owner of the Philippine Diary Project.

President Sergio Osmena, also Nacionalista, was the fourth president. He only governed the country from 1944 to 1946. Osmena was vice president under Quezon and succeeded him after his sudden death in 1944.. Two of his sons were collaborators with the Japanese. He was also a friend of MacArthur.

Carlos P. Romulo was a politician, journalist and later president of the UN General Assembly. After he was forced to flee from the Japanese, he became an important advisor to the exiled government and MacArthur. His grandnephew **Roman T. Romulo** is a politician in the Philippine House of Representatives and responsible for a major educational bill concerning World War II.

Jose Abad Santos was a chief of justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines. For his outspoken critic against Imperial Japan, he was executed after his capture by the Japanese army.

Terry Adevoso was the cofounder and leader of the famous HUNTERS ROTC guerilla unit, formed from a group of Filipino military cadets.

Marcos Villa Agustin and **Valeria "Yay" Panlilio** were the leaders of the famous Marking Guerillas. They were responsible for the capture of Emilio Aguinaldo, who was an influential collaborator with the Japanese.

Luis Taruc was the leader of the Communist guerilla movement “Hukbalahap”, which fought against the Japanese in Central Luzon.

The Second Philippine Republic (Japanese sponsored government)

José Paciano Laurel was a state attorney and leading politician from the Nacionalista Party. Before becoming president of the Second Philippine Republic in 1943, he was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Benigno Aquino was appointed by the Japanese to be the head of the Kalibapi and speaker of the National Assembly. Later, his family developed into a political dynasty: His son became a major opponent of Ferdinand Marcos and his grandson Benigno Aquino Jr. III became the 15th president of the Philippines.

Benigno Ramos (1893–1946) was a poet, writer and member of the Nacionalista before leaving the party after participating in a wildcat strike action disapproved by Quezon. He later became a founder of the *Sakdalista* movement and *Ganap* party, which advocated independence from the United States. In the Japanese, he saw a way of liberating the Philippines and formed the Makapili, a militant group of collaborators.

Emilio Aguinaldo was a hero of the Philippine revolution fighting Spain and later the United States. He was the very first president of the Philippines in 1898 before he was arrested by the Americans in 1901. In later years, a political comeback did not work and he lost in the presidential race against Manuel Quezon.

Jorge B. Vargas was the chairman of the Civilian Emergency Administration decreed by Quezon before his flight to Australia. He also led the interim Philippine Executive Commission installed by the Japanese.

Artemio Ricarte was a famous general from the Philippine revolution, who went into exile in Japan. As a symbol of the revolution, he was brought back to the Philippines in 1942.

Post-War

Manuel Roxas was a founder of the Liberal party, a split-away of the Nacionalista in 1946. He was a collaborator with the Japanese but, after being pardoned and supported by General MacArthur able to win the presidential elections. In 1948, he granted an amnesty for all individuals suspected of collaboration.

The Japanese Empire

Tōjō Hideki was the prime minister, who led the country throughout the war. He had to resign in 1944 as the fall of Japanese Empire was inevitable. He was convicted for war crimes with millions of victims committed by the Imperial Army and sentenced to death in 1948.

Masaharu Homma was the commander of invasion forces and responsible for Bataan Death March. For this atrocity, he was executed 1946.

Shigenori Kuroda was themilitary governor from March 1943 to September 1944. Under his control, the Second Philippine Republic was inaugurated and a new constitution drafted.

Tomoyuki Yamashita was the last military governor from September 26, 1944 to September 2, 1945. He spent the early years of his career in Austria and Switzerland as a military attaché. He became famous, after his spectacular conquest of Singapore and Malaya, earning him the nickname “Tiger of Malaya”. In the last phase of the Pacific war, when the Japanese defeat seemed only a question of time, Yamashita was made responsible for the defense of the strategically important Philippines. After the surrender of Japan, Yamashita was found guilty of the Manila massacre and other atrocities and executed.

Sanji Iwabuchi was the admiral in the Imperial Japanese Navy, who was responsible for evacuating Japanese forces in Manila from incoming American troops. His refusal to withdraw from the city without fighting led to the Massacre of Manila. The result

was one hundred thousand dead civilians and a completely devastated city center. He committed suicide in the midst of the battle.

- Glossary

Nacionalista Party is the oldest political party in the Philippines founded in 1907.

KALIBAPI: Kapisanan sa Paglilingkod sa Bagong Pilipinas (Association for Service to the New Philippines) was a far right political party and mass movement, which was established in 1942 after the Japanese dissolved all other existing parties. It had its own youth organization Kabataan Kalibapi. It succeeded the pro-Japanese/Pan-Asian movements named *Sakdalista* (*"sakdal"* means to accuse in Tagalog) and the *Ganap* Party (*"ganap" means complete*).

Makapili: Makabayang Katipunan ng mga Pilipino (Patriotic Association of Filipinos) was a group of militant collaborators.

Daitōa Kyōeiken or **Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere** (GEACPS): Established in all Japanese-occupied territories including the Philippines. It was created as a counter organization to the Western powers and propagated its own ideology *of Pan-Asianism.*

Pan-Asianism is an ideology and means to unite all Asian people liberate them from Western influence. Associated with the slogan "Asia for Asians".

Kenpeitai was the Japanese secret/military police responsible for massive atrocities during the occupation period.

Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon (People's Army Against Japan): Huks or Hukbalahap was a communist guerilla group active in central Luzon, the Northern

main island of the Philippines. It fought the Japanese independently and was forcefully dissolved after the occupation by the new Osmena administration.

- Documents

Short excerpt from Inaugural Address of President Jose P. Laurel, October 14, 1943 (emphasis added to highlight the double meaning of the speech):

Fellow Countrymen:

This is the hour of fulfillment of the supreme aspiration of our people for centuries. It is but fitting that we should, on this momentous occasion, dedicate a prayer of thanksgiving to those who paid the full price of blood and treasure for the freedom which we have now achieved. Rest at long last in your hallowed graves, immortal heroes of the Filipino race! The long night of the vigil is ended. You have not died in vain. **The spirit** of Mactan, of Balintawak, of Bagumbayan, of Malolos, and **of Bataan lives again**!

The Republic which we are consecrating here today was born in the midst of a total war (…)

The presence here of high diplomatic and official representatives of the Nipponese Empire and other nations of Greater East Asia testify to the traditional friendship and mutual understanding between all Oriental peoples. In the name of the Filipino people, **I wish to convey to the honored guests our sincere assurance of goodwill**, and to express the fervent hope that the fraternal ties which unite our people with theirs will grow ever stronger and firmer in the years to come.[238]

[238] ABS-CBN. "Inaugural Address of President Jose P. Laurel, October 14, 1943." ABS-CBN News, last accessed 8 June, 2023. https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/27/22/inaugural-address-of-president-jose-p-laurel-october-14-1943.

CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 5719

BY REPRESENTATIVES ROMULO, ONGCHUAN, GO (M.), CAGAS, SUAN, CHATTO, MARIANO-HERNANDEZ, ORTEGA, GULLAS, RODRIGUEZ (E.), GARDIOLA, VERZOSA, BARZAGA, DOMINGO, ABALOS, SILVERIO, MANUEL, PADIERNOS, BUHAIN, DALOG, MERCADO-REVILLA, CO-PILAR, CARI, VIOLAGO, ADVINCULA, CUARESMA, HERNANDEZ, VERGARA, GUINTU, TUTOR, ROQUE, CAJAYON-UY, COLLANTES, SALO, OLASO, ORDANES, BALINDONG, BORDADO, VILLARICA AND DALIPE, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 99

AN ACT INTEGRATING A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF PHILIPPINE HISTORY DURING WORLD WAR II INTO THE HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. It is the policy of the State to promote and protect the physical, moral, intellectual and social well-being of the youth and inculcate the values of patriotism and nationalism to foster love of humanity, respect for human rights, and encourage involvement in the political and civic affairs of the country.

To this end, the State shall put in place a mechanism that shall highlight the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country and thus educate the youth on the values of patriotism and nationalism and preserve for posterity the stories on the great struggle and heroism of Filipino soldiers who fought the Japanese occupational forces during the war.

SEC. 2. A comprehensive study of Philippine history during World War II shall be integrated into and shall cover a reasonable percentage of the mandatory Philippine History subject being offered under the general education curriculum in higher education courses of all higher education institutions (HEIs) in the country.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall, pursuant to its mandate under Republic Act No. 7722, otherwise known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994", develop in close collaboration with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) and the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office-Department of National Defense (PVAO-DND), a program to execute and implement the provisions of this Act.

[239] Philippine House of Representatives. An Act Integrating A Comprehensive Study Of Philippine History During World War II Into The Higher Education Curriculum, H. No. 5719, 19th Congress

Pledge of Honesty

On my honor as a student of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it.

Kilian Dvorak-Stocker,

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A special thanks goes to my parents and my siblings for their support: in particular to my father, who gifted me the curiosity and a passion for history and other cultures. To my mother for always having an open ear and supporting me unconditionally. I would not be where I am today without you.

Finally, thanks from the heart to the Philippines: The tragic dimension of this work brought me closer to this captivating country and its people. Salamat.

Vita

Kilian Dvorak-Stocker is Austrian and grew up in Graz, Styria. After finishing high school and mandatory military service, he started studying law and Portuguese in Vienna. The latter choice was inspired by travels, voluntary work and a semester abroad in Brazil. From 2021 until 2023 he studied international relations at the Diplomatic Academy. A turning point in his life was an internship with a local NGO in the Manila 2022. This experience extended his interest in history and international relations to Southeast Asia and the Philippines in particular. With his personal and religious beliefs, he is also interested in social issues and nongovernmental organizations. He speaks German, English, and Portuguese fluently while currently learning Filipino.