

The Public Dimension of Renato Constantino's 'Historically-Informed Social Criticism': Facets and Critiques of His Intellectual Legacy, 1945-1978

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Abstract

This article examines Renato Constantino's seminal works using what the American historian Christopher Lasch calls a "historically-informed social criticism" as a guide to underscore the public dimension of the former's intellectual legacy. As an initial step, it reviews the appraisals on Constantino to identify what has been written about the scholar and what remains unexplored. It then probes into the manner by which the scholar had articulated his nationalist thinking by revisiting his public career as a journalist and a public intellectual. Lastly, this article interrogates the substantial part of Constantino's intellectual legacy by looking at the contingent roles of his social criticisms and historical elucidations which comprise the core components of his corpus of writings.

Keywords: social criticism, public engagement, nationalism, nationalist historiography, counter-culture

Introduction

Renato Constantino, the historian and public intellectual, is known as one of the pioneers in the nationalist interpretation of Philippine history. He was also a prominent and controversial journalist who fervently wrote about the neocolonial condition of the Philippine society. Despite being popular for his nationalism, Constantino's major works – primarily his writings on history – were commonly subjected to criticisms for their apparent disregard for the norms of academic scholarship. The rigid use of the nationalist perspective is a common remark by most of his critics in the academe like John N. Schumacher (1975) and Glenn May (1987). Recent studies on Constantino also underscore historical misconceptions and distortions – for example, the highly propagandized image of Rizal as an American-sponsored hero (see Rafael, 2013/2014) or the indisputable use of English instruction to meet colonial ends (see Curaming, 2017) – were born out of his bias for the nationalist viewpoint. Admittedly, these arguments make valid points in appraising the nationalist historiography. Yet, there is another facet of Constantino's intellectual legacy that remains relatively unexplored – the public dimension of his scholarship. It should be recognized that he primarily wrote for the pedestrian and not for his peers in the academe. In fact, most of his works on Philippine history were originally written as articles, columns, or pamphlets printed on broadsheets for the consumption of the general public. This aspect of Constantino's published works deserves considerable attention to obtain a fresh understanding of his intellectual legacy as a historian.

Exploring the public dimension of Constantino's scholarship entails probing the manner by which he articulated his ideas. His methods can be analyzed along with the concept of "social constructionism" which "focuses on the processes of understanding and addressing social change in the postmodern society" and "is concerned with the ways in which knowledge is historically situated and embedded in cultural values and practices" (Camargo-Borges & Rasera, 2013, p. 2). Constantino recognizes that the Filipino people's consciousness has been continuously shaped by the influence of neocolonialism. He challenges the status quo – a product of the constructed reality of a people unaware of their neocolonial condition – by exposing social ills and their historic roots. That is why his works on history, for example, were evidently interwoven with his social commentaries written throughout decades of journalism. These commentaries or social criticisms were arguably the reason why he became a prominent nationalist of the postwar years (see Mészáros, 1978 and Kerkvliet, 1980). Constantino – whose interest in history

peaked in the late 1950s – considered historical elucidation as a primary tool to deepen his social criticism. However, any discussion about the concept of “social criticism” was noticeably absent in his works. It is thus surprising to note that most of his writings were accomplished by means of social criticism. To read Constantino’s ideas in this vein, it is imperative to settle what social criticism is. Christopher Lasch, an American historian, is known to have defined the concept:

Social criticism has something in common with editorial writing, though its more deeply informed by a study of history, literature, philosophy, and the social sciences... A social critic tries to catch the general drift of the times, to show how a particular incident or policy or a distinctive configuration of sentiments holds up a mirror to society, revealing patterns that otherwise might go undetected. But a social critic, unlike a scholar of the purest type, also takes sides, passes judgment... (Blake & Phelps, 1994, p. 1313)

This was indeed what Constantino did throughout his career as a journalist. He produced numerous columns and articles for various broadsheets which underscored the pressing issues of the Philippine society. Constantino unequivocally performed social criticism through journalistic work in order to influence a broad audience. More importantly, he did social criticisms that were interwoven with historical analyses. For this, Lasch introduces the idea of a “historically-informed social criticism” to point out the intersection of social criticism and historical exposition: “I think historical writing lends itself very well to this kind of connected social criticism, but not, of course, the kind of historical writing that makes a point of having no commitments at all, claiming scientific detachment and neutrality...” (Blake & Phelps, 1994, p. 1329). He posits that since a historian could also be a social critic, it is necessary to have a “command of the past” and the ability to relate the past to a wider public. A “historically-informed social criticism” would fall short if historians fail to engage the people in examining the current issues of the society (Mattson, 2003, p. 376). Essentially, historians need to reach out and descend from the “ivory tower” so that their valuable ideas could be put into practice. This idea interestingly underscores the discipline’s capacity for “social reflexivity” that encourages praxis out of historical examination (see Pérez-Milans, 2016).¹ Constantino’s writings, which exposed various social ills based on their historical roots, has resounding parallelisms to Lasch’s notion of “historically-informed social criticism.” Hence, revisiting Constantino’s life and ideas could shed light on what social criticism was for him and how he performed it to engage the public.

Considering the points raised above, this article aims to explore Constantino's works using the concept of a "historically-informed social criticism" – to borrow from Lasch – as a guide to underscore the public dimension of his intellectual legacy. Though scholars have already studied Constantino's ideas, much of these either acknowledge him for his nationalism or criticize him for his lapses in historical scholarship. What this article offers is to explore the public dimension of his scholarship by explaining how he engaged the wider public throughout his career. Moreover, it also explores how his works on social criticism and history played contingent roles in demonstrating his "historically-informed social criticism." Since this study could not possibly cover everything that Constantino had written in his long career, it only considers his frequently republished works on Philippine society and history spanning from 1945 to 1978. These are arguably his most famous as they remain in circulation – on sale in bookstores or stored in libraries – and, therefore, representative of his intellectual legacy. Some of these include his articles, columns, and pamphlets reproduced in volumes like *Dissent and Counter-Consciousness* (1970), *The Filipinos in the Philippines and other Essays* (1971), and *Neocolonial Identity and Counter-Consciousness: Essays on Cultural Decolonization* (1978), among others.² Lastly, this article covers his works from 1945 which marked the beginnings of his social criticism up to 1978 which saw the publication of *The Philippines: The Continuing Past* – the second installment of his two-volume history narrative. His works published within these years discuss common themes like the traces of colonialism and neocolonialism in the society and the historical circumstances/events which gave birth to the country's neocolonial condition.

The paper is divided into three major sections. The first part examines important appraisals about Constantino's intellectual legacy. This is to show what has been already written about the scholar and what is left unexplored. The second part intends to understand Constantino's social criticism by looking at how he engaged the wider public throughout his career. How did he convey his message to multiple publics under different circumstances throughout his life? This entails contextualizing Constantino and his intellectual labors vis-à-vis the socio-political factors of the postwar years. The last part probes into the substance of Constantino's "historically-informed social criticism." It revisits the contingent roles of his social commentaries and ideas on partisan history which represent the core components of his intellectual contributions. This assessment takes a divergent path from other appraisals because it situates Constantino's more often criticized works on Philippine history within the general corpus of his other writings. In doing so, this article hopes to elicit a better appreciation of

Constantino not simply as a historian but also as a public intellectual who promoted a specific ideological paradigm through a "historically-informed social criticism."

Surveying Appraisals on Constantino's Intellectual Legacy

What is remarkable about the appraisals of Constantino's intellectual legacy is the outpouring praise he received for the nationalist thinking in his writings. Moreover, scholars lauded him for the enduring value of his nationalism. Rosalinda P. Ofreneo (2000, p. 325), biographer of Constantino, calls him a "nationalist for all seasons... who stood for the interests of the majority of the Filipino people no matter what the weather... he had always made it clear that he was for what he called 'mass nationalism'." He articulated a type of nationalism that was not discriminatory nor selective; he espoused national solidarity to reject the clutches of neocolonialism. In other words, the underlying significance of his works is the emphasis on the persistent nature of colonial problems, which demands a potent form of nationalism from the Filipinos. James Petras (2000, pp. 298-299), a sociologist, lauds Constantino for demystifying "imperialist manipulation and distortion of history" endemic in existing textbooks that present the Americans as completely altruistic liberators. His national consciousness was essential to foment a collective memory that could revive the anticolonial struggles of the past.

Constantino's nationalism gave him ample foresight about the fate of the country if the neocolonial condition persisted, for which he was acknowledged by his peers. Economist Frederic Clairmont (2000, p. 335) notes that the author's scholarly legacy lies in his unique way of continuously seeking for "new perceptions of reality and new ways of changing inherited realities." In a sense, Constantino's radical insights about present-day reality allowed him to innovate and look into the looming problems of the future. Of course, having been trained in the social sciences, his assumptions were all anchored on logical observations of recurrent patterns in the past. To be specific, he was among several scholars who saw the adverse effects of globalization at the turn of the 21st century. Leonor M. Briones (2000, p. 403) recalls this in her tribute to Constantino: "Many Filipinos were saying that with globalization, nationalism became irrelevant. On the contrary, nationalism is the most powerful and effective response to the threats of globalization." Similarly, Petras (2000, p. 300) explains that "Reading Constantino's writings on imperialism, its structure, dynamic and links to nation-states is essential in any critique of contemporary 'globalony' theory." Indeed, Constantino, as a leftist observer, always found criticism to various forms of capitalism and their harmful consequences. Hence, there will always be essential use

for his intellectual contributions because, admittedly, the status quo had not radically changed throughout time. That is why his articles, pamphlets, and books are timeless because there is work to be done; the struggle still continues, so to speak.

It is also noteworthy to assess the author's legacy not only based on the immutable message he delivered through his writings but also on what they generally stand for – the cultivation of a counter-consciousness. The important matter to consider here is how the idea of “counter-consciousness” as the end goal was accepted by his peers. Philosopher Istvan Mészáros (1978, p. 3) discusses that Constantino promoted a purposeful stance in historical analysis that facilitated the emancipation of a people. Such approach – one that is distinctively Marxist – is essential because it ultimately aspires to change the world. Mészáros accurately explains the scholar's purpose: “the emancipation of the oppressed is inconceivable without breaking and melting down the chains of this reified historical consciousness and without its positive counterpart: the reconstitution of the power of consciousness as a liberating force” (Mészáros, 1978, p. 19). In addition, his works constitute a “coherent system” that necessitates social change as the present-day agenda and the formation of counter-consciousness as an imperative stage in subverting the status quo. It is without doubt that Constantino's historical scholarship finds its unique place in its aim of rousing an alternative consciousness to inspire Filipinos in their quest for social emancipation. Benedict J. Kerkvliet agrees with Mészáros on this matter. In the former's review of *Neocolonial Identity and Counter-Consciousness: Essays on Cultural Decolonization* (1978), he mentions that Constantino succeeds in fulfilling his prime purpose of raising public consciousness about the pressing problems of the Filipino society which has gone unnoticed due to the people's captive minds (Kerkvliet, 1980, p. 891). Rolando M. Gripaldo (2000, pp. 3-5) accentuates how this counter-consciousness could function to eliminate the adverse effects of neocolonialism evident in the country's export-oriented economy.

Together with counter-consciousness, the notion of the “nationalist alternative” is also a potent remedy to the country's neocolonial condition, according to Constantino. Perlita M. Frago-Marasigan (2018, p. 340) discusses Constantino's nationalist alternative as “the ‘motive force’ and key to genuine mass poverty alleviation” that inevitably entails a “reconfiguration of power relationships and reexamination of conscionable decisions by policymakers whose hands and feet are bound by the intricate web of a global economic system designed by neocolonial powers.” In retrospect, his works offer Filipinos a thoughtworthy point: “that it is better to meander outside of one's comfort zones and to embrace the uncertain in the search for something good such as social and economic empowerment” (Frago-Marasigan,

2018, p. 341). The appraisals cited above all agree on the timelessness and forward-looking nature of Constantino's nationalism. These are common opinions about the nationalist scholar that are still cited in discussion about matters of national import.

What is more interesting, however, are the views critical of Constantino's intellectual legacy (see Schumacher, 1975 and May, 1987). These criticisms usually focus on the apparent narrowness of his nationalist lens and how it affected his historical interpretation. Despite admitting the relevance of his nationalist articulations, these specific appraisals elaborate on important points about the practice of history writing. More so, it is also noticeable that almost all of Constantino's critics have written and commented on only three of his well-known writings – "Miseducation of the Filipinos" published in the *Weekly Graphic* in 1966, a speech entitled "Veneration without Understanding" delivered at the Third National Rizal Lecture in 1969, and the textbook *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* published in 1975.

Among the most comprehensive reviews of Constantino's textbook was provided by John N. Schumacher. He argues that the use of the Marxist lens fails to accurately read the history of the Filipino people because it prescribes a specific manner to interpret events based on an ideological framework. In Constantino's case, he ultimately produced a narrative that was largely about the struggle of the Filipinos based on socio-economic forces. In one way or another, the complicated story of the past had been reduced to its economic factors and its ensuing effects to politics and society (Schumacher, 1975, pp. 466-467). The Jesuit scholar also argues that Constantino ironically claimed to have written a narrative seen through the Filipino eyes using a framework borrowed from the Western tradition. Moreover, his ideological bias did not successfully unravel the history of the "oppressed" as what he originally claimed to be the purpose of the textbook. In fact, Schumacher (1975, p. 469) also shows that Constantino falls into his own criticism of earlier historians who merely account for the history of the elites. In two chapters of the book where he traces the different resistance movements against the Americans, he does not make an attempt to understand the mentality of the people – their motivations, their ideology, and the idioms used to express their aspirations. It was not really clear how his work represented the "people" in this manner. In the end, Constantino failed to provide sufficient answers to the underlying questions about the people's movement and the entirety of Philippine reality. For Schumacher, Constantino's ideological bias prevented him from having the proper hindsight to see the nuances of the past.

Like Schumacher, Glenn Anthony May wrote an extensive and quite scathing critique of the same work. Here, he admonished the

nationalist scholar for his seeming disregard for disciplinary norms: "A Past Revisited... is lively and provocative, to be sure, but it violates virtually every canon of historical scholarship, and rather than teaching students to think critically, it merely offers them a new dogma to replace the old" (May, 1987, pp. 23-24). May cites Constantino's treatment of the 1896 Philippine Revolution to substantiate his claims. For example, the Marxist interpretation that underscored the dire economic conditions of the "masses" in the 19th century as a primary motivation for their participation in the revolution was rather simplistic assessment of the phenomena. May (1987, p. 15) argues that this completely disregarded other aspects in play like clientelism. Another instance similar to this can be seen in Constantino's assertion that the Filipino elite capitulated en masse to the Americans at the onset of their colonization. May (1987, p. 18) contradicts him by citing important facts to prove that the reaction to American occupation was varied and important aspects such as geographical location and socio-economic conditions should be considered in discussing the matter.

Aside from *The Philippines: A Past Revisited*, Constantino's earlier works on Philippine history were discussed in more recent studies which highlighted the defects of his historical interpretation. For example, Vicente L. Rafael (2013/2014, pp. 7-8) briefly explains that Constantino's criticism of American education in "Miseducation of the Filipinos" paints an inaccurate picture of how the public school system operated during the colonial period. The assertion that the English language had an unquestionable role in constructing colonial consciousness could actually be countered by a report by the Board of Educational Survey in 1925 which stated that the Americans found it difficult to teach English in schools due to factors like shortage of teachers and others (Rafael, 2013/2014). This apparent generalization can also be seen in Constantino's assessment of Jose Rizal in "Veneration without Understanding." Rommel A. Curaming (2017, p. 442) briefly discusses that the popularization of Rizal as an American-sponsored hero was debatable as no textbook published during the colonial period propagandized this specific image of the hero. To overlook these important details only meant that Constantino was either unaware of such facts or his nationalist bias provided him a limited view of the past. Lisandro E. Claudio (2015, p. 195) shows the disadvantages of a rigid anti-American and anticolonial approach by arguing that what is apparently "absent in the polemics of radical nationalists are analyses of gray areas that can only be detected through close examination of colonial-era texts and broader processes of colonial state-formation." Claudio (2013, 47-48) explains that Constantino was not unique in this tradition of history writing. The emergence of the national narrative was, in large part, due to various historical factors like the prevalence of

the leftist ideology in the postwar years. This gave birth to a generation of intellectuals – which included the likes of Teodoro A. Agoncillo and Jose Maria Sison – who wrote anticolonial narratives with a “renewed emphasis on the broader category of ‘the masses’” (Claudio, 2013, pp. 47-48).

Without doubt, Constantino’s scholarship in its essence and entirety can be appreciated as a comprehensive undertaking to instill a certain counter-consciousness among readers. As articulated by his peers, the commendable aspect of his intellectual legacy was his nationalist philosophy which is distinctively anti-colonial in nature. This is evidenced in Constantino’s nationalist alternative, aimed at a genuine emancipation from the yoke of neocolonialism.³ Despite the timelessness of Constantino’s message, his scholarship did not escape the sharp criticisms of the academe. His novel attempt to decolonize history was done at the expense of certain methodological norms like constructing historical explanations based on evidence, notwithstanding theoretical or ideological biases.⁴ Indeed, the criticisms cited above provide clear and compelling arguments most especially because Constantino was adjudged based on academic parameters. And it is in these criticisms that scholars at present time see Constantino as a nationalist yet a partisan/biased historian. Thus, in reassessing his intellectual legacy, these appraisals provide an important glimpse into what needs to be accomplished. Since those who agreed with Constantino praised him for his nationalist articulations while those critical underscored the defects of his viewpoint evident in several writings, it is interesting to inquire how his most cited works operate vis-à-vis the entire corpus of his writings. In other words, what was the actual purpose of his brazen historical elucidations?

Constantino, Social Criticism, and Public Engagement

Before answering the aforementioned question, it is necessary to comprehend the means by which Constantino articulated his ideas. Social criticism played a vital part in obtaining the attention of his target audience. Despite the limited sources available to fully explore the said concept, Lasch provides important insights into how criticism can often be spliced with historical elucidation. As already cited above, he argues that “a social critic tries to catch the general drift of the times, to show how a particular incident or policy or a distinctive configuration of sentiments holds up a mirror to society, revealing patterns that otherwise might go undetected” (Blake and Phelps 1994, p. 1313). To distinguish this from the academic historian, he makes it clear that “a social critic, unlike a scholar of the purest type, also takes sides, passes judgment...” (p. 1313). The conscious choice

of bias becomes an integral part of historical interpretation once used for the purpose of social criticism. It thus compromises the objective or, to be more realistic, impartial nature of historical methodology. Nevertheless, what is stressed here is the discipline's capability for social reflexivity, as mentioned earlier. Lasch became one of the few American historians who demonstrated that through social criticism, "history can pose serious questions that help prompt critical self-examination on the part of readers as active citizens rather than just passive recipients of information. It can encourage people to think about broader moral and political questions and to think more critically about the present by better understanding lessons from the past" (Mattson, 2003, p. 376). Herein lies Constantino's similarities with Lasch. Both appreciated history as a means to show that societal problems have their historic roots, thereby necessitating a purposeful reevaluation of the past. Moreover, both reiterate that historians have the responsibility not only to reconstruct the past but, more importantly, influence the consciousness of the current and future generations (see Meier, 1994).

An essential facet of social criticism is its engagement with the wider public. Lasch recognized the importance of the concept of the "public" in order to satisfy the general purpose of social criticism. He opines that "historians... had to address fellow citizens in order to encourage the examination of current problems as well as self-examination" (Mattson, 2003, p. 376). In this regard, could social criticism be then considered a form of public history? Admittedly, there is no official definition of the subfield because public historians and public history practitioners continue to argue over it. On the one hand, the United States National Council on Public History has identified a fundamentally loose definition obtained from various arguments. Several council members imply that public history operates "between various constituencies and disciplinary fields, highly attentive to the social processes and political implications of their work, and resistant to too much closure when it comes to defining what they do" (Stanton, 2007, p. 14). On the other hand, Italian historian Nicola Gallerano (1994, p. 85) explains that the public use of history refers "to all that is developed outside the domain of scientific research in its strictest sense, outside the history of historians which is usually written by scholars and intended for a very limited segment of the population." In line with this, public history "implies a major redefinition of the role of the historian. It promises us a society in which a broad public participates in the construction of its own history" (Grele, 1981, p. 48). It is indeed remarkable that Constantino's career closely observed the methods of public history. In the first place, he did not write for the academic community or a specialized group of scholars. Though this does not in any way invalidate the criticisms directed at Constantino, it

should be recognized, however, that his main audience was the general public – the common Filipino. Simply put, Constantino primarily used the discipline of history to produce a novel form of social criticism, akin to Lasch, that influenced generations of Filipino nationalists.

In order to show how Constantino demonstrated a “historically-informed social criticism” throughout his career, a rudimentary account of his life should be revisited. Ofreneo (2001) notes in her biography of Constantino that in his young years, he was exposed to different factors that denounced the colonial forces at work in the early 20th century. For example, his father and grandmother were both critical of the colonial government, thus supplying him with enough anticolonial rhetoric in the household. Another important factor which shaped his consciousness was his time in Manila North High School during which he had the opportunity to mingle with friends who were either communists or Sakdal sympathizers. Of course, the 1930 student strike – borne out of an American teacher’s racial slurs against her Filipino students – saw the walkout of about 3,000 students to demand an end to the prevalent racism especially in state-run schools (see Agoncillo, 1976). Constantino’s entrance to the University of the Philippines (UP) in 1936 saw a continuation of the factors which molded his nationalism. But more than the student activism he witnessed in the state university, his editorship of the *Philippine Collegian* – the official school paper of UP – gave him an avenue to articulate his sentiments (Ofreneo, 2001). Though having served for only a year (1939-1940), this opportunity introduced him to the practice of journalism which he would be known for after the Second World War.

The conditions of postwar Philippines deeply affected the economic, political, and cultural landscape of the country. Evidently, it was the Americans that the Filipinos sought in order to recover from the ruins of the Second World War. After the United States had conducted a survey of the Philippines in the aftermath of the war, the Tydings Rehabilitation Act was passed to provide the Philippine government funds and resources for reconstruction. The Americans easily extended the much-needed aid primarily because of the Filipino support obtained during the war and the astounding physical devastation that the US military left in the country (Diokno, 1998, pp. 9-10). While the Philippine government, under the leadership of Presidents Manuel Roxas followed by Elpidio Quirino, was on the receiving end at the latter part of the 1940s to the early 1950s, the US made certain that it would satisfy its own interests in the long run through political and economic concessions (Magno, 1998, pp. 1-14).

This was the general backdrop encountered by Constantino who, at that time, had already started his own family. The Second World

War left Manila city completely devastated. Important establishments including UP were among those destroyed by the onslaught of bombs during the assault on the city. According to Ofreneo (2001, pp. 70-75), while in UP, Constantino pursued law studies which he did not finish because of the war. Instead, he obtained a political science degree in 1946. Thereafter, he immediately served as an instructor in UP as well as a lecturer of political science and economics in Arellano College. While teaching, he chose journalism not only as a career but a means to express his critical views of the postwar conditions. He wrote for several newspapers and magazines such as the Evening Herald, the Sunday Times Magazine, and the Sunday Post. By 1945 to 1946, the works produced by Constantino dwelled on the political and economic milieu of the time. Noticeable themes in his articles emphasized the importance of nationalism and the problems of societal conservatism and American imperialism. Ofreneo cites several of these in her book. For instance, an article published in the Sunday Post on 04 November 1945 talked about the emancipation of the masses through a conscious and collective recognition of their role as defenders of progress against the "forces of conservatism" (for example, the landed gentry, the capitalist corporations, and even from the ranks of the religious) in the society (Ofreneo, 2001, pp. 77-78). Another example was published in the same magazine on 13 January 1946 where Constantino (cited in Ofreneo, 2001, pp. 84-85) argued that "progressive nationalism" during the postwar period "...is essential in order to guard against the infiltration of reactionary foreign interests." His interest in international affairs was tested during his appointment to the United Nations (UN) as a diplomat from 1946 to 1949. These years shaped his views about the US and how it dealt with allies in the UN (Ofreneo, 2001, pp. 90-105).

His return to the Philippines and immediate employment as Counsellor to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) was during the time of the Cold War. Unfortunately, the government's crusade to cleanse the country from any communist threat placed Constantino under the authority's watch in the 1950s. In 1951, he experienced the taste of persecution and harassment when the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) searched his residence for evidence that might incriminate him as a communist. The agents took portions of his library, mostly those that were Marxist in nature. Ofreneo (2001, p. 110) cites the recollections of his wife, Letizia, about the raid: "They took down all the books that were by Marx or Lenin – about 17 of them. In the sala, they picked up *The Law of the Soviet State* which belonged to my father. It even had his signature on the title page. He [Renato] objected, 'Don't take that; it's mine,' but they took it just the same." Being tagged as a suspected communist also affected his professional life. Constantino

lost his job at the DFA because Congress removed the position he held in the department. He was also forced to stop writing for broadsheets and magazines to lay low from government harassment. Constantino applied for several jobs but companies rejected him after receiving tips from the MIS. Eventually, he was employed as an economic researcher for the Binalbagan-Isabela Sugar Company (Biscom) of the Lopezes due to his mother-in-law's personal ties with Eugenio "Eñing" Lopez (Ofreneo, 2001, pp. 112-116). Remarkably, it was during his years with the Lopezes that he was able to slowly return to journalism. Within this decade, he wrote for the Manila Chronicle and produced remarkable articles like "Our Captive Minds" in 1957, "The Corrupt Society" in 1958, and "Our Task: To Make Rizal Obsolete" in 1959. Although Constantino worked for a company owned by one of the society's most prominent and influential families, harassment from military agents did not relent (Ofreneo, 2001, pp. 107-115). These only ceased when he served as Senator Claro M. Recto's ghostwriter from 1956 to 1960. He even played a key role in the senator's presidential bid in 1957. Ofreneo (2001, pp. 118-124) discusses in her book that his association with Recto provided a momentary protection from all forms of government threats until the senator's sudden death in 1960. The following year, Congress' Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities (CAFA) investigated the alleged communist infiltration amongst UP faculty members where Constantino was again implicated despite the fact that, at the time, he was not connected with the institution. In the end, CAFA produced nothing to prove the allegations against him. Amidst all pressures coming from the authorities post-1960, the author's mentorship under Senator Recto was a turning point for the development of his nationalist thinking. In fact, he even wrote an intellectual biography in honor of Recto entitled, *The Making of a Filipino: A Story of Colonial Politics* published in 1969.

Constantino's interest in Philippine history peaked when, in 1960, he was given stewardship of the Lopez Museum. He recalled that Lopez had acquired primary documents about Jose Rizal and artworks of Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo. More so, Lopez had a comprehensive collection of rare Filipiniana books. When Eugenio Lopez decided to build a museum in honor of his parents, Benedicto and Presentacion Lopez, Constantino was appointed as curator and, eventually, director of the establishment (Ofreneo, 2001, p. 116). His exposure to important materials on Philippine history materialized in articles like "The Miseducation of the Filipinos" and "Origin of a Myth" published in *Graphic* in 1966 and 1968, respectively. Constantino then delivered "Veneration without Understanding" in 1969, arguably his most controversial piece. It was also during this time that he became involved in organizing work. In 1966, he and Senator Lorenzo Tañada

conceptualized a united front for nationalist organizations representing different sectors of the society. This led to the birth of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (MAN) which held its founding congress on 8 February 1967. The event was attended by people from the business and education sectors, writers and artists, politicians and scientist, labor and peasant groups, and formations from the far Left. However, MAN was short-lived because of difficulties to reconcile conflicting interests and apparent rivalries amongst leftist groups (Ofreneo, 2001, pp. 170-175). Nonetheless, the demise of MAN did not affect Constantino's commitment to the nationalist project. What ensued thereafter was another decade which challenged his nationalism. When President Ferdinand Marcos declared Martial Law in 1972, government harassment akin to that in the 1950s attempted to silence Constantino once more. In fact, the authorities placed him under house arrest which lasted until 1973 (Ofreneo, 2001, pp. 185-192). Despite the dangers of being identified with the Left, he produced writings which solidified his reputation as a nationalist historian. For example, Constantino edited what became a five-volume publication in 1971 entitled, J.R.M. Taylor's *The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States* accomplished through the support of the Lopez Museum. More prominent was the publication of *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* in 1975 and its sequel *The Philippines: The Continuing Past* in 1978 (Ofreneo, 2001, pp. 140-151).

Indeed, various forces in history shaped and challenged Constantino's nationalism. These, nevertheless, became crucial factors that influenced his practice of a "historically-informed social criticism." By choosing the path of journalism as a career, he was able to make his message more potent. But, as a consequence, he had to brave the risks of being an outspoken critic. Given his exposure to various forms of government pressure under different political administrations over the decades, Constantino arguably learned to adapt in order to preserve his engagement with the wider public. In times when he needed to lie low from the authorities, he found refuge through several means, whether circumstantial or intentional – in the political arena as a ghost writer or even in the private sector behind one of the country's richest business families. More importantly, Constantino conveyed unto readers a more convincing message when he infused social criticism with historical elucidation. As seen in Table 1, for example, this selection can possibly be considered as the best of Constantino's "historically-informed social criticism" written from 1945 to 1978. These examples, 34 in total, were his most cited works. Reproduced in anthologies and collections, 24 of these writings or 71 percent of the total were originally published as pamphlets or articles in broadsheets and magazines. It can thus be surmised that Constantino's primary intention was to be read by the

Filipino pedestrian – most probably, the educated class and the petit bourgeois. He obviously wanted his message to penetrate a far wider audience which explains his dedication to write for various broadsheets and magazines despite threats from the authorities. On the other hand, the remaining 10 works or 29 percent of the total are composed of speeches, lectures, books, and edited volumes which catered to a more specialized audience – university students and academics. Noticeably, these include some of his most important works on Philippine history like the two-volume textbook and the edited tomes on primary sources. In retrospect, Constantino promoted his idea of nationalism by engaging multiple publics through journalism while, at the same time, challenging academia through a scholarship that featured his partisan view of history.

Table 1. Selected works of Renato Constantino published from 1945 to 1978

Title of Work	Publication Date	Publisher	Type of Work
“Forces of Conservatism”	November 4, 1945	<i>Sunday Post</i>	Broadsheet
“Progressive Nationalism” (?)	January 13, 1946	<i>Sunday Post</i>	Broadsheet
“Our Captive Minds”	January 6, 1957	<i>Manila Chronicle</i>	Broadsheet
“The Corrupt Society”	August 10, 1958	<i>Sunday Times Magazine</i>	Magazine
“The Society Page”	December 7, 1958	<i>Manila Chronicle</i>	Broadsheet
“The Filipino Politician”	March 29, 1959	<i>Manila Chronicle</i>	Broadsheet
“Our Task: To Make Rizal Obsolete”	June 14, 1959	<i>Manila Chronicle</i>	Broadsheet
“Filipinos in the Philippines”	October 4, 1959	<i>Manila Chronicle</i>	Broadsheet
“The Phony Society”	September 11, 1960	<i>Manila Chronicle</i>	Broadsheet
<i>Recto Reader</i>	1965	Karrel, Inc.	Edited book
“The Miseducation of the Filipino”	June 8, 1966	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“Dissent in the Philippine Society”	November 22, 1967	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“A Leadership for Filipinos”	1967	Malaya Books	Pamphlet
“Society without Purpose”	January 17, 1968	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“Ethics for Nationalists”	March 13, 1968	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“Origin of a Myth”	April 17, 1968	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“The Anti-Social Filipino”	July 17, 1968	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“Diplomacy without Policy”	August 21, 1968	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“The Filipino Elite”	September 18, 1968	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“Culture and National Identity”	February 19, 1969	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“Roots of Subservience”	June 18, 1969	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“Intellectuals and Activists”	August 20, 1969	<i>Graphic</i>	Newsweekly magazine
“Veneration without Understanding”	Delivered on December 30, 1969	N/A	Speech for the Third National Rizal Lecture
<i>The Making of a Filipino: A Story of Philippine Colonial Politics</i>	1969	Malaya Books	Book
“Fascism: Prospect and Retrospect”	December 13, 1970	<i>Sunday Times Magazine</i>	Magazine
<i>Parents and Activists / Mga Magulang at Mga Aktibista</i>	1971	Malaya Books	Pamphlet
<i>The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States: A</i>	1971	Eugenio Lopez Foundation	Edited five-volume series

<i>Compilation of Documents with Notes and Introduction</i>			
<i>Renato Constantino and the Marcos Watch</i>	1972	Karrel, Inc.	Anthology
"Identity and Consciousness: The Philippine Experience"	Delivered on August 20, 1974	N/A	Lecture for the 7th World Sociology Congress, Toronto, Canada
"Nationalism and Partisan Scholarship"	Delivered on September 18, 1975	N/A	Speech for the UP History Club
<i>The Philippines: A Past Revisited</i>	1975	Tala Publishing	Book
"Development in the Context of Philippine History"	Delivered on February 18, 1976	N/A	Speech for Philippine Society for Social Development, UP Alumni Center
<i>Westernizing Factors in the Philippines</i>	1977	Malaya Books	Pamphlet
<i>The Philippines: The Continuing Past</i>	1978	Foundation for Nationalist Studies	Book (co-authored with Letizia Constantino)

Corollary to understanding the relationship between public engagement and Constantino's "historically-informed social criticism" is making sense of the substantive aspect of his enterprise. As already mentioned, his sociopolitical critique and historical elucidations have contingent roles in proving the validity of his message about nationalism. This, therefore, begs an important question to be answered – how do his works on history amplify his criticisms of the status quo?

Interrogating Constantino's "Historically-Informed Social Criticism"

In examining Constantino's "historically-informed social criticism," it is imperative to locate how his primary works on Philippine history justified his views about the status quo of the postwar years. Evident in the literature cited above, Constantino is usually appraised either for his nationalist philosophy or for his historical thinking. But evaluating his intellectual contributions as a byproduct of practicing a "historically-informed social criticism" can unravel the contingent roles of historical elucidation and social criticism – the core components of his work.

When Constantino chose journalism as a career path, his primary aim was to expose the country's neocolonial condition and its ill-effects. Based on his works cited in Table 1, Constantino observed the Filipino society to be consumerist, subservient, corrupt, and fake. He shows this, for example, in "The Society Page" where he equates the common Filipino's obsession in reading society pages in major newspapers as an unnecessary distraction or even a superfluous mania which derails them from detecting the real problems of the country (Constantino, 1971a, pp. 23-35). For him, society pages are cultural imprints of an elite and Americanized people, which imbed upon Filipinos a yearning

to emulate. This, he expounds in "Society without Purpose," develops a consumerist attitude among Filipinos evident in their craving for "State-side" products. In the long run, consumerism neglects the industrialization of the local economy and transforms the country into a miniature American society (Constantino, 1970a, pp. 18-21). He then argues in "The Anti-Social Filipino" that this societal condition is ultimately a consequence of an education that produces graduates who simply conform to the status quo and are more concerned with self-aggrandizement (Constantino, 1970b, pp. 34-38). On the other hand, subservience is best seen in Filipino politics. In "The Filipino Politician," for example, he explains that a politician's electoral victory was always contingent upon gaining America's favor, guised as "friendship," to acquire more military and economic support (Constantino, 1971b, pp. 112-113). This type of dependency, according to Constantino (1970c, pp. 51-63) in "Diplomacy without Policy," produces sycophants among public servants and compromises the country's independent foreign policy. Political subservience will only end if Filipinos cease to believe that US-Philippine ties were genuinely grounded on "freedom and democracy". Constantino repeats these aforementioned observations – about Philippine society, culture, education, economy, and politics – in "The Corrupt Society" and "The Phony Society." In these articles, he concludes that the people's uncritical acceptance of Americanization created a fake society characterized by corruption as its chief malady (Constantino, 1971c, pp. 83-88; 1971d, pp. 122-132).

Constantino's (1971c, p. 96) proposed medicine for this social illness is nationalism in the form of a "counter-culture." In "Culture and National Identity," he explains that this new culture should be able to reflect the people's yearnings and struggles to foment a strong sense of unity among them (Constantino, 1970d, pp. 45-46). The triumph of this "counter-culture" is dependent on the people's collective determination to express dissent, as discussed in "Dissent in the Philippine Society" (Constantino, 1970e, pp. 1-2). He contends that dissent and democracy are similar because both invite change and are inherently subversive to the status quo. Suppression of any form of dissent is therefore an attack against a society's democratic ideals (Constantino, 1970e, pp. 7). Aside from articulating dissent, a "counter-culture" prescribes its activists to be self-reflexive. In "Ethics for Nationalists," he asserts that Filipino activists refrain from their ideological elitism. Instead, they should observe humility and open-mindedness to various forms of criticism. Espousing social change, after all, means leading by example to be worthy of emulation (Constantino, 1970f, pp. 162-169). Furthermore, in "Intellectuals and Activists," Constantino envisions a "counter-culture" that is led by activists who are intellectuals in their own right. Being grounded on social realities, as activists are, and knowledgeable on

scientific alternatives, as intellectuals are, should never be mutually exclusive (Constantino, 1970g, pp. 152-158). Nationalism, in other words, is not only about the rhetoric but also the scientific approach in achieving its goal. Thus, Constantino writes (1970h, p. 180) in "A Leadership for Filipinos" that the movement for a "counter-culture" requires nationalist leaders who learn from the people and, in return, are capable to teach the means of subverting the status quo: "Learning from the people is in effect being a follower of the people. Teaching the people is leading the people. Leadership, therefore, is an educative force." It was Recto who Constantino regarded as an ideal archetype for a nationalist leader. In *The Making of a Filipino*, he described the late senator as one who "questioned many of the most basic assumptions of the society he was living in... As he became more and more conscious of the interrelatedness of our national problems, he discovered their basic root in colonialism" (Constantino, 1969a, p. 241). Recto's unique consciousness, Constantino writes, was born out of the nationalism he developed despite his class background.

If Constantino's social criticism focused on its ill-effects in present-day society, his partisan scholarship underscored the chronic nature of the social maladies he tackled above. His works on Philippine history were indispensable components of his intellectual contributions because they prove that the problems of the present have historic roots in the past. Thus, Constantino contends that partisan scholarship has an essential role in generating a "counter-culture." For him, the efforts to promote a "counter-culture" involves a collective dedication to attain a counter-consciousness that could reverse the captive/colonial state of Filipino consciousness (see Constantino, 1970d; 1970h; 1971c). This counter-consciousness could only materialize if Filipinos are reeducated using a scholarship that is biased or partisan towards the struggles of the people. In "Nationalism and Partisan Scholarship," Constantino (1978, pp. 265-267) explains that the methods of a conventional academic tend to overlook necessary steps which could critically reinterpret the past based on what the people need. He blames this to the prevalent tradition in the academe which gravitates towards an obsession for objectivity. That is why Constantino challenged all norms of historical scholarship when in *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* he wrote that colonial thinking is most likely a byproduct of the people's familiarity with a history written in the colonial perspective. Partisan scholarship could, therefore, unshackle Filipinos from this point-of-view (1975, pp. 8-9). Moreover, he asserts in "Our Task: To Make Rizal Obsolete" that the failure to acknowledge the people's struggles in the past will bring their sacrifices and heroisms to naught (Constantino 1971e, p. 140). With these in mind, Constantino dedicated his partisan scholarship to augmenting his observations about the postwar society. Thus, his

historical inquiry complemented his social criticism.

Since most of his commentaries were directed towards American imperialism, his works on history unequivocally unraveled the decrypted truths about the colonial past. In "The Filipinos in the Philippines," for example, Constantino (1971f, pp. 12-20) explains in perfect satire how the Americans had liberated the Filipinos from their "barbaric ways" by bringing civilization through their "altruistic" policies. His intention, of course, was to show the opposite – American brutality masked by a benevolent assimilation. In the "Origin of a Myth," he reveals how the US-Philippine ties was integrally underhanded at the onset. While the US continued to protect its compassionate image, its civil government in the Philippines devised means to suppress any form of nationalism through punitive laws (Constantino, 1970i, pp. 81-82). He also points out how the vacillating Filipino elite suddenly became "Americanistas" and helped create the image of American altruism in exchange for favors from the new colonial government (Constantino, 1970i, pp. 84-88). Constantino further exposes the American imperialist machinations in "Roots of Subservience." Here, he questions the validity of June 12 as the Independence Day and argues that the official document signed by Filipino revolutionaries did nothing but formalize the country's status as a protectorate of the US. Constantino (1970j, p. 101) even cites the specific passage to prove his point: "And summoning as witness of the rectitude of our intentions, the Supreme Judge of the Universe, and under the protection of the mighty and humane North American Nation." More so, he underscores the fact that those who engineered such declarations – the likes of Emilio Aguinaldo, Pedro Paterno, Felipe Buencamino and others – were individuals who, in fact, brokered for autonomy at the expense of the revolution's demise (Constantino, 1970j, pp. 102-110). These types of leaders would eventually influence a tradition of mendicancy and subservience among generations of Filipino politicians.

Some his works, on the other hand, gave particular stress on the roots of colonial miseducation. For example, "The Miseducation of the Filipino" elaborates on how American colonial education became a primary tool used for pacification. He argues that public instruction policies were not meant to save Filipinos from ignorance and illiteracy but instead to train them in identifying themselves as loyal colonial subjects. In fact, the classroom became an avenue to denigrate resistance leaders like Macario Sakay, while the use of English as medium of instruction expedited miseducation (Constantino, 1971g, pp. 40-44). He further elaborates his point on miseducation in "Veneration Without Understanding," arguably his most controversial essay. Here, Constantino (1969b, pp. 7-9) posits that the Americans chose to elevate

Rizal as a national hero because the latter valued education, articulated dissent, and advocated for reforms through peaceful means unlike Bonifacio. Though his Marxist reading of Rizal remains contestable for its class-reductionist analysis, it should be noted that Constantino had a motive in mind – not to denigrate Rizal but to expose the maneuverings of American colonizers that supplanted nationalism. The publication of Constantino's two-volume textbook namely, *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* and *The Philippines: The Continuing Past*, can be seen as the culmination of his cause for partisan scholarship. While *A Past Revisited* narrated how the Spanish and Americans established the conditions for colonial consciousness, *The Continuing Past* recounted how the Philippines was transformed into an outpost of US imperialism in Asia during the postwar years (Constantino & Constantino, 1978, pp. 190-191). The new political order that emerged from this neocolonial milieu engendered a society that is, as Constantino observed, consumerist, subservient, corrupt, and fake.

Constantino's seminal works on Philippine history were indeed written to support his claims about the neocolonial condition of the postwar society. His intellectual contributions were not only a reflection of a left-wing nationalist philosophy but also his practice of a "historically-informed social criticism." His social criticisms and historical elucidations were vital facets of his intellectual legacy. The former conveyed unto the public the necessity of a "counter-culture" while the latter initiated this through partisan scholarship. However, a discussion on his "historically-informed social criticism" would not be complete without touching on the ideological facet of his undertaking. Constantino's Marxist nationalism, a clear influence of his experiences before and after the war, became popular among activist circles because of its timeless message. And tracing the Marxist features in his works entails looking for recurrent topics that he wrote about. For example, self-interest, defined in the Marxist sense as an economic condition that most often permeates the society (Bober, 1948, pp. 72-73), is a common theme in Constantino's writings. This is evidenced in articles like "The Corrupt Society," "Diplomacy without Policy," "The Phony Society," "Society without Purpose," "Ethics for Nationalists" and "The Anti-Social Filipino," where he claims how self-aggrandizement and avarice among individuals continue to impede the advance of nationalism.

Furthermore, the concepts of social class and class antagonisms are often featured in Constantino's works on Philippine history. In "The Filipino Elite," he traces the historical development of the native elite as a social class and how it maneuvered to preserve its special place in the society (Constantino, 1970k, pp. 114-121). He also underscores how the interests of the elite frequently supplanted the interests of the masses throughout the course of history. Class antagonisms ultimately

mirror the dialectics or the constant interplay of a thesis and anti-thesis in any historical phenomena. These themes are endemic in the "Origin of a Myth," *The Making of a Filipino, A Past Revisited*, *Westernizing Factors in the Philippines*, and *The Continuing Past*. Despite the particular attention he devotes to social class, Constantino's monolithic approach in dealing with the concept is quite apparent in his writings. For example, he often interchanges the term "masses" with the "people" to refer to the portion of the society that is opposed to the "elite" which he sometimes calls the "upper class," the "bourgeoisie," or even the "ilustrados." Caroline S. Hau argues (2017, p. 7) that nationalist scholars like Constantino and Agoncillo tend to oversimplify and overlook important factors necessary for a class-based historical analysis. These factors which include socio-economic status, ethnicity, historical milieu, geography, and culture, are key nuances which distinguish a particular class from another (Hau, 2017, pp. 7-8; Simbulan 2005, p. 5). Nonetheless, his works embodied what the famous British Marxist historian Eric J. Hobsbawm (1997, pp. 195-197) regarded as a perception of history that is neither sociological nor economic, but both. Such perspective covers internal contradictions, with stabilizing and disruptive elements, that cannot be regarded as simply dysfunctional but necessary mechanisms for historical development (Hobsbawm, 1997, p. 195-197; Windschuttle, 1996, pp. 28-29).

Conclusion

The general argument for this research is to show the more often neglected public dimension of Constantino's intellectual contributions through a reexamination of his seminal works following the purview of a "historically-informed social criticism." He was noticeably silent about the concept of "social criticism" probably because he wanted his nationalist philosophy to speak through his writings, rather than the manner by which he conveyed his ideas. As in the appraisals cited, his peers and colleagues in the academe either praised him for his nationalist articulations or criticized him based on a selection of works that reveal the defects of the nationalist lens in historical interpretation. Though these appraisals explain much about the important features of Constantino's writings, they do not particularly expound on how his ideas became popular to various audiences of his time. Hence, the need to explore not only the substance of his output but also the means by which he engaged the public throughout his career. Constantino passionately wrote for broadsheets and magazines notwithstanding the government harassment he experienced in the 1950s and the 1970s. Because of these incidents, he was forced to engage the public not only through journalism but also through other means – whether as a speech writer or as an academic. By adjusting to the demands of the situation, Constantino managed to preserve his social criticism.

Apart from contextualizing the scholar, understanding how he practiced a “historically-informed social criticism” demands a reexamination of his intellectual output. Because his social commentaries implied the necessity of a “counter-culture,” his historical elucidations were thus created to promote a counter-consciousness that would ideally eradicate the colonial mindset of the people. Though frequently criticized for being ideologically (Marxist)-charged, Constantino’s partisan scholarship was not intended to satisfy his colleagues in the academe. His main intention, instead, was to use history as a vehicle for reeducation and, in the long run, provoke a nationalist awakening from his target audience – the common Filipino. This can be seen in many of his pamphlets, columns, and articles which featured topics about the historic roots of present-day social ills. In the end, Constantino’s unique reading of history offered an alternative which subverted the conventions of how scholarship ought to be done. In fact, his deliberate attempt to challenge the norms of the discipline can arguably be interpreted as his own way of undermining the status quo in the academe.

This paper, however, was not written to excuse Constantino from the shortcomings he committed along the way. As repeatedly stated in the discussions above, the criticisms thrown at him make valid and remarkable points about the nature of nationalist historiography. This article only seeks to provide an alternative lens by which his intellectual contributions can be appreciated. In retrospect, Constantino should also be appreciated as a scholar who was a product of his time. He witnessed the effects of neocolonialism and chose to be a critic of the society despite the dangers this entailed. This paper attempted to examine Constantino’s means of public engagement through social criticism. But there is more to explore in order to fully understand his legacy. For example, what does Constantino exactly mean by “partisan scholarship”? What are its features and purview? What was he like as a multi-disciplinary scholar? He did, after all, write about history, political science, economics, and cultural studies. These are interesting aspects of Constantino that should be considered in further research.

Notes

1 Miguel Pérez-Milans (2016, p. 2) explains that reflexivity is a “rising form of socially conditioned self-awareness through which the individual determines her course of action in relation to the social circumstances.” This means that an individual develops a self-identity that is “dis-embedded from previously taken-for-granted customs, habits, routines, expectations and beliefs” (Pérez-Milans, 2016, p. 2). This idea reflects Constantino’s perception of history that provokes self-awareness and invites individuals to work for their emancipation from the status quo.

2 For this research, majority of the sources – 23 out of 25 Constantino

writings – were obtained from the Filipiniana and Microfilm sections of the UP Main Library. Fortunately, most of Constantino’s broadsheet articles in the 1950s and the 1960s were compiled in two different anthologies – *Dissent and Counter-Consciousness* published in 1970 and *The Filipinos in the Philippines and other Essays* published in 1971. Hence, majority of Constantino’s works in this paper were taken or lifted from the mentioned anthologies. Attempts were also made to conduct research at the Constantino Foundation but to no avail. Although the foundation possesses invaluable materials for the study, its management communicated that the late historian’s manuscripts and drafts are not yet available for public use.

- 3 Frago-Marasigan (2018, p. 339) provides a good discussion about the nationalist alternative vis-à-vis neocolonialism: “Constantino unravels the wretched conditions of countries... with neocolonial status and prescribes a cure in the form of political and economic nationalism, the ‘nationalist alternative.’” Furthermore, Constantino stresses that the masses should advocate this form of nationalism and direct it towards a liberation from “the chains of neocolonial and imperialist hold” (p. 340).
- 4 Windschuttle (1996, p. 245) warns how a perspectival reading of history – one that employs theoretical/ideological frameworks, for example – compromises traditional historical methodology: “Historians are not free to interpret evidence according to their theories or prejudices. The evidence itself will restrict the purposes for which it can be used.” This is a common criticism thrown at Constantino’s use of the Marxist lens in historical interpretation.

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