**Foucault’s Genealogical Counter-Memory:**

**Disabusing Ourselves of the Myopia of Official Histories**

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**ABSTRACT**

We usually think of Plato’s famous allegory to describe a situation where people have been conned by puppeteers into thinking as if “all reality consists of shadows,” a simple reminder to all that ignorance of reality does not save one from it. In other words, one simply increases his chance of being duped or misled by others because of a lack of real historical sensibility, or an eye for detail. We turn our eyes to the classroom. The mind of the average Filipino (this is true even of some who construe themselves as “academicians”) continues to operate within the bounds of his people’s official history, an official history that is determined by today’s culture of consumerism, misguided theology, even perhaps by a deeply entrenched tradition of subservience, among many other causes. In a non-reflective environment, no emancipation can ensue, no “enlightenment” in the Kantian sense of ” reasoning with audacity” is possible. No, not even a life-affirming “sense of greatness” of the people in the most honest kind is engendered.

An alternative historicizing then must be sought. This is the reason for bringing to light “counter-memory” in the literature of Michel Foucault (1926-1984). His counter-memory, carried out in a genealogical approach to history, sought for episodes and proceedings in history that are often overlooked and dismissed but that may yet contribute to constructing a “bigger picture” of things. We are offered a bigger avenue for hermeneutic engagement as we permit alternative epistemic formations to disturb the conventional account of our shared past, as we set these narratives in opposition with each other. Our main task, then, is to elucidate Foucault’s genealogical counter-memory and its important consequences, perhaps even unearthing such alternative epistemic formations that for the longest time have been deliberately concealed and hidden from view. A counter-memory must be done to possibly oppose the mainstream historical accounts. This may apply to Filipino history, a history plagued by miscalculations—when people are taught that traitors can become heroes, that a revolution under the guise of market-driven democracy can continue to promise emancipation and progress. All the more we need to seriously consider alternatives. We must once again think against the grain.