



## BIROn - Birkbeck Institutional Research Online

Braga, Rogelio (2024) Capital-as-presence and space-as-absence: the language of Neoliberalism and the narrative of capital in Glenn Diaz's *The Quiet Ones*. *Kritike* 18 (2), pp. 98-120. ISSN 1908-7330.

Downloaded from: <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/id/eprint/56179/>

*Usage Guidelines:*

Please refer to usage guidelines at <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/policies.html> or alternatively contact [lib-eprints@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:lib-eprints@bbk.ac.uk).

## ***Capital-as-presence and Space-as-absence: The Language of Neoliberalism and the Narrative of Capital in Glenn Diaz's *The Quiet Ones****

---

**Rogelio Braga**

**Abstract:** Glenn Diaz's *The Quiet Ones* explores people's lives in the labor force created by a global market system. Work, public services, geography, identities, production, and consumption are generally shaped and directed by the flow of boundary-less foreign capital investments from developed countries. The novel presents characters as workers in the business process outsourcing industry in the Philippines, expatriates as highly skilled workers who migrated to the country to look for better economic and social capital opportunities, and the various relationships with people surrounding these workers. This paper charts the terrain, nature, and the systemic movements of capital through (1) *capital-as-presence* in the text, framing or creating work patterns, human relationships, consumption behavior, and (2) *space-as-absence* that mediates relationships between states, citizens, and the State (represented by the law and state authorities), between citizens as workers, between citizens as workers and their cities. The paper concludes that the neoliberal economic agenda in/of globalization created a language where capital is deeply embedded in a textual negotiation of/in meanings that legitimizes the power structure that perpetuates, supports, enables, and reinforces an oppressive elite, imperialist, and capitalist economic market system as the only alternative in rendering a concrete livable world.

**Keywords:** capitalism, reification, capital-as-presence, space-as-absence

**T**exts that critique the excesses of capitalism or overtly criticize neoliberalism face the challenge of demonstrating how capital has shaped the language of neoliberalism. In a systemic process typical of capitalism, this language legitimizes capital and the neoliberal economic

agenda through commodification, the reification of consciousness, deterritorialization, and consumerism. Glenn Diaz's novel *The Quiet Ones*<sup>1</sup> rises to this challenge, initiating a more public discussion on the effects of the neoliberal economic agenda on labor, work patterns, and the lives of workers in the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry in the Philippines. This paper aims to demonstrate the power structure that supports and perpetuates the language of neoliberalism and then position *The Quiet Ones* as a text critical of the neoliberal agenda on work, labor, and the "worlding" of the world of work in times where capital moves easily anywhere as labor power remains constant in definite and singular space and time.

Silence itself is a language; and neither does absence necessarily mean void nor the "non-presence" signify outright that something or an object does not exist. Western episteme renders the world as a phenomenon framed in dialectical reasoning: history as a constant unfolding of contradictions and tensions leading to a predetermined and logical end as the beginning of another dialectical process. Adorno raised the limitation of the very foundation of Western philosophy as the "negation of the negation" will also reveal a truth as logical as the identities in the dialectical process. Adorno writes: "As early as Plato, dialectics meant to achieve something positive using negation; the thought figure of a 'negation of negation' later became a succinct term. The book seeks to free dialectics from such affirmative traits without reducing its determinacy."<sup>2</sup>

The negation of the negation as the site of another dialectical process or a complimentary of the existing and dominant dialectical process is an epistemological problem that needs to be explored or revisited, especially in the time when truth (and truth-telling) can be subjected to manipulation of the dominant ideology that even the position of resistance or a critical stance legitimizes the object of its criticism or the power structure that needs to be dismantled. The language of neoliberalism, the dominant ideology of post-World War II up to now, can be explored perhaps in Adorno's negative dialectics: to reveal the structure of its language formation, and how it renders the world through this language is the first step of a conscientious criticism to the ideology and the power structure that sustains it. This paper explores this language formation and structure in Diaz's novel *The Quiet Ones* through the nature of neoliberalism's language through dialectical reasoning: *capital-as-presence* and *space-as-absence*.

One of the most common ways to look at literary production and consumption in the Philippines is that it is driven by market demands: who to publish, target readers, and the types of books and narratives that sell and

---

<sup>1</sup> Glenn Diaz, *The Quiet Ones* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1973), xix.

sustain the business. However, readership has been moving on a plateau for a decade,<sup>3</sup> and the competition among publishers is stiff as the readership market is limited. With this situation in the Philippine publishing industry, looking at literary production and consumption as driven by the invisible hand of the market will have its limitations: First, it will not give us a picture of how capital can influence reading and writing on the part of literary producers. Second, it blinds our critical assessment to the most insidious project of literary production and consumption in the Philippines in the absence of a viable market: that literary production and consumption serves the interests of the ruling class, the elites, by legitimizing its power structure where the economic and political systems of the country are beholden to a language perpetuated by the country's literary production and consumption.

*The Quiet Ones* was published by a premier Catholic university that caters education for the offspring of the country's elite. It was written in the former colonizer's language, and the novel's narrative received a "stamp of approval" from the country's literary canon-maker, the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature.<sup>4</sup> It will invite criticisms, but it will never lead the discourse to reveal the more extensive system that creates the readings and meanings of the novel: the language of *The Quiet Ones* as a text. To critique the novel on its location in the Philippines' literary production and consumption is a form of a disavowal of the presence of a neoliberal language; it also invites suspicion of the act's complicity in keeping the language of neoliberalism from public criticism and intellectual discussions. Criticism or resistance is part of the logic that legitimizes the hegemony of the ideology as it uses the language where neoliberalism is comfortably perpetuating itself as a power structure.

*The Quiet Ones* reveals a world created by the neoliberal economic system where capital moves across nation-states while labor remains constant and immobile in a specific space and time. The novel explores the world of workers in the Philippine's BPO industry during its boom in the Macapagal-Arroyo administration (2001–2010)<sup>5</sup> and the movement of knowledge workers from developed countries to the Philippines. The novel's success perhaps lies in its almost accurate rendition of the workers in the industry

---

<sup>3</sup> Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines, "The Hope of the Philippine Book Publishing Industry amid Stagnant Readership" (23 April 2020), <<https://www.ipophil.gov.ph/news/the-hope-of-the-philippine-book-publishing-industry-amid-stagnant-readership/>>.

<sup>4</sup> DLS Pineda, "Familiar Alienations in Diaz's 'The Quiet Ones,'" in *PhilStar Global* (20 October 2017), <<https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/supreme/2017/10/20/1750775/familiar-alienations-diazs-the-quiet-ones>>.

<sup>5</sup> Donald Greenlees, "Filipinos Are Taking More Calls in Outsourcing Boom," in *The New York Times* (24 November 2006), <<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/24/business/worldbusiness/24call.html>>.

and the various relationships and encounters navigating around these workers in the BPO industry. The novel's narrative is revealed through Alvin, a call center employee planning an escape from authorities after committing the fraud of siphoning funds from his customers' accounts in the United States to his bank account in the Philippines. As the story progresses, the novel's narrative reveals Alvin is in connivance with co-workers in the crime: the couples Eric and Philip, and Karen and Brock. The novel demonstrates how the lives of these characters are shaped by their work and the industry where they render their labor and how these "lives" intersect with the lives of other characters outside the industry: the couple Reynaldo and Carolina, and Alvin's American lover, Scott. The novel's narrative follows a non-linear timeline that deflects the focus of the readers from the plot to the characters' internal and external struggles; the novel refuses to adhere to the tradition of the genre where it should belong, and this narrative strategy also renders the "timelessness" and the "placelessness" of the lives of workers in the BPO industry as revealed in the text.

However, the success of *The Quiet Ones* in form does not necessarily mean that it successfully engaged and eventually revealed the object of its criticism: the dehumanization of workers in the offshoring industry through reification and the commodification of life, consciousness, and subjectivity as capital moves freely in a neoliberal economy, a contradiction in form and substance in positive dialectical reasoning, to the immobility of labor.

There are two discursive engagements in approaching the text of *The Quiet Ones* to critically assess its engagement with the object of criticism and the location of its narrative in the critical discourse of excesses and limitations of neoliberalism as the hegemonic ideology of the free market economy:

(a) The first step is to reveal the power structure that creates and sustains the language of the text, and this would also entail a conscious decision to historicize the formation of this language as part of the investigation.

(b) The second is the easiest, as the discourse is revealed in the novel's form, surface, and structure as it reveals itself to the reader.

The language of *The Quiet Ones* is a compendium of consciousness that may pose a contradiction to the object of its criticism. However, if we historicize this language, it will reveal a dialectical process seemingly in contradiction and predetermined to create a synthesis. But this dialectical process is framed by a power structure that renders the entire process not as a contradiction but as a "talkback session" on the system on how to improve itself and move forward carrying this contradiction. This "compendium of consciousness" is a product of how language is formed in adherence to neoliberalism's project to render a world based on its preferred modality that will sustain its objectives: a free-market economy where economic control is

left on the market's invisible hands while reducing state intervention. How this language renders meanings on signifiers, such as "opening," "globalized," "protectionism," "privatization," "just contractualization," "war on freedom," and "terrorists," will reveal how the process of neoliberal language formation creates its internal contradiction to justify not the product of the dialectical synthesis but of the process itself where contradiction and endless synthesis is present.

### Neoliberal Conditions

*The Quiet Ones* reveals the conditions of subjectivity and identity in a world rendered by neoliberal orthodoxy: from modern societies as a society of discipline to postmodern societies as a society of control. How the subject within these societies is reproduced within the complex mechanisms of neoliberalism reveals not just the world it tries to create but also the values, politics, and even the creation of the opposition to its legitimacy as an encompassing ideological structure.

Jodie Dean argues that neoliberalism deploys fantasies on the political imaginary to legitimize (and to function efficiently) its hegemony in the modern world. These fantasies include the concepts of abundance, participation, and wholeness with the aid of what she calls "communicative capitalism," where corporate information technology infrastructure, such as social media and the Internet in general, reproduce subjects through their active participation in circulating data stream where messages "are contributions to circulating content, not actions to elicit responses. The exchange value of messages overtakes their use value. So, a message is no longer primarily a message from a sender to a receiver."<sup>6</sup>

The fantasies also render a modern society that could only be experienced through social acceleration.<sup>7</sup> Hartmut Rosa described three types of acceleration in modern society: technological, social change, and pace of life. These processes gave rise to a condition called "dynamic stabilization": "the condition that the modern social order can only be maintained through the logic of incessant growth and escalation."<sup>8</sup> Rosa describes the modern subjects in a neoliberal world in a "frenetic standstill": the feeling that one must continue advancing and striving harder, at an ever faster rate, and

---

<sup>6</sup> Jodi Dean, *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2009), 37.

<sup>7</sup> Hartmut Rosa, *Social Acceleration: A Theory of Modernity*, trans. by Jonathan Trejo-Mathys (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 21.

<sup>8</sup> Darío Montero and Felipe Torres, "Acceleration, Alienation, and Resonance. Reconstructing Hartmut Rosa's Theory of Modernity," in *Pléyade (Santiago)*, 25 (2020), 8, <<http://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0719-36962020000100155>>.

preferably faster than others, without feeling that one is really going anywhere.<sup>9</sup>

To map the genealogy of neoliberalism, one must begin with classical liberalism's trifecta of the relationship between private property, the market, and the individual. John F. Henry summed up the argument of classical liberalism to map its progression to neoliberalism in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the development of private property, individuals being freed from the despotic rule of authority, an individual becoming now free to make decisions based on their interests and the capacity to advance those interests within a "contest" (which is held in "the market") with other individuals winning through intelligence, better work effort, and greater efficiency.<sup>10</sup> In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, liberalism was challenged by the rise of socialist movements worldwide and the concentration of power of the trade unions that challenged the market economy as "non-competitive, oligopolistic structures as the prevailing form of organization."<sup>11</sup> The birth of neoliberalism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was propelled by the need for a cogent response to save liberalism from its demise due to the rise of people's collective movements that centered the interests of the working class, seen as atavistic to the expansion of individual freedom and to maintain an efficient capitalist social order that could abandon the Keynesian interventionism, the spread of socialism, and Marxism.<sup>12</sup>

Neoliberal discourses rose in the intervening years between the two World Wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>13</sup> with Mises and Hayek's political and moral economies radicalizing capitalism as an efficient economic model. Mises and Hayek centered the discourse on the state's role in market society: that there should be a clear line between the state and the market as the "social system of the division of labor under private ownership of the means of production."<sup>14</sup> David Harvey summed up neoliberalism as "the theory of economic practices that proposes that human well-being can be best advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free market, and free trade"<sup>15</sup> and at the center of the state's function is

---

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 8–9.

<sup>10</sup> John F. Henry, "The Historic Roots of the Neoliberal Program," in *Journal of Economic Issues*, 44:2 (2010), 544, <<https://doi.org/10.2753/JEI0021-3624440227>>.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 21.

<sup>13</sup> Harvey calls this "neoliberal turn": "To ensure domestic peace and tranquillity, some sort of class compromise between capital and labour had to be constructed." *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>14</sup> João Rodrigues, "The Political and Moral Economies of Neoliberalism: Mises and Hayek," in *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 37:5 (2013), 1004, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/bes091>>.

<sup>15</sup> Harvey, *Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 2.

money. The state<sup>16</sup> should build apparatus around it, such as the military, police, and “legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of the market.”<sup>17</sup>

In the Philippines, neoliberalism came as a response to the economic debacle brought by the Marcos dictatorship during the Martial Law years (1972–1981) and in the last three years of his administration. Walden Bello described the entry of neoliberalism in the Philippines through the structural adjustment program imposed by the World Bank in the early 1980s, an intervention to strengthen the country’s economy to pay its massive external debts.<sup>18</sup> Freedom and state intervention are concepts worth exploring to describe the post-Marcos period after the dictator’s ouster in 1986. Freedom from the dictatorship paved the way for neoliberalism, which Bello describes as having “triumphed by default”<sup>19</sup> during the Aquino government (1986–1992). After the Marcos regime, the people’s experiences of widespread corruption in government led to skepticism about state intervention in economic activities. Neoliberalism reached its most influential phase in the Philippines during the administration of Fidel Ramos (1992–1996) as the hegemonic economic doctrine gathered critical mass support, and the economy was fully opened to the capital influx from abroad.<sup>20</sup> During this period, the Philippines became what Harvey calls a “neoliberal state,” where the freedom it embodies “reflect the interests of private property owners, businesses, multinational corporations, and financial capital.”<sup>21</sup>

### Placelessness: Non-linearity and Fragmentation

The world rendered by *The Quiet Ones* is the world of work in the language of neoliberalism. This language is characterized by non-linearity, fragmentation, deterritorialization, and internal contradiction in violence.

---

<sup>16</sup> Harvey calls this a “neoliberal state” where the freedoms it embodies reflect the interests of private property owners, businesses, multinational corporations, and financial capital. *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Walden Bello, “Neoliberalism as Hegemonic Ideology in the Philippines: Rise, Apogee, and Crisis,” in *Philippine Sociological Review*, 57 (2009), 10.

<sup>19</sup> During the Aquino administration, neoliberalism became the hegemonic ideological economic system in the Philippines. Bello further described that “the new government was run by bureaucrats and intellectuals greatly influenced by Thatcher and Reagan, ‘crony capitalism’ as a prevalent corruption practice during the Marcos dictatorship was used as a strong argument against the Keynesian developmentalism as a source of inefficiency in favor the dominant Thatcherism and Reaganism free market ideology, and the effects of Marcos dictatorship was weaponised as an argument against state intervention.” *Ibid.*, 10–11.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 13–15.

<sup>21</sup> Harvey, *Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 7.



This violence should have challenged the hegemony *within* a predetermined and positive dialectical process in language formation but created more spaces for contradiction.

Non-linearity and fragmentation are neoliberalism's epistemological response to Marxist historical dialectical materialism. Non-linearity and fragmentation deliberately dismantle the power structure, legitimizing history's concrete, positive, and evolutionary development as a class struggle. Non-linearity and fragmentation reveal small silenced (and erased) spaces and pockets of resistance and histories at the expense of a grand narrative of class resistance to the status quo. However, the object of non-linearity and fragmentation is not to reveal spaces, pockets of resistance, and histories but non-linearity and fragmentation as the constant state of resistance; the aim is to dismantle the power that critically engages the status quo.

The narrative design of *The Quiet Ones* is a vertical rendering of the lives of characters, fragmented. Their past was created only to justify their present conditions and actions, and their future, either erased or provisional, only to justify, again, their present condition and actions in the vertical rendering of their lives as the narrative design of the novel. The conversation between Scott and Alvin on "placelessness" and "Kilometro Zero" reveals the limitations of non-linearity and fragmentation in the language of neoliberalism as present in the novel.

Scott and Alvin argued on the concept of Kilometro Zero on one of their dates in downtown Manila. Kilometro Zero is the concrete location marked by a structure in Manila City against which all the distance in the country is measured. Scott, an American scholar sent to the country on scholarship and specialized in urban placelessness, debunked the idea of Kilometro Zero as the center: "Remember, modern Manila has no *real* center...Fluid population. Contrast and inequality. Shrinking private spaces. It's what's happening to Manila. There's a vacuum. And no administrative footprint will change that."<sup>22</sup> Scott's reference comes from the argument that the city has no center, and power is distributed unevenly. However, Scott's "de-centered" city soon met its inconsistency as there's a "fluid population" but also a "contrast and inequality" and private places are shrinking, descriptions that defeat the diffused power from the center and a population capable of movement and transfer. And then Scott, after the inconsistency, declared that the state's legitimate political will to control, manage, and execute urban planning—as represented by the "administrative footprint"—was rendered powerless. Alvin was quizzical and dismissive of Scott's argument as the latter declared that the city is *its* inhabitants:

---

<sup>22</sup> Diaz, *The Quiet Ones*, 47–48.

“What is a city without inhabitants? You see? Nothing but plains and hills and rivers. Of flood plains and esteros. But look at me. I’ve been living in Manila for, what, three years? I won’t feel at home in Seattle if I return. I will probably not return, to be perfectly honest. You see? The city is not a place. It is a social,” he paused, “arrangement. Defined by concession. By Consensus. It is us. A city ends when there are no longer people to define it.”<sup>23</sup>

Scott’s argument comes from the non-linearity of the city’s evolution from the destruction of capitalist intrusion on urban planning and the fragmentation of the city as a concrete reality, a positive space and time, as it is now dependent on the perceived agency of the inhabitants to create it. Scott’s argument reveals a contradiction, seemingly a process of dialectics, but in reality, at the negative, what it does include and eventually reveal is the truth that neoliberalism through capital restructures the city, limits the power of the state in urban planning and execution while creating a language that could conceal and reveal the project at the same time. Scott’s “concession” and “consensus” here are the “freedoms” and “democracy” preached by the neoliberal fantasy that everybody playing in the competition system wins.<sup>24</sup> These concepts stand on false premises that power is evenly distributed among the population members and that the economic elite is “non-existent” and, therefore, incapable of manipulating and subjugating people through capital.

However, the location and position of the novel introduce Alvin’s “counter-argument” to Scott’s. The novel does not detail Alvin’s exact opposition to Scott’s argument. Alvin agreed with Scott’s anti-Kilometro Zero stance when he observed and experienced passing through the EDSA and Shaw Boulevard intersections that reminded him of “suffocating concrete, the city’s dregs”<sup>25</sup> that the city is almost inhabitable. Alvin’s opposition to Scott’s anti-Kilometro Zero was unclear, bordering on racial prejudice and insecurities when it comes to access to “American taxpayers’ money.” How the novel’s narrative handled the trajectory from Scott’s anti-Kilometro Zero in Alvin to suddenly as a struggle of placelessness as expressed through loneliness demonstrates what Tatiana Panfilova calls the “problem of

---

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>24</sup> Dean, *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies*, 57.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

identity” under rapid market expansion due to globalization: the loss of subjectivity.<sup>26</sup>

Placelessness here is a response from these characters as their subjectivity disintegrates within neoliberalism’s complex spatial restructuring of spaces to accommodate the resurgence of struggles and social ills that needed attention within the subject’s perceived capacity for engagement to a rapidly accelerating world their bodies and consciousness occupy. Peter V. Zima explored subjectivity and its location in postmodern and highly advanced capitalistic societies. Zima described the decline of modern subjectivity through “subjugation” and “disintegration” due to the rapid structural changes in societies because of the expeditious expansion of capital and capitalism as a dominant ideology.<sup>27</sup> Zima proposed a dialogic theory of subjectivity where the dialectic between the subject’s individuality and identity is not in a pre-determined and positive synthesis. The modern subject is “marked by ambivalence and negation, dialogism and alterity, reflexivity, narrativity and identity construction.”<sup>28</sup>

Fragmentation is a dominant theme that is both present in modern and postmodern identity construction in various social movements beginning in the late 1960s called “identity politics” as the term “characterizing those movements in which membership in oppressed and marginalized groups provides the basis of a common identity for the making of political claims.”<sup>29</sup> Robert G. Dunn further argues that fragmentation is an inherent structure present in the logic of what he calls “commodity form” where the growing consumer society in capitalism leads to the multiplication of products and the growing plurality of the market that pushes product differentiation of a variety of consumable objects and images and this “commodity form” also functions to ensure consumers experience the “visual and semiotic fragmentation in numerous ways” that the rapid and nonstop reproduction of consumer goods in the marketplace contributes “to the intensification of sensory experience, while their temporal deployment produces a sense of discontinuity and disunity in daily existence as products, styles, and fashions change rapidly.”<sup>30</sup>

In Alvin’s conversation with his sister, placelessness was suddenly about loneliness, of moving from one place to another, reducing relationships as temporary, fragmented, and disposable. The sister asks Alvin if this

---

<sup>26</sup> Tatiana Panfilova, “Identity as a Problem of Today,” in *Fromm Forum*, 14 (2010), <[https://fromm-gesellschaft.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Panfilova\\_T\\_2010.pdf](https://fromm-gesellschaft.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Panfilova_T_2010.pdf)>.

<sup>27</sup> Peter V. Zima, *Subjectivity and Identity* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 202.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>29</sup> Robert G. Dunn, *Identity Crises: A Social Critique of Postmodernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 18.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

placelessness is from Scott, implying his anti-Kilometro Zero, where people's movement is fluid. What is disturbing is how the sister justifies the movement of anti-Kilometro Zero to placelessness and to workplace alienation as created by the painful abandonment of a lover: "Until someone leaves you and then you have to work as a toll booth operator in the middle of SLEX at 3 o'clock in the morning, you don't know—you have absolutely no clue—how it feels to be lonely."<sup>31</sup> How the anti-Kilometro Zero suddenly becomes a personal struggle is just a reiteration of the city made by the people, which is personal, subjective and fragmented. However, the danger of this movement will appear several pages later when Alvin talks about a novella, *Reunion*, "about two boys in 1930s Stuttgart. It has the usual: anti-Semitism, the rise of Nazi Germany, looming world war. That sort of things that put problems like placelessness and insomnia in proper perspectives"<sup>32</sup> just as the struggle of anti-Kilometro Zero that becomes placelessness could be reduced into an escape to another struggle so remote and closer to the subject—but still a struggle.

### Deterritorialization

Contrary to non-linearity and fragmentation as a strategy of rendering a world through the language of neoliberalism, the BPO industry has a concrete and positive historical evolution. In the Philippines, call centers arrived at the end of the 1990s; a decade later, the country was dubbed the "call center capital of the world," taking over India following the boom of BPO companies in the country and worker population in the industry.<sup>33</sup>

Call centers are a product of the "new" global capitalism that can be traced back to the "Golden Era" of post-war capitalism, where production and consumption increased. Ronaldo Munck charted the evolution of "new" global capitalism from the "Golden Era" of post-war capitalism.<sup>34</sup> Fordism was the most scientific method to manage assembly lines efficiently in manufacturing companies, specifically automobiles. With their work patterns and the structure of entire work processes, call centers follow Fordism's systematic segmentation and specialization of skills and activities.<sup>35</sup> Munck furthers that globalization, with the technology and easier movement of

---

<sup>31</sup> Diaz, *The Quiet Ones*, 60.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>33</sup> Alinaya Fabros, *Outsourceable Selves: An Ethnography of Call Center Work in a Global Economy of Signs and Selves* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2016), 6.

<sup>34</sup> See Ronaldo Munck, *Globalization and Labor: The New Great Transformation* (Manila: Ibon Books, 2002).

<sup>35</sup> Seumas Milne, "Comeuppance Calling," in *The Guardian* (26 November 1999), <<https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/1999/nov/26/guardiananalysispage>>.

capital, created a new labor–capital relation, reducing the power of the state to regulate and control capital, specifically those that came from foreign investors. Munck writes:

Globalization, in the shape of its prime economic agent the great corporation, does indeed cut across political frontiers in a way which leads to *deterritorialization*. While corporations have headquarters in particular nation-states, they are effectively disembedded from these societies by their economic logic.<sup>36</sup>

*Deterritorialization* is not a product of colonialism or located in the struggle of postcolonial subjects on their identities and cultures; it is a product of the continued evolution of capitalism and labor-capital relations in an era where capital movements are made easier because of technology. The arrival of call centers, or offshore operations, was predicted in the early 1980s as economic decolonization impacted a sudden shift in financial activities and created new labor and work patterns. Fröbel, Heinrichs, and Kreye<sup>37</sup> argued for a “new international division of labor” as “the traditional colonial division of labour in which the Third World was relegated to the production of raw materials began to change in the 1960s. Decolonization, and then the ‘economic imperialism’ of the post-war period, began to generate pressures for change.”<sup>38</sup>

The advent of the BPO industry in the Philippines is part of the more extensive historical evolution of the capitalist mode of production worldwide; call centers are part of a new international division of labor. Fröbel, Heinrichs, and Kreye enumerated the essential preconditions were required for this to happen,<sup>39</sup> and BPO is part of this evolution:

1. The breakdown of traditional social, economic structures in the Third World, which led to the emergence of a vast pool of cheap available labor;
2. The fragmentation of the industrial production process, which allowed unskilled sub-processes to relocate to the Third World; and
3. The development of cheap international transport and communications technology, which made this relocation possible.

---

<sup>36</sup> Munck, *Globalization and Labor*, 4.

<sup>37</sup> See Folker Fröbel, Jürgen Heinrichs, and Otto Kreye, *The New International Division of Labour: Structural Unemployment in Industrialised Countries and Industrialisation in Developing Countries*, trans. by Pete Burgess (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

*The Quiet Ones* centers the narrative of workers' oppression in the BPO industry on postcolonial identity discourse without acknowledging the historical evolution of capitalist modes of production and consumption as the environment that created this industry in the first place. Identity and cultural clashes are accidents in this evolution of capitalist modes of production and consumption. To examine how workers are dehumanized and reified in the industry, one must begin to look at the historical evolution of this industry.

The novel's framing of the narratives of BPO workers' oppression at the workplace in postcolonialist/post-structuralist discourse made *The Quiet Ones* unable to identify the real sources of the problem; it was unable to locate the enemy and the necessity of violence to a more viable dialectical reasoning to build the novel's intellectual capacity to engage neoliberalism and its language in discourse. The instances of internal contradictions in the novel (as we can see later in the discussion on the form through the characters) are devoid of violence. These contradictions should aim at challenging the hegemony for positive and pre-determined dialectical reasoning but will always end up aiming at creating more spaces for contradiction.

Violence should have been a necessity in *The Quiet Ones*; however, the text's language permitted some of the significant conflicts in the novel to end up in abandonment as a resolution. Call centers and the BPO industry are a product of globalization, and the state and non-state economic actors play an essential role in the sustainability of this industry. Violence as language is necessary as there is a need to challenge the status quo and several institutions as purveyors of globalization of capital and its ideologies. Abandonment is a defeatist choice, but it is an informed decision in the text. Structural adjustments imposed on the country by lending institutions such as the IMF and World Bank created an economic environment where it was easier for floating investments to enter and leave the country. Like in other developing countries, these structural adjustments changed the Philippines' economic, political, cultural, and social institutions; also, it has created a language that can justify "elements" of globalization in the local labor market. Among these elements were the use of temporary, part-time, seasonal, and hourly contractuels—contractualization and labor-only contracting.<sup>40</sup> The language of these elements is deeply embedded in several discourses on the Philippine labor market. Moreover, the IMF and World Bank pushed the country to trade and capital liberalization, a concrete example of a non-democratic, non-participatory, free-market economic system. While the activities of the IMF and World Bank are in developing countries, they are led

---

<sup>40</sup> Structural Adjustment Participatory Review International Network (SAPRIN), *Structural Adjustment: The SAPRI Report. The Policy Roots of Economic Crisis, Poverty, and Inequality* (London: Zed Books, 2004), 102.

by representatives from industrialized nations (IMF is always Europeans; while World Bank, Americans), and they were chosen behind closed doors, making these institutions not representative of the country they serve.<sup>41</sup>

The power structure that supports the language that justifies the neoliberal agenda as present in the novel will require a more powerful counter-language that can balance the power or a violent language that can shatter the entire structure. Violence is considered a linguistic-narrative project that identifies the root of the power structure that renders the language and endeavors to challenge that power structure to eventually collapse the language. Either the text will yield to the power and embrace the language, or it will ultimately challenge the language and determine the power relations afterwards.

### **Restructures, Relations**

The second discursive engagement of the novel to critically assess its success in engaging its object of criticism and the location of its narrative in the critical discourse on the excesses and limitations of neoliberalism as an ideology of the market economy is revealed in the form, as how the novel reveals itself to the reader.

The novel's structure is designed vertically based on exploring each character and their respective relationships and how these relationships shaped their worlds and, eventually, the world of the entire novel. The design of *The Quiet Ones* enables the text to explore issues of workers in the BPO industry related to work patterns, irregular work schedules, access to transportation, disjointed employee-employer relations, and the social costs of working for this industry that outweigh its economic benefits (as the call center agents are paid higher than the usual workers say teachers and other professionals in the labor market). Also, the character-driven narrative of the text enables it to dramatize the recurring themes of the novel, themes that can only be explored internally in the characters and externally with their relations to other characters; recurring themes such as loyalty, the commodification of work, life, relationships, including specific struggles and movements within a community such as the LGBTQ+ and social movements against the ruling class and structural poverty.

The text could be accessed through the characters' relationships: Alvin and Scott, Philip and Eric, Karen and Brock, and Carolina and Reynaldo. The first three pairs are workers in the BPO industry. Fabros described the work patterns and the lives of workers in the industry in three

---

<sup>41</sup> Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2003), 19.

words: *restructuring*, *relocation*, and *standardization*. The restructuring would entail changing several aspects of the worker's life to accommodate the demands of working for a call center. Since the agent's clients are in the US, living in a different time zone, and from another culture, the schedules, language, and the self (including morals and identity) should be adjusted to meet the demands of the production floor. Sleep patterns were disjointed, eating habits changed, consumption and spending habits formed according to the culture perpetuated by the company and the new purchasing power, and relationships with people outside the industry were adjusted for the call center workers. Agents are subjected to what Fabros called "temporal cycles of others," where "[s]ince services are exchanged in real-time across temporal distances, call center production requires agents to reorder their day-to-day routines according to the cycles of the time zones they service."<sup>42</sup> Characters such as Alvin, Philip, Eric, and Karen experienced "temporal cycles of others" within the operations area, and their worlds adjusted as soon as they left the office. Contrasted with workers from other countries, such as Scott and Carolina, who physically moved to the Philippines, did not suffer in adjusting their "cycles" as they moved and lived physically in the country according to their conveniences.

Relocation, on the other hand, is the confusion of places. Like the novel's characters, agents were told they were centrally located in the United States. The confusion on places would entail agents changing their names, studying and performing the American culture. The workplace transforms/transport the workers to a temporal/temporary "United States." However, in situations like this, negotiation of identities and culture is impossible as the distribution of power is wholly asymmetrical between the cultures and identities of the agents and the culture and identities of their master/employer/customer, as negotiation is only possible if both cultures have equal access to the power distribution.<sup>43</sup> In the novel, characters working for the call center, including Reynaldo, did not reach and perform a negotiated identity due to their engagement with another more dominant culture and identity. As postcolonial subjects, these characters just performed their previously negotiated selves in front of their former colonial masters in this master-slave relationship.

Offshoring of business processes would entail standardizing practices and procedures to control production processes and manage service quality. Since agents are considered "front-liners," they *become* the company they represent. As they handle human beings as customers, languages, call-

---

<sup>42</sup> Fabros, *Outsourceable Selves*, 35.

<sup>43</sup> See Homi K. Bhabha's exploration of negotiation in the opening essay "The Commitment to Theory" in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 37-45.



handling skills, and even human emotions are standardized across all production sites scattered across the globe. In the novel, there is a recurring reference to UtelCo's manual of operations whenever characters are in a situation where they need to resolve specific real-life challenges. The characters' selves, as Fabros puts it, have become the "arena of outsourcing":

Produced, consumed and exchanged within a globally fragmented production system, outsourceable selves are defined by circumstances and imperatives *outside* their direct control and local, personal context. The factors that determine the call center agent's work extend beyond her immediate setting. In this view, *sourced out* means that the outsourceable self is directed by a host of actors other than the worker herself, derived from exigencies that straddle global spaces, company objectives, management demands, client targets, and customer expectations that are rooted elsewhere. Most of these imperatives may not readily coincide with the worker's everyday practice and her sense of self, yet these heavily structure day-to-day realities and performances at work. Where outsourcing of services requires the *outside* sourcing of selves, the worker becomes disciplined by exigencies of hyperproduction and defined by varied interests and relations that are separated and redefined by a growing global distance. As she is contextualized by both convergences and disparities of transnational service operations, the performance of such outsourceable selves also produces the context that makes such global exchanges possible.<sup>44</sup>

Master-and-slave is the dominant relationship among the characters in *The Quiet Ones*, a kind of relationship borne out of being an outsourceable self in the industry. However, the master-slave relationship among these characters varies depending on the capital movements between the two parties. Alvin and Scott, as the former has a constant supply of money coming from the American company, and the latter, an American scholar, became dependent sucking out resources from a call center worker. Here, capital is demonstrated as non-moving: it comes from the Americans and eventually ends up with an American. Meanwhile, with Karen and Brock, the former was reduced to being an object, as an agent on the operations floor, a

---

<sup>44</sup> Fabros, *Outsourceable Selves*, 233.

necessary tool for Brock's success as the operations manager and the success of the company's business. Carolina and Reynaldo's relationship, on the other hand, can be characterized by the mutual decision to reduce each other into an object, a tacit agreement between the couple, out of their feelings, to get what they want from each other: for Carolina, survival so that she can function well as a high-paid expat knowledge worker, and for Reynaldo, the access to resources that his relationship can provide with Carolina. However, the "castration" of Reynaldo signifies that the capital should move to and stay with Carolina; Reynaldo's attempt to control the transaction was presented by the novel's text as an attempt to impose patriarchy (that needs to be castrated) rather than the total control of the transactions. The "enslavement" between Eric and Philip, however, is not between the two as they are both "enslaved" by their consumerist lifestyle, the purchasing power that they got from defrauding the company as well as from their class privileges.

### Reification

*The Quiet Ones* poses several challenges and questions on the formation and nature of the language of neoliberalism as a free-market ideology where privatization, deregulation, and the removal of state interventions are its primary goals. If we are to follow Barthes, the construction of language carries the same structure as the consumption of text, where meanings are perpetually "about to arrive" and meanings through the act of experiencing the text (as in the reading) is a relentless negotiation in systems of intertextuality.<sup>45</sup> However, the Barthesian system of language and meaning formation can only provide a limited debate on the role of power structure and power relations as capital dictates—a power structure that shapes, commands, reinforces, and silences meanings that eventually influence reading.

In *The Quiet Ones*, it is necessary to examine the novel as a language to carefully explore its location and position against the object of its criticism. Analyzing the text's internal logic may be daunting, but the form can provide clues on where we can begin a discursive interrogation of the text's language. Capital and its movement within the text, a movement that impacts the deployment of meanings, is a platform where we can begin examining the language of the text.

Central to the critique of capital are the concepts of "commodity" and its "use value" and "exchange value" as the fundamental unit of capitalism. Commodities are objects that satisfy a person's needs and wants. The

---

<sup>45</sup> See Roland Barthes's essay "From Work to Text," in *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 155–164.

commodity has its use value intrinsic or the utility of the object, while its exchange value is the quantitative relations of the commodity to other commodities in exchange situations such as barter and buying/selling.<sup>46</sup> Marx further argues that commodities have social dimensions because production has social dimensions: labor is added to the commodities exchange value. Surplus value, for Marx, is the labor power added to the exchange value, and this is where the exploitation of the working class took place: as the Capitalist will extract more surplus value, i.e., extending working hours of the workers so that more money can be extracted in labor within this oppressive system. Capital is money obtained from this oppressive system of capitalism. As characters in *The Quiet Ones*, call center agents are reduced to commodities as outsourceable selves, and globalization has created an environment where this conversion can be possible. As Fabros succinctly puts it:

Outsourceable Selves highlights a fundamental aspect of global service outsourcing in call centers that is quite obvious yet remains so implicit and taken-for-granted: agents, recomposed workers, not services, are the industry's main product. Reflected in concurring hiring, training, monitoring, deployment, and turnover cycles, the continuous production of outsourceable agents makes up the primary function of the third party, offshore call center.<sup>47</sup>

Alvin, Philip, Karen, Eric, and Reynaldo are human beings reduced to commodities. As their company and clients exploit their labor, Scott and Carolina, represented by Western industrialized countries and former colonial masters of the Filipinos, also took advantage of exploiting the fruits of these workers' labor.

Reading the text, we can conclude that the narrative attempts to critically engage neoliberalism and the excesses of capitalism in a discussion. However, if we look closely at how the text justifies meanings, we can experience another level of reading of *The Quiet Ones*. The recurring abandonment in the text, the casual reducibility of class struggle to a mere expansion of civil liberties, the privileging of identities and cultural clashes over class conflict—we know that it is not enough that the text articulated the seeming exploitation of labor. Still, the text also participates in forming a specific language, the language of neoliberalism.

---

<sup>46</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: Vol. 1* (New York: International Publishers Co., Inc., 1967), 36.

<sup>47</sup> Fabros, *Outsourceable Selves*, 233.

Reification is a recurring theme in the novel, objectifying subjective consciousness and *vice versa*. Reification is present in the bourgeois class consciousness where commodity fetishism is the culture, and human beings are reduced to consumers or objects for transactions and exchange:

The fetishistic illusions enveloping all phenomena in capitalist society succeed in concealing reality, but more is concealed than the historical, i.e. transitory, ephemeral nature of phenomena. This concealment is made possible by the fact that in capitalist society man's environment, and especially the categories of economics, appear to him immediately and necessarily in forms of objectivity which conceal the fact that they are the categories of the relations of men with each other. Instead, they appear as things and the relations of things with each other. Therefore, when the dialectical method destroys the fiction of the immortality of the categories it also destroys their reified character and clears the way to a knowledge of reality.<sup>48</sup>

Lukács argues the necessity of dialectics in addressing the problem of reification: the process of reification is subjecting the conscious self to the modes of production of the capitalist as the creator, a crisis in a bourgeois society where reality can no longer be separated from the fantasy and commodity fetishism, and the presence of the proletariat negates this form of life.<sup>49</sup> However, in the textual deployment of reification, the process of Marxist dialectical materialism seems to be anachronistic as the language being utilized is the language of neoliberalism, which has its way of using its version of dialectical reasoning. The proletariat in the novel performs the crisis of the bourgeois society; the performances would entail abandonment, reduction of the conflict of class struggle to an expansion of civil liberties, and the privileging of postcolonial interrogation of identities and cultural clash over class conflict.

Marxist historical dialectical materialism can be utilized if there is a clear distinction between the two opposing classes, where the language being used is at least outside the language of neoliberalism or objectively the language devoid of any neoliberal agenda. In the case of our time, in the novel itself, where the class distinction has already been blurred, and class struggle

---

<sup>48</sup> Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1971), 14.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

has been relentlessly repressed, what form of dialectical reasoning can be applied so we can come up with a more viable critic of neoliberalism while either utilizing its language or rejecting it outright? How can the language of neoliberalism be understood in the first place, as its presence is omniscient and omnipresent and has self-sustaining logic? How can we map the process of neoliberalism's language, legitimacy, and limitations?

Neoliberalism's language can be mapped in the two present processes: *capital-as-presence* and *space-as-absence*. On the one hand, capital-as-presence is the omniscient and omnipresent nature of capital as signs, symbols, meanings, and, to a certain extent, as textual engagement in the form of consumption of meanings. On the other hand, space-as-absence is the negative and non-identity of identity and the non-identity itself. Space-as-absence is Adorno's process in negative dialectics only that it is always premised on capital-as-presence. Space-as-absence is a process, a product of tension and contradiction but, internally, its tension and contradiction mirror the positive dialectics, which is its shadow. Therefore, space-as-absence is related to a positive/objective being (what is present) created by capital. The language of neoliberalism and its nature could be accessed then in the discursive linguistic discourse on power relations, power structures, and the movements of capital, including its absence.

Suppose we focus on the concluding resolution of all the relationships (built and reinforced by capital) of the various characters in the novel. Can we describe if the language of *The Quiet Ones* made a critical position against the reification and commodification of work, relationships, identities, cities, senses, etc., through the text's formal elements, such as characterization, resolution, and plot structure? Are the "quiet ones" the actual location of a critical position of resistance or counter-narrative, or is it just a space-as-absence specter of capital's negative presence?

## Conclusion

*Capital-as-presence reveals the power structure in capitalist power relations.* If power structure is the terrain where two opposing forces or concepts are negotiating (provided that the power distribution is symmetrical), where is the location of capital-as-presence in the novel's text: (1) work (2) public services (3) geography (4) identities (5) production and consumption, or (6) various relationships?

Capital-as-presence in the text is either morphed into social, political, intellectual (as in the case of Scott), or capital as money. To locate the capital-as-presence in the novel's text, several questions could serve as a guide: Who holds and controls the capital? Who is the commodity in the power relations? And how does the commodity in the power relation resist, talkbacks, and

struggle to change positions with the one holding the capital? These questions locate the movement of capital in the power relations while identifying the nature of transactions and those involved in engagement. Take, for example, the various relationships revealed in the text. The text has four relationships: Alvin and Scott, Carolina and Reynaldo, Karen and Brock, and Philip and Eric. Capital-as-presence moves several times in these relationships, depending on the situation and the power distribution between the couple. One must first establish the relationships in the power relations: at work, between employer and employee, or agents and customers; in public service, between the representatives of the authority and the citizens; in geography, between locals and the foreign utilizing spaces; and identities, between the dominant and less powerful, or identities at the periphery whether it is cultural, religious, or ethnic identity. Capital as the money used to obtain more money (in the Marxist discourse: M-C-M or money-commodity-money) can perform itself as a presence, omnipresent and omniscient.

*Space-as-absence is a negative presence, dependent on the positive existence/presence.* Capital creates, erases, and then legitimizes a world based on the systemic nature of capitalism of uncontrolled wealth accumulation by those who control the modes of production. Negative presence is the binary opposition of “what-is-present” created by capital. To demonstrate the negative presences/spaces-as-absence created by capital and how it mediates relationships in the novel’s text: (1) between states, (2) citizens and the State (represented by the law and state authorities), (3) between citizens as workers, (4) between citizens as workers and their cities?

To locate space-as-absence, these questions can guide the process: What is the description of the power relations? That is, is it master and slave, or is the power evenly distributed between the two parties? Identify the categories under each party and look for categories that converge and diverge. Lastly, search for a negotiation between the two parties, provided the power is distributed evenly, such as between nation-states in the novel. The two nation-states had a master–slave relationship, as the Philippines was a former colony of the United States. The contradiction and tension between the two states are passed on even to their respective categories as nation-states, which either converge or diverge: economic ideology, history of colonial domination and subjugation, language, identities, cultures, etc. In the novel, the engagement of the two states has created a negotiated space: the call center as a workplace, and for the characters in the novels, the extension of their lives. *What-is-present* here or a positive existence is the call center; however, the call center is also a product of an engagement between two previously identified elements: nation and state. The lives and universe of the characters in the novel were produced by their engagement with the call center as what-is-present is the space-as-absence. Through this, tension and

contradiction are also present to create and then legitimize it as a new what-is-present and create another space-as-absence, the process will continue *ad infinitum*. This process, together with the movement of capital-as-presence in the different levels of space-as-absence, is how the language of neoliberalism works, and this is the cartography of its linguistic process that renders a world that perpetuates and legitimates, at the same time, the dictum that the world has no alternative to neoliberalism.

*School of Creative Arts, Culture, and Communication  
Birkbeck, University of London,  
The United Kingdom*

## References

- Adorno, Theodor, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. by E.B. Ashton (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1973).
- Bello, Walden, "Neoliberalism as Hegemonic Ideology in the Philippines: Rise, Apogee, and Crisis," in *Philippine Sociological Review*, 57 (2009).
- Bhabha, Homi K., *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
- Barthes, Roland, *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977).
- Dean, Jodi, *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2009).
- Dunn, Robert G., *Identity Crises: A Social Critique of Postmodernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).
- Diaz, Glenn, *The Quiet Ones* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2017).
- Fabros, Alinaya, *Outsourceable Selves: An Ethnography of Call Center Work in a Global Economy of Signs and Selves* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2016).
- Greenlees, Donald, "Filipinos Are Taking More Calls in Outsourcing Boom," in *The New York Times* (24 November 2006), <<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/24/business/worldbusiness/24calls.html>>.
- Harvey, David, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Henry, John F., "The Historic Roots of the Neoliberal Program," in *Journal of Economic Issues*, 44:2 (2010), 543–550, <<https://doi.org/10.2753/JEI0021-3624440227>>.
- Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines, "The Hope of the Philippine Book Publishing Industry amid Stagnant Readership" (23 April 2020), <<https://www.ipophil.gov.ph/news/the-hope-of-the-philippine-book-publishing-industry-amid-stagnant-readership>>.

## 120 CAPITAL-AS-PRESENCE

- Lukács, Georg, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1971).
- Marx, Karl, *Capital: Vol. 1* (New York: International Publishers Co., Inc., 1967).
- Montero, Darío and Filipe Torres, "Acceleration, Alienation, and Resonance. Reconstructing Hartmut Rosa's Theory of Modernity," in *Pléyade (Santiago)*, 25 (2020), <<http://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0719-36962020000100155>>.
- Milne, Seumas, "Comeuppance Calling," in *The Guardian* (26 November 1999), <<https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/1999/nov/26/guardiananalysispage>>.
- Munck, Ronaldo, *Globalization and Labor: The New Great Transformation* (Manila: Ibon Books, 2002).
- Panfilova, Tatiana, "Identity as a Problem of Today," in *Fromm Forum*, 14 (2010), <[https://fromm-gesellschaft.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Panfilova\\_T\\_2010.pdf](https://fromm-gesellschaft.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Panfilova_T_2010.pdf)>.
- Pineda, DLS, "Familiar Alienations in Diaz's 'The Quiet Ones'," in *PhilStar Global* (20 October 2017), <<https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/supreme/2017/10/20/1750775/familiar-alienations-diazs-the-quiet-ones>>.
- Rosa, Hartmut, *Social Acceleration: A Theory of Modernity*, trans. by Jonathan Trejo-Mathys (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).
- Rodrigues, João, "The Political and Moral Economies of Neoliberalism: Mises and Hayek," in *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 37:5 (2013), 1001–1017, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/bes091>>.
- Stiglitz, Joseph, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2003).
- Structural Adjustment Participatory Review International Network (SAPRIN), *Structural Adjustment: The SAPRI Report. The Policy Roots of Economic Crisis, Poverty, and Inequality* (London: Zed Books, 2004).
- Zima, Peter V., *Subjectivity and Identity* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).