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## Editor's Introduction

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**H**ow do fishers in Batanes create a community to help cope with the hazards of fishing, which is undertaken as a lonely endeavor by individual fishers at sea? Maria F. Mangahas's article provides ethnographic data on an annual ritual of "making the *vanua*," a ritual that, for the given season, binds fishers of the dorado fish in a port-based collectivity that governs members with its rules and taboos. At the same time, the ritual deals with uncertainty by pleading to the fish to feel compassion for the fisher's need to feed their families, who are deemed to respond by allowing themselves to be caught in a "clean" port. Thus, successful fishing is associated primarily with trust, cooperation, and social order among fishers, and secondarily with deference toward fish as "fellow beings." Mangahas argues that this maritime tradition in Batanes is deeply rooted, and is linked to the wider Austronesian world—a perspective this journal seeks to encourage.

The salience of popular culture also undergirds the discussion by Soon Chuan Yean of politics in a barangay in Batangas Province. The enigma that Soon tackles concerns political leaders whose reputation to outsiders is unsavory—including a mayor who was assassinated reportedly by the New People's Army for "crimes against the people"—but whom ordinary people regard as "good." In his analysis of Tagalog concepts a la *Pasyon and Revolution*, Soon advances an interpretation of leaders who bridge social structural divisions through actions that people interpret positively. Lest we accept the cultural chasm as totally irremediable, the extreme contrast with outsiders' views that Soon finds appears to call for further study.

Marco Garrido pursues the question of a class and cultural divide in his analysis of social boundaries as these apply to two events that transpired in

2001: Edsa 2, which ousted Joseph Estrada as president, and Edsa 3, which attempted to reinstate him. Garrido reads middle-class interpretations that render Edsa 2 as morally legitimate and Edsa 3 as morally bankrupt as political acts of exclusion from civil society. These representations ensue from everyday cultural practices that create a sense of class separate from the masses, who are seen as wanting in civic competence. A riposte to the middle classes' exclusionary strategies, Edsa 3, Garrido argues, is a significant statement against the invisibility and cultural domination of the masses.

A special feature of this issue is a symposium on Philippine Studies, based on two papers presented at the Eighth International Conference on Philippine Studies (ICOPHIL) held in July 2008. Ramon Guillermo analyzes the so-called indigenization movement, represented by Pantayong Pananaw and Sikolohiyang Pilipino. Guillermo argues that the fluorescence of these intellectual movements was entwined with the nationalist and militant mass movements that emerged in the 1960s; however, their current state of disengagement from the latter movements deprives them of strength and relevance.

Vicente L. Rafael surveys studies of the Philippines in the United States in the wake of Reynaldo Ileto's critique of American Orientalism in the late 1990s. Rafael maps out three reorientations based on the rediscovery of empire, the turn to comparative studies, and the preoccupation with the Filipino diaspora. Despite these advances, Rafael observes a particular weakness in the general failure to engage with sources in Philippine languages—raising questions about the status of the Philippines in these studies. Is Philippine Studies in the United States a mere prop to postcolonial studies of America and its empire? However, even more marginalized than the Philippines itself are the class positions and cultural perspectives that the three articles in this issue tackle and seek to give voice.