

philippine studies: historical and ethnographic viewpoints

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

**Flames of Baler: The Story of the Siege of Baler,
Reconstructed from Original Documentary Sources
by Carlos Madrid**

Book Notes

Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints
vol. 63 nos. 2 (2015): 292

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at philstudies.soss@ateneo.edu.

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>

Flames of Baler: The Story of the Siege of Baler, Reconstructed from Original Documentary Sources

Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2012. 228 pages.

Carlos Madrid's *Flames of Baler* is based on his dissertation in the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. The book zeroes in on the town of Baler, the last town under Spanish control to fall to Filipino forces during the Philippine revolution. Baler, capital of present-day Aurora province, was part of the now-defunct politico-military district of Principe in the late nineteenth century. The opening chapter provides the geographical and socioeconomic backdrop for late-nineteenth-century Baler by analyzing the town's *principalia* class. The book gives a blow-by-blow account of the armed engagements between Filipino revolutionary forces and the Spanish colonial army in Baler, from September 1897 to June 1899, at which point the Spanish forces under 2nd Lt. Martín Cerezo finally surrendered, even as the Philippine–American War was already being waged throughout Luzon. It narrates the struggles of the revolutionaries under Emilio Aguinaldo to capture the last Spanish stronghold and Spanish efforts to defend it until 2 June 1899, despite the fact that the Philippines had already been ceded to the US under the Treaty of Paris of December 1898. Although mainly a politico-military history, the book provides valuable information on the impact of revolution and war on the everyday lives of ordinary people in and around Baler. The work is based on a wide array of primary sources found in archives in the Philippines and Spain, which the author lists down toward the end of the book. Former Sen. Edgardo Angara, a native of Baler, gives the foreword to the book.