

philippine studies: historical and ethnographic viewpoints

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**MacArthur in Asia: The General and His
Staff in the Philippines, Japan, and Korea by Hiroshi Masuda**

Book Notes

Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints
vol. 63 nos. 2 (2015): 293

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MacArthur in Asia: The General and His Staff in the Philippines, Japan, and Korea

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012. 334 pages.

Hiroshi Masuda's *MacArthur in Asia: The General and His Staff in the Philippines, Japan, and Korea* was originally published in Tokyo in 2009 by Chuokoron-Shinsha. Cornell University Press decided to publish its English translation by Reiko Yamamoto three years later, giving it a wider audience and serving as a testament to the merits of the book. The book narrates the trajectory of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's career in Asia and dissects the "enduring mythology" surrounding his persona. It begins with MacArthur's encounter with the Philippines and the colonial backdrop that defined his stellar rise within the military. By 1935 Philippine president Manuel L. Quezon had appointed MacArthur as the top military advisor to the Commonwealth government. Most of the chapters (i.e., chapters 3 to 9) are devoted to MacArthur's stint as commanding general of the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFEF), with each chapter narrating key turning points in the Pacific theater of the Second World War. Naturally the narrative initially focuses on the Philippine front and recounts his failed attempt to defend the Philippines from Japanese occupation. However, starting in chapter 9, the attention shifts toward Japan. From hereon, the author analyzes MacArthur's pivotal role as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) in Japan, with Japanese disarmament, the war crimes trials, and political-economic reforms as the more important discussion points. The Korean War represents the brief yet controversial episode in MacArthur's career that marked the end for the decorated general. The author's attention to details on MacArthur's campaign in the Philippines stands in stark contrast to the numerous MacArthur biographies produced by Japanese scholars, who tend to concentrate on the SCAP years. Indeed, part of the author's argument is that MacArthur's Occupation policies in Japan drew much from his prewar administrative experiences in the Philippines.