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## Editor's Introduction

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# Editor's Introduction

**E**mma H. Blair and James A. Robertson's *The Philippine Islands* has a canonical status in the historiography of the Spanish Philippines. Despite some scholars' creeping sense of its inadequacies, only now is this multivolume work the subject of an intense critique launched by Glòria Cano in this issue of *Philippine Studies* and in a related piece in the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*. Cano advances the provocative thesis that the involvement of James A. LeRoy starting with the sixth volume transformed the series into imperialist propaganda. A Spanish scholar, Cano argues keenly that LeRoy steered the compendium to project an image of Spanish rule as constituting an unremittingly dark age, which, combined with a dim view of the locals, justified U.S. imperial power as a civilizing mission in the Philippines.

This negative portrait of Spanish rule was intended for American consumption on the mainland—but the question of its resonance with *ilustrado* nationalist thought Cano leaves aside. In any event, omissions, mistranslations, and misleading use of terms—"cacique" being a prime example—are far from innocent mistakes in Blair and Robertson, for they played an integral part in imperialist discourse. Cano also surfaces Robertson's role in disseminating the fraud of Jose Marco. Importantly, she casts light on the little-known Filipino scholar Clemente J. Zulueta (who died in 1904), whose knowledge of historical sources, which Robertson spurned but also appropriated, made him see the weaknesses of Blair and Robertson at the outset.

Given Cano's critique, scholars may continue to consult Blair and Robertson, but they can no longer do so uncritically. Moreover, we are compelled to question—and unthink—the established views about Spanish

colonial rule, which might have arisen from the unintended fusion of imperialist and nationalist ideologies.

What we assume we know, and what we forget and remember, are part of a structured collective discourse, undergirded by power relations, as T. Ruanni F. Tupas reminds us by way of Pierre Bourdieu. Tupas pursues another vital aspect of American imperialism: the introduction of the English language in the Philippines. It was a deliberate tool in pursuit of American hegemony, but it was also to the advantage of the Filipino elite who linked arms with the new rulers. Tupas argues that the historical circumstances, now part of Filipino historical amnesia, surrounding the introduction of English must be recognized in the debate on language, if consciousness and structures are to be transformed.

Having studied homelessness in Japan, Hideo Aoki turns his sight to understand the phenomenon in countries of the world capitalist periphery. Almost inevitably, he uses the lens of globalization, which however may occlude some of the internal dynamics behind the increase in the ranks of the street homeless in Metro Manila. Nevertheless, his research makes an important contribution by drawing attention to this phenomenon, which has attracted scant theoretical and analytic attention from among Filipinos.

Martin Joseph Ponce reviews four books on overseas Filipinos by authors who see themselves, some uneasily, as part of this diaspora—a term that, Ponce argues, is deployed as a framework both to describe and to analyze the globalization of Filipino life through specific readings of gender and sexuality. Ponce sees these books as discursive mechanisms that articulate the diaspora as a cultural (not just a material) formation, with its cultural and racial partialities, both internal and external. He argues that the work of diasporic intellectuals cannot be dissociated from their locations in—and the politics of—U.S. academic institutions. Although not within the essay's scope, the relationship of these diasporic works to Filipinos in the Philippines also needs to be examined and problematized.

This issue of *Philippine Studies* begins with the politics of American scholarship at the start of the twentieth century and ends with the politics of overseas Filipino scholarship at the start of the twenty-first. Thus we ponder the possibilities, paradoxes, and ironies of intellectual production.

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