

# philippine studies

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

---

## Reappraising an Empire, by Stanley

Review Author: John Schumacher, S.J.

*Philippine Studies* vol. 35, no. 2 (1987) 252–253

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

---

Philippine Studies 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@admu.edu.ph](mailto:philstudies@admu.edu.ph).

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>  
Fri June 27 13:30:20 2008

for example; and the resistance of the middle and upper classes to anything more than rhetorical reform and the consequent danger of rising class tensions and polarization if the hopes for fundamental change prove illusory. These are the deep subterranean forces whose movements cannot perhaps be predicted with accuracy, but which will surely influence future developments. Indeed, if the government of President Aquino becomes mired down in political battles and unable to address fundamental issues affecting the people, or if she herself should in taking the "military option" become a prisoner of the military and of those who supply them with arms, some of the worst scenarios could yet be realized.

To end on a more mundane note: at close to thirty dollars the book is expensive, particularly for a work which has not been set in type but produced from computer print-out; moreover, I found the print rather hard on the eyes.

*John J. Carroll, S.J.  
Loyola School of Theology  
Ateneo de Manila University*

REAPPRAISING AN EMPIRE: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN HISTORY. Edited by Peter W. Stanley. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1984. vi, 407 pages.

This collection of studies on Filipino-American relations grew out of a workshop and a seminar held at Harvard University during the summers of 1977 and 1978, in which most of the historians, Filipino and American, whose research transformed the historiography of twentieth-century Philippines in the late 1960s and early 1970s, took part. One characteristic of this new historiography was its attention to provincial and regional history, which made it possible to test earlier generalizations against detailed local research, particularly in the Philippine National Archives. Another was the greater attention given to the social, cultural, and psychological sides of the Filipino-American encounter, instead of the earlier concentration on political, economic, and nationalist concerns. The result has been a new evaluation of the American impact on the Philippines.

In his Introduction, Peter Stanley refers to the "official mythology" on which the traditional belief in the "special relationship" between the two countries rested: that American policy in the Philippines had been an enlightened one of development and benevolent assimilation, moving steadily toward independence, in which "the Americans were liberal tutors and the Filipinos receptive students." The leftist critique of that myth, on the other hand, has maintained that this benevolence was merely an American cover for

exploitation. The newer historians' evaluation of the American impact undermines both interpretations, finding that "the American impact upon the Philippines — either for better or for worse — [was] much less substantial than previously imagined." Many of the studies in this volume indeed indicate the limitations of American influence, whether for modernization or exploitation of the Philippines, and the decisive role played by Filipino leaders and Filipino cultural and social patterns. If the Americans, following the policy laid down by Taft, co-opted the Filipino elite in order to make possible without continued use of force the implementation of American purposes for the colony, Filipino elite politicians also co-opted the Americans in the service of their own political and social ends, a mutual co-optation which Stanley encompasses in the term "collaboration."

These themes provide a unity to the volume, though in some essays more clearly than others. In this respect the first two essays and the last two, though competent in their own right, fit less aptly within the general theme of collaboration. It is impossible to comment on the individual chapters; a mere listing of topics must suffice. Stuart Creighton Miller examines, chiefly from the press, attitudes of American soldiers in the Filipino-American war. Glenn May does two case studies of an American and a Filipino soldier and their reactions to the war, the one through his diary, the other through an interview in old age. Michael Cullinane illustrates the theme of mutual co-optation in an enlightening study of Manuel Quezon's relationships with American colonial administrators in Tayabas, particularly Constabulary commander Harry H. Bandholtz. As an illustration of the collaboration theme, I found Cullinane's perhaps the most provocative essay in the collection. A similarly provocative and useful complement is Reynaldo Iletto's look at the underside of elite-American collaboration in the revolutionary tradition which continued to simmer just below the surface, particularly in the period 1912-14. By its very presence the threat of revolutionary violence affected for a time the shape of *compadre* colonial politics. Stanley's dissection of the psychology of Dean Worcester is a case study of the career of one important American colonial administrator. Kenton Clymer analyzes the attitudes of first-generation Protestant missionaries toward the American colonial government, supportive on the whole, but often critical on specific issues, and by no means unanimous. Ronald Edgerton illustrates the impact made on Filipinos by the frontier ethos which Americans like Worcester promoted in Bukidnon. He finds that the cowboy myth had its impact on managers and small ranchers rather than on Bukidnon cowboys. Norman Owen in a study of the nineteenth-century American merchant firm, Peele, Hubbell & Co., in the abaca trade shows that their aspirations to implant American-style business methods among Filipinos far exceeded their actual impact. Frank Golay shows the conflicting priorities between American administrators and Filipino political leaders with regard to development and modernization and to the means to raise the revenues necessary for these ends. This conflict was to

limit severely the success of the early developmental policies. In the final section on post-independence relationships, Bonifacio Salamanca traces the twenty-year negotiations over supplementary war damage payments, 1951-72, and the final resolution in the various projects funded by the Special Fund. Richard Welch studies the nature and limits of neocolonial relationships during the Quirino regime.

Some of these topics obviously have more significance than others, and not all are equally illustrations of the directions traced by Stanley in his useful introduction. Nonetheless, the level of research and scholarship is high throughout the book, which is a major contribution to the understanding of the "Fil-American empire" in its multiple facets. There are unfortunately a number of typographical and a few other minor errors, of which these deserve note: French Indonesia should be French Indochina (p. 244) and *simpatica* should be *simpatía* (p. 383, n. 32). Needless to say, they do not affect the worth of a valuable book.

*John N. Schumacher, S.J.*  
*Loyola School of Theology*  
*Ateneo de Manila University*

THE AGTA OF NORTHEASTERN LUZON: RECENT STUDIES. Edited by P. Bion Griffin and Agnes Estioko-Griffin. Cebu City, Philippines: San Carlos Publications, 1985. 198 pages.

Until the 1970s the Agta of northeastern Luzon were among the remotest and least known of the various "Aeta" or "Negrito" communities. That they are now becoming among the best known is largely a product of the University of Hawaii's research program. Griffin and Estioko-Griffin have compiled an up-to-date sample of ethnographic studies by affiliates of the program. The text is supplemented by a selected bibliography and a set of photographs juxtaposing the old and new among Agta.

Apart from one article on Agta language, the papers in this volume represent "the more ecologically and materially oriented approaches" in anthropology (Griffin, p. xiii). They can be grouped into three main issues: (1) human-environment relations, (2) production and reproduction, and (3) the incorporation of Agta into wider economic and ecological systems.

Taking the first issue, Karen Mudar's research on faunal resources indicates a relation between hunting technology and the type of game that is successfully pursued. Agta, who hunt with bows and arrows and dogs, track down whatever wild pigs they encounter, but the success rate is highest for immature and elderly pigs. Her findings raise many interesting questions on the configuration of hunting technology, work patterns and social organization.