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**Repensar Filipinas: Política, Identidad y Religión  
en la Construcción de la Nación Filipina**  
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the academic institutions where Conklin worked, namely, Columbia University and Yale University, would have been instructive. Indeed, the longevity of Conklin's academic career at these institutions and the cultural memory associated with these institutions may have generated a different quality of engagement with Conklin's ethnographic approach, one marked by cooperation rather than competition. Glimpses of this possibility can be seen in Kuipers and McDermott's description of Conklin's teaching methods.

Finally, as many of the themes addressed by Conklin in this book have been the subject of continuing ethnographic and linguistic research, and given the sociocultural transitions and environmental stresses that face many communities in the Philippines today, including the Hanunóo and the Ifugao, it would have been both timely and appropriate for Conklin's work to be the subject of a contemporary critique or retrospective commentary on current challenges in undertaking ethnographic research in the Philippines.

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MARÍA DOLORES ELIZALDE PÉREZ-GRUESO, ED.

### **Repensar Filipinas: Política, Identidad y Religión en la Construcción de la Nación Filipina**

Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2009. 293 pages.

In 1898 Spain lost her last three bastions of a great empire: Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. The quick capitulation of the Spanish army in the Philippines engendered a flood of opinions as to who or what was to be blamed for the defeat. Was it administrative immorality, the predominance of militarism, the implantation of the Penal Code, the Maura Law, or the behavior of the religious orders? The answer or answers depended on who was explaining the story. Whatever the root cause, the hard fact to be swallowed was that Spain had lost the Philippines in a war with the Americans. The political debate in Spain did not end in 1898. The split opened up in 1898 between Liberal and Conservative politicians was inexorably deep. In 1904 the politicians continued to insist that the Spanish had failed to implement suitable reforms to retain the archipelago. After this heated debate of that year, the Philippines started to disappear from the Spanish imaginary.

Scholars and politicians were no longer interested in the archipelago. When in the 1950s some Spanish scholars revisited the Philippines as an area of study, they started to do so from the colonizers' point of view, ignoring the Other as part and parcel of the story. Those scholars explained the history of the conquest and the evangelizing mission of the friars.

Fortunately, from the 1980s onward, some Spanish scholars, interacting with Filipino scholars, have transcended these stories and have looked at Philippine history from both sides. Actually *Repensar Filipinas: Política, Identidad y Religión en la Construcción de la Nación Filipina* (Rethinking the Philippines: Policy, Identity and Religion in the Making of the Filipino Nation) is a clear example of Spanish-Filipino interaction. This book is the result of the meeting of the Tribuna Hispano-Filipina, which took place in Madrid in 2007. This meeting gathered prestigious Filipino and Spanish scholars. They discussed the meaning of the archipelago in the Spanish context; the construction of Filipino politics; the meaning of becoming Filipino, that is, Filipino identity; and the imprint of the church and religious orders on Filipino society.

The book is divided into four parts. The first is entitled "Gobernabilidad y economía en las Filipinas españolas." This topic is discussed by María Dolores Elizalde Pérez-Grueso and Luis Alonso. The second is titled "La forja de la vida política filipina" analyzed by Josep M. Fradera and Xavier Huetz de Lemp. The third part is on "La definición de una identidad Filipina." Fernando Zialcita and Vicente L. Rafael raise this subject. The fourth part, "El papel de la Iglesia en la sociedad Filipina," is discussed by John D. Blanco and Josep M. Delgado. Fr. José S. Arcilla, S.J., writes the conclusion.

The introduction written by Elizalde, titled "Estudios para un mejor conocimiento de las relaciones entre España y Filipinas," examines the state of the question of Spanish and Filipino historiography. She provides the Spanish interpretation of the Philippines after the loss of the archipelago. For many decades, the religious orders were the only ones who wrote the history of the Philippines. Their objective was to analyze what different congregations had done in the archipelago. No doubt, the religious orders' analyses are important contributions because they provide much information, but they only raise themes related to their evangelizing campaign. However, as mentioned, in the last twenty years a group of scholars started to explore Philippine history from new approaches, which compared the Spanish

colonial empire with other imperialisms. In these new stories the Filipino began to play an important role. If Elizalde explores old and new Spanish interpretations for foreign readers, above all Filipino scholars, she provides valuable information for Spanish scholars when she raises issues of Filipino historiography. Finally, in order to give a full picture of Philippine history, she explores international historiography that has added an understanding of Spanish colonial rule. The main contributors to this international historiography have been American scholars—not in vain did the United States of America occupy the Philippines from 1898 to 1946. Elizalde concludes that it is necessary to gather our knowledge and try to write a Philippine history from Spanish, Filipino, and American points of view, and for this purpose she provides scholars an important bibliography.

Besides writing the introduction, Elizalde contributes a chapter titled, “Sentido y rentabilidad. Filipinas en el marco del Imperio español.” She reexamines Spanish colonial administration from the conquest to the total collapse of Spanish colonial rule. She emphasizes three traits that shaped the contours of the Spanish colonial model in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These are the *encomienda* system; centralization under the governor-general, who respected the structure of Filipino power; and the religious orders. This structure changed in the eighteenth century with the implementation of Bourbon reforms. The Spanish administration realized the necessity to enforce the defense of the islands, strengthen the governmental mechanism, make the administration dynamic, and question the role of the religious orders. In sum, in the eighteenth century the Spaniards inaugurated a new colonial cycle by which there would be a bigger, more effective dominion on the territory. Finally, she discusses the implementation of the most important economic reforms in the nineteenth century. The Philippines, in the last thirty years of Spanish colonial rule, became the most important colony for the Spanish administration. The Spanish government modernized the administration and the economy of the Philippines, exploiting the colony to make it productive and economically rewarding. Despite these reforms, they were undertaken too late.

In “La administración española en las islas Filipinas, 1565–1816. Algunas notas acerca de su prolongada duración,” Alonso raises a provocative argument about the long maintenance of the Philippines. He questions the secular argument, provided by American, Filipino, and even Spanish scholars, that the Philippines depended economically on New Spain through

the system called *situado* by which the Philippines received funds from the Mexican treasury. Alonso analyzes the tribute system for the first forty years of the Spanish occupation and infers that the archipelago was self-sufficient. He concludes that Spanish administrators knew how to force the indigenous economy in order to divert significant resources toward the treasury of Manila. Actually, the indigenous peasants became the main contributors to the maintenance of the Spanish presence.

Fradera, in “Reformar o abandonar. Una relectura del conocido como Informe secreto de Sinibaldo de Mas sobre Filipinas,” revisits the report written by Sinibaldo de Mas in 1843. Many have cited Mas since the very beginning of the twentieth century but few scholars have elucidated who Mas was and in what context the secret report emerged. Fradera gives an interesting biography of Mas and throws light on the secret report on interior politics. He informs us that Mas received, at the beginning, instructions from the Spanish government to elaborate this report, which had to be contextualized in the Spanish reformist policy. Mas concluded that if the Spanish wanted to maintain the archipelago they should implement reforms, otherwise it would be better to abandon the colony.

The chapter, “Una escuela colonial de ‘disimulación,’” written by Huetz de Lempis explores the political life in the Philippines in the nineteenth century. Huetz de Lempis affirms that there was no political life because the double control exerted by the administration and the clergy did not allow in the colony criticisms of the Spanish dominion. Huetz de Lempis makes generalizations about the political press, denying its existence in the archipelago. He omits, in order to make this categorical assertion, a part of the Spanish bibliography of the nineteenth century; an example would be *Diarióng Tagalog* and *La Opinión*, among others. Moreover, he raises other secular arguments such as the corruption of the Spanish administration, censorship, or the lack of freedom, without regard for nuances in these arguments. To write this chapter he uses a narrative strategy that is “counterfactual history.”

Zialcita, in “Preguntas acerca de la identidad filipina,” focuses on the problem of identity in Filipino society. Because the Philippines was in fact colonized by Spain, the United States, and Japan and its culture was contaminated by foreign influences, above all by the Spanish, he wonders how to classify the Philippines. The American academy encapsulated the Philippines in Latin America because the archipelago shared the same institutions. This

is one reason why the Philippines is perceived in departments and books of Southeast Asia as unique. Zialcita points three factors that heighten the worries about identity. Firstly, the trend to assume that there was no poverty and inequality in the Philippines before the arrival of the Spaniards; secondly, Spanish legacy alienated the archipelago from Asia; and, finally, Filipino originality underlies the combination of different ideas and influences. It is thought that the mix of cultural influences is anomalous.

The chapter, “La vida después del Imperio: Soberanía y revolución en las Filipinas españolas,” written by Rafael is based on Apolinario Mabini’s texts. Rafael explains how Spanish imperialism was based on a kind of political theology. In fact, the Dominicans imposed on the Philippines St. Thomas’s tradition that supported the reality and primacy of the supernatural order because of its inherent transcendence. This supernatural order did not invalidate the political sovereignty of the Spanish conquest. The contradictions of this sovereignty, which gave primacy to the religious orders until the nineteenth century, made the *ilustrados* put the blame on the friars. They considered that these were blocking their political ambitions. Rafael contextualizes in this framework Mabini’s texts. Mabini criticized Spanish theological sovereignty and wanted independence in order to establish a government represented by a free people.

In “La religión Cristiana Filipina durante la época colonial: transculturación de las costumbres e innovación de las prácticas,” Blanco establishes a process of transculturation by which Spanish Christianity adopted some traits of Filipino culture. In this context, he questions the theory of hispanization implanted by John Leddy Phelan, who considered Spanish acculturation and Christian evangelization as two identical processes. For Blanco there is a binary opposition between hispanization and Christianization, quite often confronting each other.

Delgado in “‘Entre el rumor y el hecho’: El poder económico del clero regular en Filipinas (1600–1898)” explores how the regular orders in the Philippines acquired or purchased urban and rural patrimony. He establishes that the regular orders did not receive a great salary and the Crown responded to combat the abuses committed by the religious. He elucidates how the orders strove to win the lands, by intervening in the testaments of the dying. In addition, Delgado clarifies how the American administration never solved the problem of friar lands.

Arcilla, in “A modo de conclusión: Unas reflexiones sobre la construcción de Filipinas,” concludes that it is necessary to reformulate the history

of the Philippines, as he questions the Spanish black legend spread by the American academy. The Spaniards were in the Philippines for more than three hundred years, and there is a deep Spanish imprint on Filipino culture, such as words in Tagalog or in Filipino pathos, among others.

*Repensar Filipinas* is a contribution to understand some aspects of Spanish colonial rule from the perspective of the colonizers and the colonized. We expect this book to be the beginning of further meetings in which Spanish, Filipino, and American scholars interact and share their knowledge.

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DÁMASO DE LARIO, ED.

## **Re-shaping the World: Philip II of Spain and His Time**

Quezon City. Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2008. 164 pages.

Edited by the Ambassador of Spain to the Philippines Dámaso de Lario, *Re-shaping the World, Philip II of Spain and His Time* gathers the lectures delivered to commemorate the quadricentennial of Philip II’s death. While the book is primarily a discussion of the different aspects of Philip II and the events that surrounded him, it aspires likewise to initiate a dialogue to remove barriers to a better understanding of the past formed by, in the words of Spanish Ambassador to the Philippines Delfin Colomé in his foreword, “the contradictory readings, the ambiguous formulations of our traditional historiographies” (x). Most, if not all, of the essays in this collection are revisionists, particularly in projecting Philip II as other than the “Black Legend.”

Penned by Patrick Williams of the University of Portsmouth, the first essay entitled “Philip II, the Philippines and the Hispanic World” situates the conquest of the Philippines within the larger context of the Hispanic world. Williams discusses the aims, designs, and policies of Philip II in the New World, highlighting not only his interest in the riches of the Indies but also, unlike his father the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, his conviction that to bring the natives within the folds of the Catholic faith was a sacred duty. His ardency in consolidating his control of the Indies is attributable to the fact that, even if his father did not bequeath him the title of “Holy Roman