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Special Issue: **PHILIPPINE STUDIES AND THE CENTENNIAL OF THE DIASPORA**

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Asia Pacific: Perspectives is a peer-reviewed journal published at least once a year, usually in April/May. It welcomes submissions from all fields of the social sciences and the humanities with relevance to the Asia Pacific region.* In keeping with the Jesuit traditions of the University of San Francisco, *Asia Pacific: Perspectives* commits itself to the highest standards of learning and scholarship.

Our task is to inform public opinion by a broad hospitality to divergent views and ideas that promote cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, and the dissemination of knowledge unreservedly. Papers adopting a comparative, interdisciplinary approach will be especially welcome. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to submit their work for consideration.

* 'Asia Pacific region' as used here includes East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Oceania, and the Russian Far East.

Philippine Studies and the Centennial of the Diaspora: An Introduction

by Joaquin L. Gonzalez III, Ph.D. and Evelyn I. Rodriguez, Ph.D.

For those of us who came of age in the United States before the late-1990s, seeing the words, “the Philippines,” in English-print, can still surprise us. This is because, as recently as ten years ago, we could still count the number of places where “the Philippines” was published on one hand: in the ethnic newspapers our parents brought home from local pan-dasal bakeries or Asian supermarkets, and on the one or two brief pages our US History textbooks devoted to the Spanish-American War. Because our out-of-home exposure to anything Filipino was so inadequate, most of us had no clue that the Philippines shares such a long and complicated history with the United States. And we certainly could never have imagined such a thing as “Philippines Studies”, which not only analyzes and disseminates this history, but places the Philippines, with its history of colonization, migration, and racial mixture and integration, at or near the center of global and diasporic scholarship.

Fortunately, this is less the case for students today, especially at the University of San Francisco (USF), where the Maria Elena Yuchengco Philippines Studies Program (YPSP) has made it possible for students to, daily, see and learn about the Philippines, in their university courses.

Formal Philippine studies in multicultural, multiethnic San Francisco bloomed only in the 1990s with course offerings at City College of San Francisco and San Francisco State University. But its peak came in 1999 with the generous endowment of Filipino diplomat and philanthropist Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco to USF for the establishment of YPSP. Thus, USF became the only Catholic Jesuit University in the United States to have such an academic program. YPSP first established itself with financial grants to Kasamahan, USF’s Filipino student organization and their long-standing Philippine Cultural Night presentation, Barrio Fiesta; the purchase of Philippine studies publications and films; financing student attendance at Philippine studies conferences and workshops; and enlisting student participation in the USF-Ateneo summer immersion program in the Philippines. It then expanded to offer courses in Filipino politics, Philippine and Filipino-American histories, conversational Tagalog, Knowledge Activism, and a survey course on contemporary Filipino culture and society.

Since then, the YPSP has grown and evolved, especially in response to student appeals for an education which enables them to understand how the culture, politics, religion, business, societies, environment, and economies of the Philippines are related and interdependent on Filipino rela-

tionships with and within other nations. To further institutionalize Philippine studies as an important academic field of inquiry, YPSP developed an undergraduate minor—the only one of its kind in San Francisco. Today, YPSP faculty are teaching courses, conducting research, and performing service learning on a broad range of topics relating to the Filipino diaspora as well as collaborating and linking to the rest of the world. Unlike other universities, USF’s Philippine studies courses are an integral part of university’s general education core requirements for Cultural Diversity, Service Learning, and Social Science. They satisfy major requirements in the Politics, Asian Studies, and International Studies programs as well as electives in the Asia-Pacific Studies, Ethnic Studies, Asian American Studies, Catholic Studies, and McCarthy Public Service programs. A Yuchengco Fellows Program for Young Professionals in the Media has recently been established at USF’s Center for the Pacific Rim as well as an Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco Lecture Series which is sponsoring the centennial conference: “100 Years of Filipino Presence in the United States: A Journey of Hope”.

Students of the Yuchengco Philippine Studies program are immersed in service learning and community activities in San Francisco’s South of Market District (SOMA). They mentor at-risk Filipino Americans and their families at Westbay Multi-Services Center, Filipino Education Center, Bessie Carmichael Elementary School. Every year, along with their YPSP professor, YPSP students provide hundreds of hours volunteering at the Veterans Equity Center, Filipino American Development Foundation, Manilatown Heritage, Bindlestiff Studios, and San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission. They join Filipino ethno-tours of San Francisco as well as protest marches in front of the City Hall and the Philippine Consulate. YPSP students have participated in seminars at the Asia Foundation, Asia Society, and the Philippine Consulate General. Many graduating seniors have received prestigious Asian American Civic Engagement Summer Internships through the generosity of the US Department of Education and the Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good. YPSP also supports the annual Philippine International Aid (PIA) fund raiser. Recently, along with Filipino-American students, faculty, and administrators from San Francisco State University, Golden Gate University, and the City College of San Francisco, YPSP students launched a successful campaign that named a South of Market park for Filipina American Olympic, two-time gold medalist platform diver Victoria Manalo Draves.

In 2004, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo received an honorary doctorate from USF and joined the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, long-time head of the Philippine Catholic Church as alumni. Board of Trustees member, Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco was later accorded similar honors. YPSP faculty members have been recipients of: Teaching Excellence Awards, Research Excellence Awards, Jesuit Foundation Grants, Faculty Development Funds, Human Rights Fellowships, US Congressional recognition, McCarthy mini-grants, and Asian American Civic Engagement funding.

Given YPSP’s distinctiveness and substantial growth

since its inception, the editors of *Asia Pacific Perspectives* (APP) have decided to dedicate a special issue to bridging scholarly works from USF Philippine studies professors and researchers with contributions from colleagues from three of the Philippines' leading Filipino and Philippine studies universities, the Ateneo de Manila University, the University of the Philippines, and De La Salle University. This issue, like the field of Philippines Studies, examines a wide range of issues that span borders, writing and literary spaces, disciplinary fields, and Filipino concerns. Though focusing on Filipino and Philippine themes, the articles disciplinary underpinnings represent analytical viewpoints from sociology, arts, humanities, literature, law, politics, history, labor, economics, business, and even technology. Their varied research approaches are also worth noting, from archival documents, ethnographies, participant-observations, legal cases, to key informant interviews, resulting in rich and thick qualitative data and analyses.

Moving in a somewhat chronological and geographical order, Evelyn I Rodriguez opens with an important revisionist article on Philippine international relations prior to American occupation, and sociologically describes some of the outcomes of Mexico-Philippines relations under Spanish rule. In "Primerang Bituin: Philippines-Mexico Relations at the Dawn of the Pacific Rim Century" Rodriguez sketches the prevalent discourse regarding the origins and effects of Pacific Rim dealings, and then describes the history of the Manila Galleon Trade. She highlights the deep ways Mexican and Filipino pre-twentieth century societies were influenced by their trade with each other, and argue that this calls for more scholarly consideration to how contemporary Pacific Rim relations have a significant bearing on culture, as well as socioeconomic and environmental matters.

Then, from legal lenses, Marie Lorraine Mallare, one of the issue contributors considers contemporary Philippines and US relations, by exploring the sensitive and emotional issue of mail-order brides within the larger global sex trafficking industry. In "Mail-Order Brides: A Closer Look at U.S. and Philippine Relations," Mallare examines the bilateral relationship between the United States of America and the Philippines and whether these allies have laws that protect women who are caught in the mail order bride system. She also explains the harm of stereotyping Filipinas or women of Asian descent as sex workers, and the need to protect women from possible abuse by their white male perpetrators. Lastly, Mallare provides an analysis of the legal and regulatory regimes that are currently in place and whether laws, from both ends of the Pacific, are effective or outdated.

This important legal commentary is followed by: the results of a PEW Charitable Trust funded study, an artists electronic publication, and a compilation of English and Tagalog poems which delve into Filipino life in America, using political science, arts, technology, and humanities approaches. In "Apathy to Activism through Filipino American Churches," Claudine del Rosario and Joaquin L. Gonzalez III examine the conversion of socio-political capital for Filipino immigrants in the United States. Gonzalez and

del Rosario argue that the Filipinized churches in San Francisco have become modern day counter-hegemonic spaces and structures where advocacy and activism tactics are learned and immigrant rights are discussed. These counter-hegemonic actions are then directed at US laws that displace, repress, and discriminate against new immigrants.

Changing spatial and literary spaces, this issue moves to contributions from: award-winning artist Carlos Villa and award-winning writer Rofel Brion. Carlos Villa teams up with humanities computing consultant Andrew Venell to move from the traditional visual artists' medium to an electronic arts masterpiece, "Worlds in Collision." This is the world's first website devoted to Filipino American art history. Villa and Venell provides a website collage representing a lineage of Filipino American artists and makers and their cultural achievements in painting and sculpture, graphic design, graffiti writing, "turntablism," music, writing, and film. Ateneo de Manila University Professor Rofel Brion, a Spring 2006 Visiting Fulbright scholar at USF, offers three poems, each in Filipino and English. The Filipino versions were first printed in his acclaimed book, *Story*. The Filipino poems are included in this issue with permission. Entitled "Poems from Diaspora," the English translations, which were written in San Francisco, are being published here for the first time.

From the Philippine side of the Pacific Rim, two social scientists look at critical transnational issues which seem at the outset to be simply domestic concerns, i.e., at the national-level militarization and at the community-level corporate social responsibility. In "The Quest for Power: The Military in Philippine Politics, 1965-2002," Erwin Fernandez traces the involvement of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in Philippine politics beginning in 1965 during the presidency of Marcos, until 2002, a year before the Oakwood Mutiny, during which a group of soldiers tried to overthrow current Philippines President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Fernandez argues that the specter of military interventionism would always haunt the Philippine body politic as long as there are no efforts to exorcise the ghosts of the past.

Meanwhile, in "Corporate-Community Engagement in Upland Cebu City, Philippines," Francisco Magno examines the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities in strengthening resource management and environmental sustainability in the upland barangays (villages) of Cebu City located in the central Philippines. In this effort, Philippine Business for Social Responsibility (PBSP) partnered with companies such as the Aboitiz Group of Companies in implementing a package of interventions embodied in the Cebu Hillyland Development Program (CHDP), improving the organizational, socio-economic and environmental systems of communities in the local communities.

We conclude this special Philippine issue of *Asia Pacific Perspectives* with a section containing two essays on "Delano, California Grape Strike" veteran, Philip Vera Cruz. As Filipino Americans celebrate the centennial of the Filipino diaspora to the United States, Joaquin L. Gonzalez III in "Reflections on Philip Vera Cruz and the Filipino Diaspora" pays tribute to the lifetime accomplishments of this under-

studied Filipino and American historical icon, Philip Vera Cruz, by comparing his struggle for social justice with the contemporary battle for immigrant rights. Thus, Vera Cruz stands alongside well-known farm worker activists Larry Itliong and Cesar Chavez. Gonzalez argues that just like Vera Cruz and his contemporaries, the millions of overseas Filipinos of today are the modern-day heroes and heroines of the world we live in, a world without borders but still very much a world with limited protection and social justice for them.

In the second essay, entitled "A Conversation with Philip Vera Cruz, Spring 1971", Sid Valledor unveils an edited transcription of tape recorded personal interviews with the then 70-year old Vera Cruz. The frank and open exchange, between mentor and student, occurred at Vera Cruz' historic Delano home. For over thirty years these valuable tape recordings and Vera Cruz' writings remained dormant. With

mixed emotions Valledor, a retired labor leader, prevailed upon himself to let the world know of what Philip Vera Cruz had to say outside the popular press reports on the Great Delano Grape Strike, as Vera Cruz understood this event. Valledor's interview essay is an integral part of the farm workers movement story as seen from a unique historical evaluation.

This APP issue shares the extensive and collaborative scholarly work being undertaken by the one of the premier formal, institutionalized Philippines Studies program in the United States. Since all contributors are currently teaching, it also affords a foretaste into the range of topics and disciplines the next generation of Filipino and Filipina diaspora scholars are studying, increasingly curious about, and growing passionately engaged in. In other words, this special issue offers a glimpse into Filipino history "in the making."