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Introduction. A overview of Philippine studies

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Introduction

An Overview of Philippine Studies

In a letter to the readers of this journal dated May 1999, the purpose of which was to explain a number of recent editorial developments, the editor pointed out that the journal's geographical focus, which traditionally has largely been limited to Indonesia, is in fact much wider and also includes other countries in Southeast Asia and Oceania. Articles on any country in the region but especially Malaysia and the Philippines would be welcome. In order to stimulate the geographical widening of the journal and to encourage comparative studies between the various countries, this special issue devoted to the Philippines has been published. The aim of this issue is to introduce readers to a number of topics indicative of the recent international interest in Philippine studies. That is one of the reasons why within the wide scope already mentioned there is no further focusing on one particular topic or region within the country. The variety of topics presented in this issue reflects to some extent the variety of work within the field.

So far this journal has paid little attention to the Philippines. Over the years the number of articles explicitly related to the Philippines has been rather limited. In its other academic publications, such as the *Verhandeligen* series, the Institute's attention to the Philippines has also been rather minimal. There is only one title that explicitly refers to the Philippines (Bootsma 1986), and it deals with the fact that during colonial times the United States and the Netherlands were actually neighbours, although the administrations of both colonies never maintained a very close relationship. Neither did the two countries' academic communities share much mutual interest, in spite of such potentially fruitful areas as the forms of direct and indirect rule, local systems of law and dispute settlement, and linguistics. An effort to set up a common research programme for legal studies by Prof. F.D. Holleman, who was teaching in former Batavia, and Prof. H. Otley Beyer of the University of Manila, ended in frustration (Holleman 1990). Apparently administrators and academics at that time were not much interested in neighbouring countries.

For a long time, the general focus on Indonesia was also reflected in the

Institute's acquisitions policies for books and journals. It has only been in recent years that the Institute has more actively included the Philippines in its acquisitions practices. In the Institute's library, the Philippines now receives ample attention. This also reflects a general increase in interest in the Philippines throughout the Netherlands as a whole (see also Van den Muijzenberg 1992, 2001).

To characterize the field of Philippine studies as it exists today worldwide, we can look at some recent conferences which provide a good overview of current themes and interests. They also reflect the origins of the most important research communities. There are two important series of such events, the International Philippine Studies Conferences and the European Conferences on Philippine Studies. In addition there are numerous smaller-scale meetings or panels within conferences of other types, but for the purpose of this introduction it may suffice to refer to the two types mentioned above. The larger of the two is the International Philippine Studies Conference, which is presently being held every four years. The first meeting in this series took place in 1980 in Kalamazoo, Michigan, the second in Honolulu (1981), the third in Manila (1989), the fourth in Canberra (1992) and the fifth again in Honolulu (1996). The sixth meeting in the series was recently held in Manila in July 2000 under the theme 'Turn of the Centuries: the Philippines in 1900 and 2000'. The next will take place in Amsterdam in 2004.

Philippine Studies Conferences are also held in Europe every three or four years. The first took place in Amsterdam (1991), the second in London (1994), the third in Aix-en-Provence ('Philippine Communities between Local Traditions and Globalization', 1997) and the fourth ('The Philippines in Southeast Asia and Beyond') took place in September 2001 in Alcala, Spain. Though smaller than the first type of international meetings, the European conferences are not really different from the international conferences, either in scope or by the identity of their participants. In both cases there are substantial numbers of Europeans and Americans as well as Asian scholars, mainly from Japan. The relatively small number of Spanish academics engaged in Philippine studies is somewhat surprising. There are of course also a number of Filipino students and researchers who either come from the Philippines or who have obtained research and teaching positions at research institutions or universities abroad.

The geographical distribution of the conferences also reveals the widespread interest in Philippine studies combined with the presence of Filipino academics and students in many parts of the world. Both types of conferences reflect a continuing interest in a number of themes. There is a kind of consistency in the titles of the panels organized during these conferences. The tables of contents of journals specializing in the Philippines or in edited volumes on Philippine studies indicate a similar tendency. Some of the dom-

inant themes of current social science research in the Philippines are the following (see also Hayase 1991; Anderson, Reed and Sardalla 1996; Rutten 1996; Sánchez Gómez 1995; Macdonald and Pasigan 2000).

Colonial history

The Spanish and American colonial period, and in particular the period of the revolution at the end of the 19th century, continues to be an important topic for academic research on the Philippines. Spanish researchers have a special interest in the era in which Spain ruled the country. They base their work largely on the available sources in Spain, which does not allow for a general colonial history. Their work is more about the Spanish in the Philippines and the history of the Christianization of the country through the eyes of the religious orders. These limitations necessarily influence the kind of research that is possible.¹ American and Filipino researchers continue to take a great interest in the political history of the colony, since the Americans took over from the Spanish rulers. Apart from general studies that deal with issues at the national level, there are also a large number of publications that focus on the American presence and influence in particular areas. Many of the topics still being studied and re-studied are based on archive materials in the United States (Jenista 1987; McCoy 1993). One of the interesting examples is the influence of the American administrative system on the classification and boundaries of ethnic groups (see Hutterer 1991).

Diaspora and labour migration

A large number of Filipinos are working abroad, especially in countries in East and Southeast Asia and the Middle East, but there are also substantial numbers in Western countries. The Filipinos have a number of comparative advantages over citizens of many other countries. With their command of English and their relatively high level of education, combined with a willingness to work for relatively low wages, they find their way to other countries as domestic helpers, nurses, skilled labourers and to all kinds of jobs in the hotel and entertainment industry. Filipino sailors are to be found on the fleets of many Western countries. They also seem to suffer less from homesickness, and consequently they tend not to leave their jobs before the end of their contracts. In many cases married men and women go abroad for

¹ Sánchez Gómez (1995) provides a good overview of the Spanish historical studies that relate to the Philippines.

lengthy periods. Once in a while there are public discussions about whether or not the Philippine state should support this labour migration. Usually these discussions are raised because of incidents of abuse involving Filipinas and Filipinos abroad. But in most cases the discussions fade away and things return to normal. For the economy of the Philippines the remittances sent back by overseas workers are crucial. Migrants returning home, the so-called *balikbayans*, usually laden with presents, electronic equipment and other items, are welcomed upon their arrival in Manila as the modern heroes of the nation. Jointly they are the biggest single cash earners in the country and in many parts of the Philippines life cannot be properly understood without understanding the economic, demographic and social impact of this migration. All kinds of academic studies have been undertaken that deal with migrant communities in faraway places: economic studies of the impact made by these migrants, the revival of Filipino identity abroad, perceptions and forms of Filipino identity and types of social organization in new environments.

Questions related to national identity and culture

In the Philippines there is a continuous debate about the nature of Filipino values, identity and identity makers and about the role of Filipino public culture in everyday life. There can be no doubt that the Philippines has lost much of its original cultures in the course of its history. Examples are the traditional religions, forms of architecture, systems of name giving, forms of social organization and many expressions of material culture, oral tradition and music (Scott 1994). The adoption of the English language as the most important medium of instruction in schools and universities as well as in governmental circles is another example of foreign influence. Lack of national pride is a widely discussed theme in some circles as long as foreigners do not participate in the discussions.

At the moment there is a strong interest in finding the roots of the Filipino culture and a tendency to stress what is truly Filipino and what is the nature of Filipino values (see Andres 1989). Filipino academics (social psychologists and anthropologists) largely dominate this debate (Jocano 1998). The discourse is partly aimed at the widely-expressed criticism that Filipinos lack a strong national identity. What now constitutes Filipino culture is largely shaped and influenced by the Spanish and American Christian cultures along with Chinese influences, and many Filipinos lack pride in their original national heritage. Present day public culture is largely characterized by Western culture (Bulatao 1992; Jocano 1997; Mulder 2000).

Non-governmental organizations

The Philippines is a country with a very large number of non-governmental organizations. Though the NGO movement has its roots in colonial times and is also linked to nationalist ideals, this enormous growth is largely due to opposition and protest movements against martial law under President Marcos. By the time the repressive policies were abolished under the Aquino (1986-1992) and Ramos (1992-1998) administrations, NGOs were booming in number and ideological direction. In addition to the NGOs there are also what are called people's organizations and community-based organizations, which promote local interests. In the Philippines, empowerment of local people is a very strong force and has taken the form of numerous small-scale organizations. These groups operate in a variety of fields. The origin and nature of these organizations, their legitimization, the scope of their work, their role in building a civil society, their relations with politicians and their political identity as social movements are themes that have attracted a substantial number of academics (see Clarke 1998; Hillhorst 2000).

Environmental policies

The combination of the country's own geophysical characteristics, the lack of extensive energy resources, high population pressure and what has been labelled the 'politics of plunder' have resulted in a devastating environmental situation in the Philippines (Tujan 2000). This downward spiral only entered the consciousness of policy makers in the early nineties, even though access to natural resources was one of the crucial elements in the wave of democratization that occurred after the fall of Marcos in 1986 (CVPED 1992). Logging bans were enacted in 1992 after years of fierce debate. International support for nature conservation was secured through the financial support of big donor agencies. Processes of devolution and dissolving state responsibilities and the transfer of power into the hands of local communities have been a dominant theme in environmental policies over the last few years. Resource management has moved from predominantly state-centred to community-based management or has taken the form of co-management, which is defined as the sharing of responsibilities and benefits between communities and authorities with or without intermediate parties (Bernardo and Snelder 1999). There is a relatively large number of social, legal and political scientists interested in these kinds of studies, some focusing on the national level (policy studies, involvement of politicians in resource exploitation) while others pay attention to the 'signs of hope' among the local communities that are taking up new responsibilities (see Utting 2000; Gauld 2000).

Oral literature

There is among Philipinists a strong interest in oral literature, performing arts, popular theatre, folk stories, myths, epics and songs, an interest that is shared by academics from many countries. This interest is usually strongly connected to particular ethnic groups, mainly the so-called cultural minorities or indigenous peoples as they have maintained more of their original culture. Worth mentioning in this context is the rich seven-volume series of Philippine Folk Literature published by the University of the Philippines Folklorists (see Eugenio 1996). The academic interest in these topics is geared towards both socio-cultural analysis of the oral traditions as elements expressing ethnic identity and towards socio-linguistic analysis.

Land reform

Since the fall of Marcos in 1986 land reform has been one of the major elements of political and social reform in the country. The redistribution of land to landless farmers was considered a key element in reducing poverty and inequality in the countryside. The property of the large landowners was to be bought by the state through the land bank and sold again under favourable terms to landless farmers. As in many other countries, problems of implementation – including the financing of these programmes, the skilful manipulation of rules and regulations by the landowners, and coping with the second and third phase consequences of land reform programmes (changes in crop cultivation, changes in the credit and trade structure) – have had their effect on the actual outcome of the law. The land reform programme is a topic for continued empirical research in many rural areas (see Putzel 1992; Van den Top 1998).

Muslim communities

As soon as the Spanish arrived in the archipelago they were faced by strong Muslim communities in the southern part of country. They called the people 'Moros', the same name they gave to the Muslims in northern Africa. For a long time the Muslim communities were not a very interesting topic for research. It has been mainly since the 1970s that the Muslim communities and their political struggle have attracted the attention of Filipino and foreign academics. Since that time a vast body of knowledge has been collected concerning these communities, focusing on their history and the politics of religion. In general this research is carried out by a rather small number of

research institutions in the southern Philippines and a few institutions abroad (the United States and Australia).

Women's studies

Women's studies in the Philippines is a rather varied field. First there is the Filipino contribution to international feminist studies, focusing on the experiences of Filipinas in social and political life. There is also a strong interest in how Filipinas have been affected by the processes of development and modernization, such as the commercialization of agriculture, and in the gender approaches adopted by development projects (see Kwiatkowski 1999). This is part of the critical literature describing women as the relatively powerless and exploited part of the population. On the other hand, there are studies portraying Filipinas as the core of family life, providing security and well-being, and even exercising a subtle power over men. Many of these studies also focus on symbolic aspects of gender relations, while the former category is more practice-oriented and empirical (Anderson, Reed and Sardalla 1996). Quite a few of the migration studies also focus on women in particular.

Indigenous peoples

There has always been a strong ethnographic and anthropological interest in the inhabitants of the Philippines now known as indigenous peoples. In earlier times they were labelled pagan tribes, non-Christian tribes, hill tribes, cultural communities or cultural minorities until they began to be called 'indigenous peoples' in accordance with the international discourse on this subject. During the American colonial period (1898-1946) many good ethnographic works were written on a large number of tribes, such as the works by Barton on the Ifugao (Barton 1919, 1946). This interest continued to some extent after American colonial rule came to an end and up to the present day. There is still a relatively strong interest in the indigenous peoples today, not only from a traditional ethnographic standpoint but also in relation to their position in a changing socio-political context and in relation to a redefined role in the management of natural resources. The struggle of the indigenous peoples to gain acknowledgement of their collective rights both within the country and internationally has attracted a good deal of attention from Filipino as well as foreign anthropologists. Some of the researchers have taken a long-term interest in the study of these minorities and published extensively on them. Many continue to do so. See for instance the works of Headland on the Agta Negritos (1986; Early and Headland 1998), Conklin on the Hanunoo (1957)

and the Ifugao (1980), Rosaldo on the Ilongot (1980), Eder on the Batak of Palanan (1993, 1999), and Bennagen and Fernan on indigenous peoples in general (1996).

Of course there are other themes that could be mentioned, but the ones mentioned above are among the most relevant. From a comparative perspective it is somewhat surprising to note the relative absence of a number of themes and disciplines from the research agendas – archaeology, pre-history and demography, for example. The study of history from before the second half of the 19th century or even from pre-colonial times is rarely undertaken. Rural economic studies are also relatively weakly developed, while few scholars devote their attention to the demographic situation in the countryside, which is a major theme in relation to the state of the environment, the large-scale labour migration and many other issues (see Doeppers and Xenos 1998). Another subject that is somewhat absent is the Spanish influence on Filipino cultural and economic life. Neither Spanish nor Filipino scholars seem interested in taking it up. This is not to say that these themes are completely ignored in the study of the Philippines, but in contrast to neighbouring countries and compared with the strength of studies on other contemporary and political issues, their relative weakness is striking. Another theme that is not receiving much attention in comparison with, say, Indonesia, is the nature of inter-ethnic relations, in spite of the fact that the mobility of the Filipinos within their own country has been enormous. In the field of urban studies there is a strong focus on Metro Manila as the capital of the country and the centre of political, administrative, economic and intellectual life. This is hardly surprising, with an estimated population of 15 million people. To some extent the booming city of Cebu attracts attention, too, but generally the second- and third-order towns arouse little academic interest. Once outside the context of Manila and Cebu, social scientists tend to head for the countryside and regard the smaller towns only as stepping stones into the rural areas.

Filipino academic life is very much dominated by the major Manila- and Los Baños-based universities and research institutions with a few notable exceptions, such as the San Carlos University in Cebu City. The Manila- and Los Baños-based institutions also dominate the research agenda and provide most of the senior academics for the local universities. Though there are scores of universities in all the provinces across the country, the campuses of the University of the Philippines, the Ateneo de Manila University and San Carlos University in Cebu dominate the country's academic landscape in terms of numbers and quality of staff, numbers of students and relations with foreign research institutions and projects. Provincial universities, both public and private, generally lack the research facilities, equipment, funding and

staff to perform well at the international level. Because they are so embedded in the local context and because they are committed to helping solve local problems, their staff lack this external outlook. Opportunities for pursuing higher levels of education are usually confined to the Manila- and Los Baños-based institutes. Other good research institutions that play a coordinating and stimulating role in the country's academic community are the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), both based in Los Baños. Until recently the International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM) was part of that stimulating research community, but it has now been transferred to Kuala Lumpur.

Internationally, Philippine studies were long dominated by American as well as Filipino scholars, many of whom were educated in the United States. American interest has been substantial ever since the early 20th century. Classic works on a large number of issues, solid and detailed monographs on many ethnic groups, and studies on a number of historical events are to a large extent of American origin. At present, Arizona State University, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Wisconsin and the University of Hawaii all have substantial research programmes on the Philippines. But many other universities provide courses and research facilities on the Philippines in disciplines such as history, anthropology, linguistics and political science.

Within Europe, Philippine studies can be found in a number of countries. Spain (Madrid, Seville, Barcelona) has been the traditional centre, with a strong focus on historical studies. But Philippine studies has been rapidly expanding, particularly in the last twenty years. At the moment there are substantial numbers of researchers with an interest in the Philippines in France (Aix-en-Provence, Paris), the United Kingdom (London, Hull), Germany (Hamburg, Bielefeld, Düsseldorf), the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Leiden, Nijmegen), and Denmark (Copenhagen, Århus). In most cases these researchers are involved in long-term projects often based on close cooperation with research institutions in the Philippines itself (see Rutten 1996). The research themes chosen by these European academics vary from migration, NGOs and political movements to environmental issues, political science, rural economy and labour mobility studies. Also of interest is the work on minority peoples in various parts of the country.

The Japanese showed some scholarly interest in the Philippines before World War II, but it was mainly historical. Due to the strong anti-Japanese sentiments among the Filipinos after the war, fieldwork became impossible. It was only after the resumption of foreign relations between the two countries that exchange programmes were started and fieldwork could be carried out. In the 1960s and 1970s, field studies were undertaken on topics such as eco-

nomic history and agricultural sociology, including labour relations and land tenure. Of specific interest to Japan is the study of the World War II occupation and relations with the Filipino resistance movement. Much of the work in this field is not easily accessible for the international community because it is written in Japanese (Hayase 1991). In recent years, however, studies in anthropology, political science and geography have also been published in English. Worth mentioning here is the work of Kikuchi (1996) and Shimizu (1989). In particular the universities of Tokyo (Waseda University and others), Kyoto and Fukuoka have programmes focused on the Philippines.

In addition to the United States, Europe and Japan, mention should also be made of the Philippine studies programme in Australia (Canberra) and a number of other universities in that country. This, however, is not to deny the valuable contributions from individual researchers in countries not mentioned here, such as Russia and New Zealand.

Most of the researchers and almost all Filipinos active in this field devote their professional attention exclusively to the Philippines. However there are also a number of academics who take a wider geographical approach by combining their thematic interest in the Philippines with other countries in the region. In many cases these countries are not dealt with as separate entities but are placed in a comparative perspective. To mention just a few examples: Niels Mulder (Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia), Robert Reed (Philippines, mainland Southeast Asia) and Willem Wolters (Philippines, Indonesia), and the geographer Terry McGee on urban developments in Southeast Asia, and the pre-historian Peter Bellwood. In this respect it would also be interesting if KITLV's environmental history project, the EDEN project, could expand into some of the neighbouring countries such as Malaysia and the Philippines during its next phase.

An interesting aspect of the international character of Philippine studies has to do with how open the Philippines is to visiting foreigners and the general eagerness of Filipino researchers to engage in external linkages or joint academic undertakings. This attitude is then reflected in the identity of the researchers working in this field. Usually the nationality of the researcher is not at all an issue in itself, but on a number of occasions it has become an issue – during conferences, for instance, or if it was deemed useful to take a position in a particular case. Discussions or publications on some issues might trigger nationalistic feelings among some groups of Filipino academics. Sometimes discussions are influenced by anti-neo-colonial arguments. Examples of such cases had to do with historical research on particular aspects of the behaviour of national heroes and other historical figures, the identity of the state and the political climate in the country. These topics easily generate feelings of national pride, especially when American authors

are involved (see Pertierra 2000). In the same way problems might occur in other disciplines such as biology, when new species of plants and animals are discovered and described for the first time. It is clear that nationalistic feelings might emerge in international projects if the discoveries are made by non-Filipinos.

Some of the journals that specialize in Philippine studies and include both Filipino and foreign authors are the *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* (University of San Carlos, Cebu), *Philippine Studies* (Ateneo de Manila University), *Journal of Philippine Development* (Philippine Institute of Development Studies), *Philippine Journal of Public Administration* (University of the Philippines), *Journal of Environmental Management* (University of the Philippines in Los Baños), *Philippine Natural Resources Law Journal* (University of the Philippines), *Pilipinas* (Arizona State University). In addition there are quite a few journals with a Southeast Asian focus that regularly publish articles on the Philippines. A relatively large number of books by international scholars are published in the Philippines by local publishers, sometimes in co-production with a publisher from a Western country. Two of the best-known publishers in the Philippines in the field of social studies are Ateneo de Manila University Press and New Day Publishers.

Though most of the time the world of Philippine studies seems to be the exclusive interest of Philippinists alone, on a few occasions studies from this country have attracted the attention of academics from outside the country. One such case was the Tasaday controversy. The Tasaday were an isolated tribe that were 'discovered' in the southern part of the country in 1971. The discovery was widely publicized in popular journals such as *National Geographic* and in the other media. The American journalist John Nance and the Presidential Advisor for Minorities, Manuel Elizalde, played a crucial role in this exposure. But there were also scientific, linguistic and anthropological investigations by Filipino and foreign researchers (Yen and Nance 1976). For many years, the Tasaday were featured in anthropological textbooks as an original hunting and gathering tribe, and photographs of these cave dwellers were widely used to illustrate a true 'Stone Age' culture. However in the late 1980s it was disclosed that the Tasaday were a hoax, set up for publicity and for other reasons. The Tasaday controversy became a hot issue, both inside and outside the Philippines. There were heated debates at academic conferences, such as during the IUEAS meeting in Zagreb in 1988, but the issue was also discussed in the Philippine parliament.

It was largely thanks to an initiative by Thomas Headland, an American anthropologist, that a number of anthropologists (and not only Philippinists), and other academics involved in this controversy, were willing to look back and present their views on the issue instead of sweeping the case under the anthropological carpet. Were there lessons to be learned with respect to the

type of research questions asked, or with regard to the research methodology, or the relation between politics and scholarship? And what about the role of the media, who made such a big deal out of these peace-loving, noble savages (Headland 1992; see also Duhaylungsod and Hyndman 1993)?

There is another respect in which events in the Philippines are important for what happens in the Southeast Asian region, and that is in relation to the movement of indigenous peoples. There is no other country in the region in which the indigenous peoples have obtained such substantial rights – at least on paper – and where they are so well-organized and are given such a degree of moral support by the media and leading institutions such as the Catholic Church. At international forums, Filipino representatives of indigenous peoples are amongst the most vocal and best organized. This is also reflected academically in the literature on indigenous peoples, by Filipino as well as foreign scholars. At the international level some Filipino organizations have assumed a leading role at global forums representing less well-organized groups of indigenous peoples in the region (Tebtebba 1999).

This issue

This special issue of the journal consists of a number of articles on various subjects expressly written by authors who have been active in Philippine studies for many years.

Otto van den Muijzenberg provides an overview of 400 years of Philippine-Dutch social relations. Contrary to popular belief in the Netherlands and the Philippines, these relations have lengthy historical roots, and they are also important in terms of their economic, political and social aspects. After their initial efforts to colonize the area, the Dutch had to give up and leave the country to the Spanish. The rather limited amount of trade during the colonial times has almost exploded in recent times. With regard to trade and financial relations, the countries are important partners. Agricultural products – but increasingly electronics and clothing as well – are shipped from the Philippines to the Netherlands, while a few Dutch products are widely marketed in the Philippines. More important but less visible, however, is the extent of Dutch investment in the Philippines. In terms of population flow, the Netherlands is an important destination for Filipinos looking for work or study abroad (nurses, domestic helpers, seamen, students). The community of Filipinos rarely receives the kind of media attention that other groups of migrants attract, with all the problems they have to cope with. As a developing country the Philippines still receives Dutch aid money, and as part of these projects scores of Dutch development workers and students spend some time in that country. For most of them their stay is only tempor-

ary in contrast with the Dutch Catholic missionaries who formed an important community for several decades. Since economic and social relations have not been influenced by a history of colonization, the various types of co-operation seem to develop into authentic partnerships.

Willem Wolters deals with an interesting topic in the economic history of the country: the monetary policy in the Philippine Islands. One of the problems that rulers had to solve during the transition from a colony fully run by the mother country to a colonial state was the organization of trade relations with respect to currencies and their exchange rates. During the last decades of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, various currencies were used in the Philippines. Among these were the Mexican dollar, the American dollar and the Philippine peso. There was a silver as well as a gold standard for some of these currencies. Due however to political events elsewhere in Asia and the fluctuating prices of gold and silver, some currencies were more in use than others. Efforts to keep these markets in check proved very difficult, since cross-border flows of currencies to neighbouring countries (Taiwan, Hongkong, China) were almost impossible to control. High-value (gold standard) currencies tended to leak out of the country while the low-value currency (the Mexican dollar, based on the silver standard) was smuggled in. Wolters describes how the administrators tried to control the money market through the banking system, trade permits and rules concerning Chinese immigration.

Greg Bankoff focuses his attention on the centennial commemoration of a very important event in the country's history, the Philippine Revolution of 1896-98. The way this event was observed in 1998 provides a fascinating picture of how history is remembered and celebrated in a country that does not have many indigenous monuments or other features that could serve as deeply rooted national symbols. In fact the country does have a number of symbols such as the national animal, the national flower, the national house, the national dress, the national fish and the national tree, which are revived in the public awareness from time to time. But something that might serve as a powerful national symbol is hard to come by in the country. The official celebration of the Philippine Revolution, however, offered a good opportunity to remember certain elements from the country's past while ignoring or forgetting many others. Given the nature of Filipino politics and the nature of the public debate, it came as no surprise that numerous dissenting voices from all corners of society also made themselves heard during the celebration.

Robert Reed presents the remarkable success of the *Iglesia ni Cristo* church, a Filipino faith which evolved from a protest movement in the beginning of the 20th century to a global belief system. Manalo, the founder of the *Iglesia ni Cristo*, quarrelled with the American Adventist leaders over

matters of doctrine and the authority relationships that were common between Westerners and Filipinos. He was expelled from the organization in 1913 and founded his indigenous church a few months later. The story of this church and its religious community combines a number of highly interesting aspects of Filipino social, cultural and religious life. The success of the truly Filipino religious organization is to a large extent due to the diaspora of the Filipino overseas workers. At present the belief system has spread to all corners of the world and is also making converts among local populations.

In her article, Levita Duhaylungsod analyses the discourse regarding the role of indigenous peoples in the sustainable development debate. The position of indigenous peoples in this discourse is largely based on the notion of the traditional agriculture system, which for the most part is aimed at self-sufficiency. In the course of history, however, indigenous people have lost land and resources to encroaching farmers as well as to mining and logging companies. One might wonder whether notions of traditional sustainability are still valid under present-day conditions with a heavier population, new technologies for agricultural intensification, and most importantly with the changes that have taken place among the indigenous people themselves. Their knowledge has changed, as have their forms of social organization. They may also be more internally differentiated regarding such areas as market orientation. The author illustrates her arguments by referring to the situation in a village of the T'boli people in the province of Sarangani, Mindanao. This community has been the target of a number of agricultural development schemes by various organizations. It is interesting to compare the dynamics of the discourse on indigenous peoples with the contemporary realities and experiences of communities that are classified as indigenous. It also underscores the difference in temporal orientation: while the concept of indigenous peoples refers primarily to the past, sustainable development is future-oriented. This difference in orientation gives rise to tension among the indigenous people themselves as well as among those who deal with them from the outside.

In her contribution, Rosanne Rutten provides the reader with insight into the identity of the New People's Army (NPA) and their strategy for mobilizing activists. This communist revolutionary movement was founded in 1969 and gained nationwide support during the Marcos regime. When Cory Aquino came to power in 1986, however, and national politics became more democratic, the movement lost many of its supporters, though it certainly has not disappeared from the local scene and from the world of Filipino politics. The focus of the study is on the sugar cane workers from two localities in the province of Negros Occidental. In presenting her study Rutten also refers to a more theoretical issue, namely the sense of belonging and the structure of the movement. How is popular support for an organization like

NPA mobilized in the Philippines? Is it based on the notion of brotherhood and a strong collective 'we-feeling', or is it based on a structure of leaders and followers?

Ben Malayang III traces the historical roots of a contemporary conflict in the country: the claims and rights of what are now called the indigenous peoples. When the Spanish left the country and sold it to the Americans, the domains of the indigenous peoples were not included in the transaction. Colonization of these areas only took place in a later phase. This fact is also recognized in the present definition of indigenous peoples in the Philippines, which refers explicitly to the fact that these peoples were not colonized but were replaced, marginalized and impoverished at a later stage. Within the Philippines this is by no means a minor issue, as indigenous peoples number at least 8-10 million and jointly claim up to 20% of the country's land, including its resources, as their ancestral domains. Recent governmental regulations such as the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC, 1992) and more particularly the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA, 1997) try to address these issues and to undo some of the historical injustice. Malayang points to a number of alternative approaches to understanding the problem and to a number of policy options for resolving the issue of ancestral domains.

Ton van Naerssen relates the globalization of the urban economy of Manila to the growth of urban social movements. In order to provide a modern infrastructure, cheap labour, communication facilities and tax incentives to attract foreign capital and develop an export economy, Manila, like many other large cities in East and Southeast Asia, has gone through phases of rapid growth. Due to complex conditions in the countryside that include political unrest and the mechanization of agriculture as well as the perception of Manila as a better place to find jobs, tens of thousands of people have migrated to the capital city. Collectively they have contributed to the rapid increase in the number of urban poor. The occupied land was often designated for other purposes. Under the Marcos regime, the policy of eviction without compensation and forced resettlement to areas outside the Manila region gave rise to urban social movements often linked to the other resistance movements. Since the Aquino administration, 'democratic space' has created more opportunities for the urban poor to find support within the capital's administration. The key to political power for the urban poor – their numerous votes – was used in this struggle. For that reason the nature of the urban social movements and their strategies have to some extent also changed.

Andres Masipiqueña, Gerard Persoon and Denyse Snelder discuss a decade of academic cooperation between a Dutch and a Filipino university in the field of interdisciplinary environmental studies. The project was de-

signed to be mutually beneficial and not as a project for the one-sided institutional development of a particular target organization. It also differs from other projects in that it has no final date of termination. As long as the project is deemed worthwhile in terms of gains by the institutions involved, it will be continued. Though the project has faced various tensions over the years that originated from differences in academic paradigms and traditions, differences in the Dutch and Filipino culture, and differences in the role of the socio-political context, the chemistry has worked out relatively well.

Conclusion

As stated above, the aim of this special issue is to introduce a number of current themes in Philippine studies to the readers of this journal, many of whom may have their main interest in other countries. The Philippines provides an interesting comparative perspective within Southeast Asia in areas such as state formation and national identity, state-minority relations, the nature of everyday politics, religious diversity and in particular the process of democratization after dictatorial rule, gender studies and the mobility of labour. It is hoped that this issue will contribute to the strengthening of the comparative study of the Philippines in the Southeast Asian context.

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