


Editor's Note (Volume 7, Number 1)

urrent events compel us to look into our historical past as Filipinos tackle once again an issue as old as our nation: territorial disputes. The Chinese encroachment of the Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) induced a resurgence of nationalism among Filipinos in a bid to lay solid territorial claim of the West Philippine Sea, a phenomenon that coincided with the commemoration of two historical events this June: the 126th anniversary of Philippine independence and the 163rd birthday of Jose Rizal. More than a century ago, our forefathers struggled to provide *kaginhawaan* to the Filipinos in the form of an independent, self-governing nation. Today, as the Philippine and Chinese governments engage in constant and continuous coastal disagreements in the West Philippine Sea, the ordinary Filipino fisherfolks of Bataan and Zambales struggle to provide a *maginhawang buhay* to their families. Territorial lines may be imaginary in the sea but for the Filipino nation, this is part of the Filipino identity—especially for our fisherfolks, who rely on the sea for their livelihood. This parallelism of seeking *kaginhawaan* serves as a fitting backdrop for *TALA's* newest volume as the journal journeys onto the waves of new perspectives on Spanish colonial legacies, narratives from Mindanao, and selected primary sources.

Opening our volume this year are two essays that delve into the overlooked Spanish legacies in the Philippines. *The Background of the Schools and Teachers in Spanish Pampanga and Tarlac (1863-1898)* by Louie Aldrin L. Bartolo is a comprehensive discussion of the Spanish education system from the establishment of local schools, employment of teachers, initial course offerings, and eventual outcome of the pioneer students from the chosen research locale. Bartolo's mastery of the archival sources from the National Archives of the Philippines provided a credible assertion that the modern public education system began during the Spanish colonization.

The second article tackles the native's participation in Spanish military history. Moises Levi S. Orlino's *A Dependent Empire: The Military Activities of the Filipino Natives in Spanish Taiwan, 1589-1642* focuses on natives who participated in the Spanish aim to completely subjugate Taiwan to protect the Philippines in the 16th century. The Spanish colonial government in Manila tapped Pampangos and Cagayanos to man walls, construct forts, and defend the island from would-be invaders. Orlino concludes that this demonstrates the

reliance of the Spaniards on the natives and indigenous peoples to maintain their hold on their empire.

Technology-wise, *Luzon's Once Extensive Railways*, the first book review for this issue, examined Arturo G. Corpuz' *The Colonial Iron Horse: Railroads and Regional Development in the Philippines, 1875-1935*. Carlos Joaquin R. Tabalon gave an in-depth historiographical analysis of Corpuz' work on 19th-20th century Philippine transportation. This review is a prime example of a historian who was guided by Louis Gottschalk's five questions for serious book reviewers as expounded in *Understanding History A Primer of Historical Method* (1953). Tabalon asserts that *The Colonial Iron Horse* provides a new perspective on the role of transportation as one of the factors that hastened industrialization and development of towns and provinces during the Spanish and American colonization.

For this issue, three narratives give a glimpse of 19th to 20th century Mindanao from various perspectives: from the Spanish Argentines, the American soldiers, and an American professor of Asian History.

Unrealized Ambitions of Proyecto de Colonización: Exploring Spanish Colonial Projects and Identity in 1890s Mindanao by Joshua Philip D. Castillo is an analysis of a primary source that shows the shifting outlook on Spanish colonization towards the last decade of the Spanish Empire. Castillo's significant contribution to the dearth of literature on Spanish Mindanao accessed newly digitized sources from the Archivo Historico Nacional and by so doing, provided a new outlook on the method of colonization during the waning years of Spanish rule.

As The Heaven Witnessed It All: A Jeopardy of American Colonial Pacification in Sulu, 1906 by Christian Ely F. Poot is a close reading of American sources about the Bud Dajo massacre. Poot's attempt to historically recreate this Mindanawon tragedy juxtaposed with the analysis of the American perspectives and the Moro's points of contention is a breath of fresh air among researchers of the Moro struggle against colonial rule.

The second book review is also by Christian Ely F. Poot who did a comprehensive analysis of Michael Hawkins' *Making Moros: Imperial Historicism and American Military Rule in the Philippines' Muslim South*. Poot examined the paradoxical role of a foreign entity, the Americans, in reinterpreting the Moro identity during the early years of their colonial rule.

From underutilized archival sources spring new findings as the remaining four essays reinterpret the educational legacy of the First Philippine Republic, the presence of the American National Red Cross in the country, the memorialization of Ermita, and the historical actor, Salvador Araneta.


The Country's First State University: Aims, Structure, and Legacy of the Literary University of the Philippines (1898-99) by Jon E. Royeca narrates one of the short-lived but lasting legacy of the First Philippine Republic. Royeca utilized existing primary sources to give readers a glimpse of the premier state university run by Filipinos. As the war for independence raged, the pioneering batch graduated in September 1899, a true reflection of the Filipino ideal of the value of education.

Institusyonal na Kasaysayan ng American National Red Cross sa Pilipinas, 1917-1940 by John E. Castro narrates the travails of the Red Cross Organization in the country and how differences in priorities paved the way for a Philippine branch of the world's largest independent medical aid-giving body.

Reconstruction of Ermita: The Memorialization Case Through Its Historical Data Paper (1950-1953) is a reinterpretation of the quest for local identity gleaned through the primary source. Kim P. Cataquian analyzed how attempts to establish the historicity of accounts and artifacts are inevitably influenced by externalities that eventually shape the identity of the locals. Cataquian asserts that recognizing this external colonial influence paves the way for incorporating it into the understanding how local history illustrates communal identity.

Salvador Araneta as Examined and Reexamined by Wogie T. Pacala provides an overview of the works done about Salvador Araneta as well as unexplored sources, in particular, the archival ones that remain unpublished and underutilized to this day. Pacala highlighted the primary sources left by Araneta as a collection of works and is currently working on a guide for future researchers.

The first issue for the year 2024 tackles age-old topics with new lenses in an attempt to reinforce the continuous exploration of the Filipino identity. In gleaning from historical sources, *TALA* surfs the tides of renewed nationalistic commitment of the Filipinos, hoping that this shall be, in the words of Fernand Braudel, for the *longue dureé*.


MELANIE J. MAGPANTAY
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Issue Editor