

Editor's Note

On behalf of the new editorial team of *Social Science Diliman*, I am pleased to present in this issue three research articles that, in my opinion, demonstrate efforts to provide a new understanding and serious rethinking of both the familiar and the unfamiliar. The first presents the preliminary findings about the Ticao Stones of Masbate, the second offers a different perspective of reading an otherwise stereotypical fish trading house, and the third concerns a topic that, according to our reviewers, only a few Filipino historians have addressed seriously.

We present the first scholarly article about the Ticao Stones of the province of Masbate. Ramon Guillermo's article, "Ang prosesong transkripsiyon ng inskripsiyon sa mga Bato ng Ticao," introduces us to the initial findings by the University of the Philippines Ticao, Masbate Anthropological Team—headed by Francisco Datar of the U.P. Department of Anthropology—that investigated the transcriptions of inscriptions carved on two slabs of stone accidentally found in 2000 by grade school students of a public school in the *barangay* (village) of Rizal in the town of Monreal on Ticao Island in Masbate. The slabs were reportedly used as a doormat by the school for a long time. Stories have it that a teacher of the school 'discovered' the inscriptions when she asked her students to clean the stones. Residents suspect the inscriptions resembled pre-Spanish Philippine syllabary. Their teachers reported this 'discovery' of the inscriptions to media only in 2011. No discernible pattern yet emerges from the U.P. team's preliminary examination of the inscriptions on the tablets, but Guillermo raises several hypotheses and provides tools for further investigation. The Ticao Stones are currently in the custody of the National Museum in Manila.

The second article is Nelson N. Turgo's research, titled "Bugabug ang dagat (Rough seas): Experiencing Foucault's heteretopia in fish trading houses." Place, in his essay, is conceived and lived by multiple users both within and beyond the prescribed and assigned conceptual project of its builders. The use in this case of a fish trading house in the town of Mauban in Quezon province is fluid in individual and group users' ordering of hierarchies and scales of social relations, depending on time-circumscribed and locale-specific contingencies. The physical structures' mutable use illustrates the simultaneous maintenance or transcendence of evolved borders of economic and cultural transactions, again in relation to the constraints and possibilities of socially oriented limits or extensions of spatial bounds. Here we see the abstraction

Editor's Note

of place not in conjectural terms but in its own solid grounding on the material particularities of the intricacies of tangible markets. Indeed, place may be singular in conception but hetero in its consequent use—either intentional or unintended—by different parties in their varying calibrations of human agency. This, perhaps, is the contribution of Turgo's study to the discourse of place, which the author owes to Foucault's elaboration of heterotopia.

In the article "Governor-General Leonard Wood's neoliberal agenda of privatizing public assets stymied, 1921-27," Vicente Angel S. Ybiernas gives us a glimpse of an economic phenomenon during the American colonial period in Philippine history that many think is the norm found only in contemporary times, i.e., the privatization of public assets. Ybiernas counters some scholars' assertion that the failure of Wood to advance the almost unimpeded flow of U.S. capital into the country was because of the so-called 'Cabinet crisis' of 1923 that saw Filipino members of Governor Wood's cabinet resign *en masse*. Ybiernas explains that Wood's failure to implement his neo-liberal project in the country was due to his misunderstanding of the linked relationship between publicized nationalism and patronage politics that characterized the country's national politics of the period, coupled with adverse economic conditions that did not favor the 'denationalization' of government assets. Using this particular case, the investigation by Ybiernas makes clear to us how politics feeds into economic issues.

We also present in this issue a review of an award-winning Filipino independent film and a recently published book on media and identity. Christian Tablazon's view on Filipino independent filmmaker Raya Martin's *Independencia* (2009) highlights the film's refocusing of the indios' retreat to the womb of the forests during the American occupation of the Philippines in the late 19th century and on through the early until the mid-20th century. "Quotidian minutiae as (sub)alter-narrative: Negotiations on history in Raya Martin's *Independencia*" explores the film's literally physical and metaphorically symbolical fringes of the anonymous indios' struggle for political independence and liberation, on both the personal realm and the fluid, almost undefined collective sphere. The film was screened as part of the *Un Certain Regard* category of the Cannes Film Festival in 2009, and received two major awards at the 2009 Bangkok International Film Festival, namely, the grand prize in the Southeast Asian category and the jury prize of the Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema (NETPAC). Tablazon contends that the film articulates the inarticulates' retreat to the fringes of a country/nation in a state and 'stage' of flux. The film re-presents the tableau-like 'constructed-ness' of the undocumented indios in the midst of their obfuscation by the colonizers and

the ilustrados. In the diorama of our *bayan's* tumultuous history, the film, according to Tablazon, recreates an alternative history of the nearly obliterated time-space of the indocumentados or the unnamed.

Finally, Erwin Gaspar A. Alampay reviews the book *Migration and New Media: Transnational Families and Polymedia* by Mirca Madianou and Daniel Miller (Routledge, 2012), and indicates how the authors, through the cases they have analyzed, are able to capture the complexity of communication patterns among migrant families. The book, according to Alampay, may very well provide us with how we can 'read' the transnationalization of kin and social ties that results from how overseas Filipino workers and the families they left behind in the Philippines accommodate to their advantage the wide range of media platforms that are currently available to them.



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