

We close 2024 with articles that offer careful examinations and re-examinations of cultural productions and practices that embody and/or interrogate socio-historical impulses. These artistic modes and expressions are analyzed as they engage with state power, institutions, and various social structures.

Kevin Paul D. Martija's "Ang Moral na Ligalig ng Agosto-Setyembre Taong 1995 hinggil sa mga Awitin ng Bandang Eraserheads, Yano, at Teeth" revisits how moral panic ensued from the perceived—and perhaps, even conceived—harmful effects of songs by folk/punk rock bands Eraserheads, Yano, and Teeth in the late 1980s to 1990s. Using the term "moral na ligalig" to describe such panic, Martija looks at how the convergence of public opinion and those of lawmakers and the church identified these bands as a threat to society. The discussion of how moral panic is fueled by politics, as seen in the state's claim that these bands promoted Satanism and the use of illegal drugs, continues to be relevant to this day in the context of the various ways by which the government has enforced its anti-drug campaign. As moral panic is both rooted in and strengthens stereotypes, Martija warns against the ease by which state institutions can foment suspicion for non-mainstream music such as those by Pinoy rock bands, usually considered a threat to society's moral fiber.

A cultural expression that has gained global popularity but has likewise been perceived as a threat to moral values is hip-hop. Emerging from society's margins and becoming a vehicle to express social inequities and injustice, hip-hop nonetheless established its strong presence around the world, including the Philippines. In "Ethnography as Ambagan, in Our Own Words: Meaning-Making by and for Pinoy Hip-Hop Heads (Practitioners, Fans, Learners)," Lara Katrina T. Mendoza presents hip-hop as a vehicle of underrepresented voices and an articulation of Filipino values. Analyzing the autoethnographies of urban ethnomusicologists and the dynamics among researchers, artists, and fans, Mendoza surfaces the core values of hip-hop in the Philippines such as "pag-ambag" (i.e., to contribute) and its "ambag" (i.e., contribution) to culture. Hip-hop's performativity and sub-texts are given attention as integral parts of its discourse and ethos. Mendoza raises an essential question among artists and scholars in the Philippines: "What does it mean to contribute to hip-hop from a Filipino space and perspective?"

As important as recognizing the ethos of artistic expressions is their preservation as part of cultural history. This is extremely critical particularly for practices and texts that oppose dominant narratives. The archives as repository of alternate storylines play a significant role as a site of contesting socio-political and historical

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narratives. In “Cinematic Archives and the Marcos Regime,” John Adrianfer Atienza emphasizes the need to preserve films—from 1965 to 2023— about the Marcos regime as these are important works that counter historical revisionism. More than just arguing for the critical role of a cinematic archive to counter the tenacious Marcosian narrative of history, Atienza characterizes these films and groups them into three generations marked by particular approaches to and dominant themes pertaining to the dictatorship.

The next essay provides a glimpse at contemporary religious Indonesian poetry and invites readers to consider the many facets of Jesus Christ’s image in these works. The study of twenty-five poems by ten recognized poets of Christian and Muslim background is of particular interest as Indonesia is a nation with the largest Muslim population in the world. Yoseph Yapi Taum’s “Exploring Jesus Christ in Indonesian Poetry: Transcending Religious Boundaries in the Portrayal of Divinity” dwells on the figure of Jesus Christ and identifies five themes that run through the selected poems. Taum close reads them and explains that Indonesia’s religious pluralism has accommodated the figure of Jesus’ divinity, contrary to claims of other critics that Christianity has little presence in Indonesian literature. Literary studies scholars will find this essay a significant exploration of religious poetry in the context of a multicultural society.

The next two studies provide a bigger picture in knowledge production as they argue for the specificity of approaches to and frameworks for local knowledges and the necessity to write in other Philippine languages. Both underscore the ultimate purpose of research in the Philippines.

John Amtalao’s “Problematisasyon sa Katangian ng Araling Kordilyera bilang Pamamaraan sa Pananaliksik mula sa Korpus ng mga Akda ni Padre Francis Hubert Lambrecht hinggil sa Ifugao” calls for the careful reading and evaluation of materials specific to communities or regions. He takes off from the writings of Fr. Francis Hubert Lambrecht, a missionary-anthropologist whose more than seventy books and articles on Ifugao culture and tradition provide scholars with earlier ways of reading the cultures of various ethno-linguistic groups in the Cordillera. While it is crucial for local studies to be produced from the perspective of local scholars, Amtalao recognizes the earlier contributions of foreign scholars who wrote on the culture and history of the Kan Kankana-ey, Ibaloy, Kalinga, and Ifugao. Maintaining a critical stance on what has been written on the Cordillera, Amtalao acknowledges that as much as the writings of foreign scholars serve as the foundation for the establishment of Cordillera Studies, those of local scholars are responsible for strengthening research on the Cordillera. While Cordillera Studies is not yet a program or a full blown discipline like Philippine Studies, their trajectories are

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comparable. In pursuing Cordillera Studies as a discipline, Amtalao reminds readers of the impossibility of appreciating and understanding indigenous ways of knowing and doing without immersion in its culture and knowledge of its language.

Further emphasizing the necessity of having a clear vision of who we are writing for as Filipino scholars, David Michael M. San Juan's "A Critique of Scopus-Centrism in Philippine Universities and Educational and/or Research Agencies: Why Filipinos Should Write Research in Filipino" details the effects of Scopus on scholarship and research. His study takes the readers to the world of journal indexing, critiques the Scopus-driven policies of universities, and explains how these have not encouraged the production of excellent research and high-quality investigations. San Juan dwells on the effects—both tangential or otherwise—of abstract and citation databases such as the obsession for university rankings and the increase in publications of research in English, at the expense of production of works in local languages. This does not bode well for local studies whose scholars, pressured to meet the publication demands of the academe, have chosen to write in English, the preferred language by Scopus. San Juan enumerates possible ways to address Western-centric academic policies as these have undermined the growth of scholarship on local knowledges written in other Philippine languages for Filipino readers.

The reviews in this issue introduce readers to important publications and an exhibit: Ramon Santos's *Tunogtugan: Twenty Essays on Musical and Sonic Traditions* (2023), Alexandre Coello de la Rosa and João Vicente Melo's *The Jesuit Encounters with Islam in the Asia-Pacific* (2023), and *1898: US Imperial Visions and Revisions* (2024) at Washington DC's National Portrait Gallery.

In his review of Santos's publication, Oscar T. Serquiña, Jr. takes off from the disciplinal lens of speech communication, theatre studies, and performance studies, and reflects on how the usual Euro-American legacies and paradigms fail to elucidate the complex nature of Asian music, in particular the musical or sonic traditions in Southeast Asia. Also important for Serquiña is Santos's explanation of how music is present in various avenues, spaces, and places, all of which counter traditional notions of theater and performance. Music-making in Santos's work, Serquiña points out, is both performance and a performative act.

In "Welts and All: Portrait of American Nation-Building Via Landgrab," a review of an exhibit which ran from April 28, 2023 to February 25, 2024, Jose Santos P. Ardivilla looks at what portraiture reveals about America's presence in its colonies. The National Portrait Gallery's collection of pictures of men and women who built the United States prompts Ardivilla to ask "How did American exceptionalism and manifest destiny serve as core ideologies in America's nation building?" Ardivilla's

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review draws attention to how portraiture unveils the tensions and contradictions in the colonial expansion of the United States.

Ewa A. Łukaszyk's evaluation of *The Jesuit Encounters with Islam in the Asia-Pacific* presents readers with an important work showing the Jesuits as forerunners of globalization. The meticulous attention given to critical parts of the book provides a general appreciation for the Jesuits' activities, in particular the Order's presence in early European maritime and colonial history in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Łukaszyk contextualizes the monograph's discussion of five examples of Jesuit contact with Islamic societies in Asia. Although *The Jesuit Encounters* is not a comprehensive study, it does bring to light previously ignored aspects of the Jesuits' engagement with Islam. Despite its limitations, the study according to Łukaszyk, shows how religion, war, and long-distance trade-based economies constituted the crux of Jesuit legacy.

The articles and reviews in this issue are iterations of various issues in the field of humanities. They elucidate persistent concerns underlying contemporary cultural texts and practices, emphasizing the need for continuous commitment to interdisciplinary research that draws not only inspiration and energy, but also methods from various disciplines. As illustrated by the studies, a range of critical and conceptual frameworks must be deployed for a deeper and nuanced understanding of cultural expressions and forms. No single approach will be able to capture their complexity.



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