

# philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University • Loyola Heights, Quezon City • 1108 Philippines

---

## **Dissent Over American Occupation of the Philippines: Twelve Against Empire**

Review Author: John N. Schumacher

*Philippine Studies* vol. 17, no. 2 (1969): 338–340

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

---

Philippine Studies is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at [philstudies@admu.edu.ph](mailto:philstudies@admu.edu.ph).

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>  
Fri June 30 13:30:20 2008

in inculturation is well-known, some serious factors must have hindered such a procedure. But the question is at least mentioned here.

Further, may a Jesuit in the Philippines be permitted mild wonder that his Jesuit predecessors receive no mention in the three hundred and thirty-three years of the Spanish period in Philippine history? In the text for this period all Catholic religious orders are grouped together as "friars," a technical ecclesiastical term which does not include Jesuits, *Paules* and Benedictines, who were also in the Philippines in Spanish times.

FRANCIS X. CLARKE, S.J.

## DISSENT OVER AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

TWELVE AGAINST EMPIRE: THE ANTI-IMPERIALISTS, 1898-1900. By Robert L. Beisner. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968. xvi, 310 pp.

The expansionist fever whipped up by irresponsible journalism, which swept the United States into the Spanish-American War and carried over into the forcible occupation of the Philippines as its aftermath, was not without its fierce opponents in the United States itself. The anti-imperialists, as they came to be known, though some had from the beginning opposed war with Spain, became fully aroused when the treaty of Paris left Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines in the hands of the United States. The obvious unwillingness of the Filipinos to submit to American annexation, soon made manifest in the outbreak of war between Filipino and American forces, caused the Philippines to become the main focus of the attention of the anti-imperialists, though they likewise opposed annexation of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. The campaign which poured out denunciations of American imperialism through newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and public speeches during the years 1898-1900, and even beyond, was carried on by politicians of both major parties, as well as large numbers of private citizens. For the two years preceding the re-election of McKinley in 1900 on a platform calling for retention of the Philippines, anti-imperialist leagues in all parts of the country denounced the American war against the Filipinos as a violation of the American Constitution and the principles on which the Republic had been founded. Perhaps no question besides slavery so profoundly divided the American people in the nineteenth century.

Professor Beisner, in a lively series of studies, has chosen twelve prominent figures from among the anti-imperialists to typify what he considers to have been some of the factors and motivations at work in this movement. The book, winner of the Allan Nevins Prize of the Society of American Historians, does not profess to be a history of the anti-imperialist movement as a whole, nor of its organizational set-up or strategy. Aiming rather at uncovering "the emotional and intellectual well-springs of the movement", it has excluded from its consideration the Democratic opponents of the Republican administration's expansionist policy and concentrated rather on the dissident Republicans and independent "mugwumps", as having no obvious partisan reasons for opposing the expansionist policy.

Drawing on the speeches, writings, and private papers of men like Carl Schurz, William James, George Frisbie Hoar, Andrew Carnegie, and other perhaps less well-known figures, Beisner shows the variety of ideals and motives which inspired them in their common denunciation of American expansionism. For some it was chiefly a fear that this expansionism would lead to the destruction of democratic principles and institutions at home. Others, whom today we might qualify as economic imperialists, while not denying the desirability of extending American influence and economic penetration to other parts of the world, felt that it could be done more easily and cheaply without undertaking the burdens of colonialism. Idealistic mugwumps like William James saw in the venture into imperialism a tragic end to America's innocence by her embarking on the evil ways of European powers (a view, the author remarks, which overlooked such earlier evidences of human frailty in American history as slavery, the near-extirpation of the Indians, and expansionism against Mexico).

Of more lofty views were those who argued with irrefutable logic that "a nation which believes in representative government has no business ruling other peoples against their consent, no matter how gentle the rule or how little it impinges on the lives of the people in the mother country." Even among these, however, there were not a few who, no less than imperialist opponents, shared the racism so current in the United States at the turn of the century. Where the imperialists spoke patronizingly of the duty of the Anglo-Saxon race to uplift peoples of lesser races, not a few anti-imperialists rejected the idea of American sovereignty over Puerto Rico and the Philippines because of their unwillingness to admit non-Anglo-Saxon peoples to the rights of American citizens. In this matter a notable exception was Senator George Frisbie Hoar, who paid tribute to Rizal, Mabini, and Aguinaldo in the American Senate. His advocacy of the Filipino cause, upholding the capacity of the Malolos government to rule its own nation, exposed him to the charge of treason

for lending aid and comfort to the enemy in time of war, but Hoar was not fazed.

As may be evident from the brief summary of its contents, the book is primarily concerned with American history, with analyzing an example of conservative dissent and its value in American life at a turning point in the history of the United States. Nonetheless, the book is likewise of interest to the historian of the Philippines for the background it gives for the history of the resistance to the American occupation. There is no doubt that the campaign of the anti-imperialists gave encouragement to Aguinaldo and other Filipino leaders to hold out in the face of overpowering military strength, in the hope that the anti-imperialists might be able to defeat McKinley in the elections of 1900 and bring about American recognition of Philippine independence. Beisner's study makes clear, however, that not all of the anti-imperialists were, like Hoar, to be accounted friends of the Filipinos. Indeed some were certainly much less friends than some of those who had joined the advocates of expansionism out of a sincere, if rather patronizing, desire to bring progress to the Philippines. A reading of this well-written and painstakingly researched book will cast considerable light on the course of Filipino-American relations at the turn of the century.

JOHN N. SCHUMACHER

## ON THE HUMAN IN THE FILIPINO LANDSCAPE

**HISTORY AGAINST THE LANDSCAPE: Personal and Historical Essays about the Philippines.** by Miguel A. Bernad, S.J. Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1968. x, 175 pp.

Father Bernad's latest book, *History Against the Landscape*, is a collection of literate, scholarly, and human essays about the Philippines "written at various times and in varying moods over a period of about ten years." Modestly characterized by the author as "personal essays with a historical background," they are travelogue and history, record and comment, full of scholarly fact and alive with personal insight.

The first section deals with relatively slight and discrete material, previously published for popular consumption in magazines like the *Graphic*, the *Chronicle*, and the *Sunday Times Magazine*. The second section, previously published in *Solidarity*, probes into "Mindoro and its Tumultuous Past". The third section paints close-up portraits of four Philippine mountains: *Apo*, the mysterious mountain; *Manung-gal*, that claimed the life of a Philippine President; *Canlaon*,