

# philippine studies

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**The Hispanization of the Philippines:  
Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565–1700  
by John Leddy Phelan**

Book Notes

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JOHN LEDDY PHELAN

## **The Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565–1700**

Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011. 234 pages.

This classic by John Leddy Phelan (1924–1976) has been reprinted by the original publisher in a paperback edition, which should enhance its accessibility. Phelan was a historian of Latin America. His dissertation and first book was on a Franciscan writer's views on Spanish actions in the New World. From the comparative vantage point of Latin America Phelan studied the early colonial history of the Philippines, arguing that experiences in Mexico affected Spanish colonialism across the Pacific, resulting in "indirect hispanization" through the work of missionaries who imposed Catholicism on the colonized population who, in turn, resisted as well as adapted selectively to Spanish rule. Significantly Phelan stated in the preface, "I have not, however, employed the historical method exclusively but rather have made an effort to combine sound historical practices with some anthropological techniques" (viii). This landmark work is methodologically significant in its attempt "to bring the disciplines of history and anthropology into closer collaboration" (ix). This approach was nurtured in the milieu of the Philippine Studies Program of the Newberry Library where Phelan was a fellow. The interdisciplinarity of this country-specific area studies program left its mark on this book. Relying on social science interpretative tools would characterize all of Phelan's subsequent work. It would also characterize many later works in Philippine historiography, particularly those that wrestled with issues of religion and historical change, many of them building on but also critiquing Phelan's pioneering work.

BENJAMIN T. TOLOSA JR., ED.

## **Socdem: Filipino Social Democracy in a Time of Turmoil and Transition, 1965–1995**

Pasig City: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Manila, 2011. 316 pages.

As a way of documenting the history of Filipino social democracy, the essays in this collection discuss the various "social democratic formations