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**Editor's Introduction**

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## Editor's Introduction

Since the rise of national consciousness, the fact of conquest has been one of the most vexed issues of societies struggling to come to terms with the colonial past. The deception by and superior military strength of European invaders have been standard answers. In the Philippines, Ferdinand Magellan's death in the Battle of Mactan at least permits the celebration of a triumph by the locals. Lapu Lapu is frequently imagined as directly dealing the fatal blow on Magellan. Jose Amiel Angeles reexamines this battle and finds no historical basis for the myths that surround it. He sets out to understand Mactan from the perspective of indigenous notions of warfare, and the European notions with which the indigenous interacted. He argues that the preconquest islanders acted in battle in ways that conformed to beliefs in spiritual potency, a paradigm that disadvantaged them vis-à-vis Spanish military tactics. Angeles concludes that the outcome of the Battle of Mactan owed largely to Magellan's weak leadership and the fractiousness among his men, rather than to the superior military prowess of Lapu Lapu's warriors. Angeles's scholarship aims not to deflate national pride but to advance the cultural understanding of warfare in history.

The transformation of gender roles and relations under Spanish rule involved, among others, the fashioning of a new ideal for women. Marya Svetlana Camacho explores the teaching of "virtue" as defining femininity, which transpired in boarding schools that functioned like nunneries. In keeping with Spanish norms, residents in these boarding schools were taught to value and practice piety, chastity, modesty, seclusion, and industriousness in order to prepare them for roles within the home as spouse-mother-homemaker. Women's role in the home, argues Camacho, was valued to the extent that social order depended on the production of subjects who knew their place in society. However,

Camacho hints at social tensions: ethnic segregation, seclusion to resist parental dictates, the reformation of recalcitrant females. Through to the nineteenth century, with stories yet to be told, these schools served as sites to articulate but also constrain female agency in colonial society.

A phenomenon with its own history, the presence of ethnic Chinese has generated many stereotypes about Chinese and non-Chinese. Rupert Hodder tackles one stereotype: that Chinese businesspeople dominate economic activities in the Philippines. He analyzes nationwide as well as local level data for 2000–2003 to argue that Filipino and cosmopolitan companies, rather than Chinese firms, dominate economic activities. Hodder offers three explanations for the overstatement of Chinese economic significance: street representations that blow out of proportion local concentrations of Chinese interests; academic explanations for economic growth in East Asia that seek to find something quintessentially Chinese; and the interaction of street, merchant, and academic representations. However, Hodder argues that the impressions created by this overstatement enabled some Chinese to play catalytic roles in the economy. In any event, defining ethnic identity is a slippery enterprise, a point that should be noted in any attempt to calculate the economic significance of any ethnic group. Economic figures, after all, are cultural artifacts whose construction no one can take for granted.

Language is often seen as inseparable from identity, and the demise of a language is perceived as a threat to a whole culture. Given the fast disappearance of languages in the age of globalization, Victoria Anderson and James Anderson discuss group solidarity and prestige as two important factors that affect the viability of languages. They apply this framework to discuss the decline in the number of Pangasinan native speakers, which is affected by migrations, relative cultural prestige, urbanization, and interethnic marriages. However, despite the prestige of Ilocano, Filipino, and English, which make many Pangasinenses feel that theirs is an endangered language, Anderson and Anderson argue that changing language use in various communicative settings will allow Pangasinan to survive. Ironically, the perception of a threat due to globalization may itself be a factor in revitalizing a language. Thus, the articles in this issue compel us to reexamine cultural icons, assumptions, and stereotypes, allowing us to find fresh, if unsettling, views.