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Article

# Manilaner’s Holocaust Meets Manileños’ Colonisation: Cross-Traumatic Affiliations and Postcolonial Considerations in Trauma Studies

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**Abstract:** After interrogating the (non-)referential status of the Holocaust for Asians, this essay examines Frank Ephraim’s *Escape to Manila* and Juergen Goldhagen’s *Manila Memories*. In particular, cross-traumatic affiliation is studied between two groups of people: the Manilaner and the Manileños: the former were Europeans who fled Nazism and sought refuge in Manila; the latter were Filipino residents of Manila who, during the Second World War, found themselves under Japanese Occupation. A closer reading of the memoirs, however, also reveals latent orientalism in the portrayal of Filipinos. This essay thus echoes present postcolonial concerns in recent Trauma Studies research which ask the place of serial colonisations, martial law, climate catastrophes and the sacred in Trauma theory.

**Keywords:** Manilaner; Manileños; Holocaust; Quezon; cross-traumatic affiliation; Japanese Occupation; U.S. colonisation; postcolonial theory; Trauma Studies; Philippines

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## 1. Introduction

Among Trauma Studies theorists, it is well known by now that the place of the Holocaust has been, and perhaps still is, considered as the foundation and paradigm of trauma theory scholarship so much so that it has become a “floating signifier” of other traumatic events ([1], p. 3). As Craps has noted, designations of other extreme events only confirm its signifying position: “Kosovocaust”, “African Holocaust”, “American Holocaust”, “nuclear Holocaust” and “abortion Holocaust” ([1], p. 75). Levy and Sznajder even argue that the Holocaust has become a “cosmopolitan memory” which “harbors the

possibility of transcending ethnic and national boundaries” because its changing representations have become politically and culturally symbolic ([2], p. 4).

However, as one can observe in recent debates within Trauma Studies, not all regard this “universalistic” characteristic of Shoah discourse in a positive light. Although its founding scholars—Cathy Caruth, especially—should be acknowledged for developing Trauma Studies; for articulating the link between trauma and literature; and for claiming that “trauma itself may provide the very link between cultures” ([3], p. 11), Caruth’s claim to solidarity has since been challenged by Postcolonial Studies-inspired scholars who have expressed complaints about the field: its elitist content and form; its Western Holocaust event-based model of PTSD and trauma; and its preference for melancholia rather than resistance. Such views since then paved the way for Trauma Studies’ postcolonial turn—or postcolonial reconsideration—since some critics, such as Rothberg [4], Craps [1], Tal [5] and Mengel and Borzaga [6], return to the seminal texts of Frantz Fanon [7], W.E.B. Du Bois [8] and Aimé Césaire [9] in order to underscore their contribution to other types of trauma such as colonisation and racism. Consequently, today, postcolonial-enriched trauma theory allows one to consider other forms of suffering originating from, for example, the colonial experience and natural disasters. Such a turn also lets one interrogate the paradigmatic status of the Holocaust.

For example, critics, such as Huyssen ([10], p. 14), point out the risk of the Holocaust serving as “screen memory” which may hide other episodes of history that also merit attention. Likewise, in his recent work, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, Stef Craps calls for traumas of non-Western or minority populations to be acknowledged for their own sake and in their own terms ([1], p. 19) lest “well-meaning attempts...result in the appropriation or instrumentalization of his or her suffering in the service of articulating the trauma of the self” ([1], p. 3).

Similarly, in his seminal work, *Multidirectional Memory*, Rothberg draws attention to the fact that “the ever-increasing interest in the Nazi genocide distracts from the consideration of other historical tragedies” ([4], p. 9). Rather than advocating competitive memory, Rothberg underscores the two pitfalls of sacralisation and trivialisation of the Holocaust memory. Thus, he proposes a multidirectional memory which allows a dialogical approach to discussions on traumatic events, thus taming any universalisation or Americanisation of the Shoah.

Ironically, even until today, in a place like the Philippines, there is no danger of an overdose of Holocaust memory, rather, a lack of it. Indeed, although aware of the Holocaust through my European education and personal trips to, for instance, Yad Vashem, I have been struck by the different degree of (un)familiarity with the Holocaust in Philippine classrooms as compared to European ones. It is not surprising to see only a few raised hands in classes of 25 first-year college Filipino students aware of the Kristallnacht. This is not a case of ignorance, rather, in my opinion, a case of referential events of WWII. However, if this example may be deemed anecdotal, the work of colleague and Filipino scholar Jo-Ed Tirol, not only sheds light on the role of the Philippines in the rescue of Holocaust refugees, but also justifies the non-referential status of the Holocaust in Philippine social memory. In fact, he even makes an interesting call for a proactive social memorialisation of the Holocaust within Philippine history. That Tirol’s PhD dissertation on Jewish Holocaust victims rescue in the Philippines was only completed in 2015 is revealing enough of the recent interest on the subject. In his study, the Filipino scholar explains why the story of Holocaust refugees in Manila remained hidden for years. Because of immediate post-WWII priorities of the Philippines, this white Jewish population’s small number and, thus, homogenisation to

other foreign groups, hid them from the limelight. Consequently, the account of their escape from Nazism also remained secondary to other more pressing concerns. However, the current re-surfacing of the significant involvement of President Quezon and the Filipinos towards Jews during WWII sheds new light to the status of “the Holocaust” within the Philippine context. Thus, for Tirol, while “Filipinos may already have a working memory of the war [with a focus on] studying military chronologies, the Japanese occupation, and the road to liberation by the United States,” one should campaign for a firm anchoring of “the Holocaust as part of the Philippine experience of the Second World War” ([11], p. 264). Such a position of the Filipino scholar actually offers an Asian point of view of “the Holocaust” for the Filipinos: a non-referential trauma, nor a one-time trigger traumatic event of the Second World War.

Perhaps the most visible event that established the role of the Philippines was the unveiling of the Open Door Monument on June 2009 in Tel Aviv. Conceptualised since 2005, the monument was a joint project of “the Embassy of the Philippines to Israel, the Filipino Community, the Holocaust survivors and their families in Israel and from all over the world” to memorialise the help extended by the Philippines to more than a thousand Jews escaping Kristallnacht [12]. One can observe that, since then, there has been an increasing interest in the rescue story which again was recently recognized through a posthumous award given by the Israel Embassy to the Manuel Quezon last August 2015 [13].

After 2009, in these last three years, aside from Tirol’s research, personal encounters with scholars Racelle Weimann and Sharon Delmendo have contributed to the increasing relevance of the Shoah from the perspective of the Philippines. Through the initiative of the Israel Embassy in Manila and the late Isabel Kenny, Racelle Weimann, from Temple University, was invited last November 2012 to hold talks in a few universities in Manila. Thanks to her (and later on, through newspaper articles), I learned that the first Asian anti-Kristallnacht rally took place on 19 November 1938 within the compound of the old Ateneo de Manila University, thus, her interest in presenting in my institution [14]. A year after her visit, on November 2013, an exhibit and talk, the “Courage to Remember”, was again initiated by the Israel Embassy. Invited as a panellist due to my specialisation in Trauma Studies, I met, during this occasion, fellow scholar Jo-Ed Tirol, whose work I briefly explained above. Once more, in June 2014, researcher Sharon Delmendo from John Fisher College in Rochester, delivered a more comprehensive talk on Quezon’s Open Door Policy. With Noel Izon, Delmendo produced the documentary film “An Open Door: Jewish Rescue in the Philippines” [15], the trailer of which is available on Youtube. What is interesting to point out, however, is that these scholars came primarily, not to present the events of the Holocaust, but the role of the Philippines in welcoming Jewish refugees. In other words, the events of the Shoah come secondary to the main topic: the Philippine rescue.

This standpoint confirms what other critics claim as well. In his work, *The Meanings of Social Life*, Jeffrey Alexander asks the following question: “is the Holocaust Western?” In other parts of the world, he acknowledges, the Holocaust is not a common reference of WWII ([16], p. 83): “Obviously, non-Western nationals cannot “remember” the Holocaust, but in the context of cultural globalization, they certainly have become gradually aware of its symbolic meaning and social significance” ([16], p. 84). The author reminds us that, at the beginning of WWII, the “Holocaust” was not yet as we know it now. When the concentration camps were discovered by the Allies in 1945, these were first seen as “atrocities”, among many others. Interestingly, the term used, “atrocities”, according to Alexander, first described the Japanese brutalities in the Philippines ([16], p. 28)! Therefore, before it had become a paradigm of trauma, the Holocaust, at one time in history, was referred to as an “atrocities” among others.

Indeed, in Southeast Asia, for example, “Hiroshima” and “Nagasaki”—the bombings of which we commemorate seventy years this year—or the Japanese Occupation might be the more prominent traumatic references evoked. In Craps’ analysis of Anita Desai’s *Baumgartner’s Bombay*, for example, he observes how “the Holocaust is not a major concern of people in India, if they are aware of it at all” ([1], p. 116).

However, far from disregarding the relevance of the Holocaust in an Asian setting, I share Stef Craps concern to “bridge a disciplinary divide between Jewish and postcolonial studies preventing the Holocaust and histories of slavery and colonial domination from being considered in a common frame” ([1], p. 73). In particular, I am interested in Craps’ notion of *cross-traumatic affiliation*, which he talks about in the sixth chapter of *Postcolonial Witnessing*. This idea merits further theorisation.

In an interview, Craps defines *cross-traumatic affiliation* as “a way of bringing different historical traumas into contact in an ethically responsible manner; that is, without collapsing them into one another, preserving the distance between them” [17]. This idea not only emphasises discussions on ethical witnessing within Trauma Studies, but also bears similar concerns with La Capra who already elaborated on “empathic unsettlement”. In his work, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, LaCapra proposes a desirable dimension of inquiry that should complement and supplement empirical research, that is, empathic unsettlement which “involves a kind of virtual experience which one puts oneself in the other’s position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other’s place” ([18], p. 78). When asked how cross-traumatic affiliation is different from La Capra’s idea of empathic unsettlement, Craps describes the latter as “a general way of relating to traumatic experiences whereas the former concerns a relationship specifically between such experiences” [17]. Cross-traumatic affiliation should thus hopefully encourage transcultural empathy in which two or more different cultures, which have undergone different types of traumas, seek to understand the other’s trauma for their own sake and in their own terms ([1], p. 19). Therefore, cross-traumatic affiliation presupposes differentiation and solidarity.

Cross-traumatic affiliation, in my sense, also proposes an ethical attitude to counter a current “triumph of victimhood” ([19], p. 26) “wound culture” ([20], p. 124) or even a “vicarious victimhood” ([21], p. 47). A work such as Fassin and Rechtman’s *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood* traces the trajectory from suspicion of victimhood to one that even “excites sympathy and merits [financial] compensation” ([21], p. 5). In Todorov and Belos’ words, “To have been a victim gives you the right to complain, to protest, and to make demands” ([22], p. 143).

Much like Rothberg’s multidirectional memory, cross-traumatic affiliation avoids a “hierarchy of victimhood” in which the loudest lobby gains legitimisation of victim status over others. While Rothberg encourages a non-privative on-going discussion of memory, Craps complements such a notion by suggesting an ethical attitude which does not pit one trauma or victim status over another. Cross traumatic affiliation is a disposition which allows one party to relate to the trauma of another based on the former’s own trauma experience while, at the same time, recognising the uniqueness and difference of each culture’s experience. By avoiding such homogenisation or dilution of two distinct experiences, one acknowledges pain according to the terms of that particular culture. Last but not least, cross-traumatic affiliation encourages solidarity independent of (political, financial, mediatised) justifications of one’s “hierarchy” of victimhood.

Consequently, this essay examines Frank Ephraim’s *Escape to Manila* [23] and Juergen Goldhagen’s *Manila Memories* [24] which reveal cross-traumatic affiliations between two groups of people: the Manileños and the Manilaners. The former name refers to Manila-based Filipinos, who, during World

War II, found themselves under Japanese Occupation in an already-U.S. dominated Philippines. The latter, meanwhile, designates a hybridised German name which Europeans gave themselves after seeking refuge in Manila in order to escape Nazi persecution.

That both memoirs recount the Holocaust and (Japanese) colonial domination in Asia constitute an interesting area of study. First, they testify to the role of the Philippines as haven to persecuted Jews. Second, they put together the referential traumatic references of the East and the West during World War II. Third, these stories show how each community's pain and suffering become bridges of cross-traumatic affiliation and responsibility toward the other.

Although researchers such as Delmendo and Izon [15], Harris [25] and Tirol [11] are expounding on this rescue story from a historical perspective, my interest in these Manilaner memoirs comes from the point of view of Literature, Memory and Trauma Studies which, as I have explained in the first paragraphs, have drawn a lot from Holocaust texts. My main objective therefore is to examine the Holocaust in the context of a colonised Philippines. To this end, I shall first introduce the two memoirs which will be followed by an examination of cross-traumatic affiliations between the Manileños and Manilaner. A closer reading of the memoirs, however, also reveals latent orientalism in the portrayal of Filipinos. This essay thus echoes present postcolonial concerns in recent Trauma Studies research which ask the place of serial colonisations, martial law, natural catastrophes and the sacred in Trauma theory.

## 2. Results and Discussion: Manilaner's Holocaust

During the years of the Second World War, the Philippines, which was transitioning into independence, was under the leadership of Commonwealth President Manuel Quezon who was put into power since 1935. Along with McNutt and Frieder, Quezon was a key figure in transporting more than a thousand Jews—a number surpassing that of Schindler's List [15]. These German and Austrian Jews escaping *Kristallnacht* were provided with homes and jobs in Manila. Unfortunately, the Japanese occupation would soon again disrupt their lives. In other words, for these emigrants, the memories of WWII included both the Holocaust and the Japanese Occupation.

The memoirs of these survivors have been compiled in Frank Ephraim's *Escape to Manila* [23] and Juergen Goldhagen's *Manila Memories* [24]. Both published in 2008, these books bring together personal memoirs, historical data, archival research and oral testimonies. Although hard to read, Ephraim's book has the merit of gathering the stories of 36 survivors from pre-Kristallnacht up to the end of the War. Frank Ephraim dedicates his book to "all the Manilaner who, fleeing from one tyranny to another, acquitted themselves with honor" [23]. Born in Berlin in 1931, Frank Ephraim, with his parents, fled to the Philippines in 1939. He then worked as a naval architect and served in the U.S. Department of Transportation. He died in 2006.

Goldhagen's book, meanwhile, collects the memoirs of four men who, 65 years later, remember their childhood during Japanese-occupied Manila. Between nine to twelve years old, all of them were students in the American School in Pasay. Of the four, only two can really be considered as "Manilaners" because they belong to those who have fled anti-Semitism in Germany. Goldhagen explains that "the idea for this book grew out of a seminar on war experience held at an American School of Manila reunion for the Classes of 1945–55. Fellow alumni and authors...encouraged us all to put down our memories. Here are ours" ([24], p. 9). Juergen Goldhagen also gives another reason for writing the memoir. In a television

interview in 2009, he revealed his interest in compiling the stories of Americans who were not interned in the University of Santo Tomas [26]. Through e-mail, telephone and personal conversations, he thus gathered the accounts of three other friends, two of whom live in the U.S. and one in London. A more organised book, it is published by Old Guard Press. Although he stayed in Germany until he was seven years-old, the young Juergen admits not having “the sense of being Germanic” but, rather, American, having grown up in a U.S.-occupied Manila. Today, he still lives in the States. Both books are therefore authored by Americans of German origin who have lived in Manila and later moved to the U.S. Both dedicate their books to their parents and, in the case of Ephraim, to his family and to the Manilaner.

### 2.1. Cross-Traumatic Affiliations of East to the West

*Escape to Manila* recounts of a historic anti-Kristallnacht rally in Intramuros, the Walled City of Manila, on 19 November 1938, ten days after “the Night of Broken Glass” ([23], p. 38). This demonstration gathered more than a thousand people, among whom the Catholic Archbishop and twenty speakers who condemned Nazism. Frank Ephraim explains the singularity of the event:

The Philippines was a country of 18 million Filipinos; most of whom were Catholics, so these events could hardly have been the work of the Jewish community in Manila, which by early November 1938 numbered between 300 and 350 refugees whose political muscle was nonexistent...The events of November 19, 1938, in Manila were therefore all the more remarkable ([23], p. 39).

A month after this rally, on 5 December 1938, President Quezon declared his ambitious intention of reserving lands in Mindanao (the second largest island) for the settlement of two thousand Jewish refugee families in 1939 and then 5000 families yearly until 30,000 families would have arrived. This project was met with stark opposition from the U.S. State Department which described the Jews as “another troublesome group” whose entry they might have to fund should the settlement fail ([23], p. 44; [24], p. 15). In fact, in November 1938, the State Department ordered that “visas should not, repeat not, be issued to refugees proceeding to the Philippine Islands” ([23], p. 40). In spite of these difficulties, the President allocated three hectares of his own land in Marikina in order to shelter Jews. Fortunately, Quezon obtained invaluable help from two other key players of this immigration scheme: U.S. High Commissioner Paul McNutt, who was sympathetic to Jews and Filipinos; and Herbert Frieder, head of the Jewish community in Manila and founder of the Helena Cigar Factory ([15], p. 13). Thus, on 23 April 1940, Marikina Hall was inaugurated in the presence of 300 members of the Jewish community ([23], p. 68).

According to U.S. historian Sharon Delmendo ([15], p. 12) and current Philippine President Noyon Aquino, Quezon felt a fraternal link with the Jews who, like him, were suffering from racial discrimination. Izon and Delmendo write: “Quezon, who felt the brunt of many Americans’ racial discrimination against Filipinos, felt a fraternity with the Jews who were suffering so acutely as Nazi power grew” ([15], p. 12). More subtly, in a speech on 7 August 2014, during the premiere of “Rescue in the Philippines Refuge from the Holocaust” in Malacañan Palace, President Benigno Aquino, Jr. declared that “[t]hough the Philippines was thousands of miles removed from these events [of the Holocaust], our forefathers knew that oppression like this could not go unnoticed” [27]. Thus, Quezon’s experience of discrimination under colonial rule allowed him to relate to the atrocities suffered by a

people across the globe. In other words, cross-traumatic affiliation allowed solidarity between one Asian nation to a European one.

## 2.2. Cross-Traumatic Affiliations of West to the East

While the Jews received a haven during the Commonwealth period, during the Japanese Occupation from 1941 to 1945, in this part of the world, these Manilaners would experience, on the one hand, favour from the Japanese; on the other hand, contempt. In January 1940, as a measure of restriction, the German embassy in Manila refused to renew the passports of some families because they were Jewish ([23], pp. 28, 41). Paradoxically, during the Japanese Occupation, “Jews with expired German passports were still considered [by the Japanese as] German citizens in the Philippines—refugee status did not count” ([23], p. 63). In his preface, Juergen Goldhagen declares that “while the Japanese in Manila considered us friendly allies, Hans Hoeflein and I would have been treated differently back in Germany” ([24], p. 9). Thus, in spite of their statelessness, when asked for identification, these Manilaners would not hesitate to show their expired German passports. The child Juergen even occasionally played with a Japanese neighbour and accepted toys and candy from the Japanese soldiers who were described as fond of kids ([24], pp. 45–46). All the same, his family kept a distance: “At that time, none of us knew what was happening to the Jews in Germany, but it was a good thing that Dad didn’t approach the officers” ([24], p. 59). Moreover, services continued in Temple Emil, although, because of curfew implementations, attendance decreased to 30/50 people ([23], p. 94). Goldhagen even goes as far in saying that “the Japanese were not anti-Semitic” ([24], p. 59). It appears, then, that while being allies of Germany, the Japanese seemed to be unclear about the Jewish Question. An interesting account in *Escape to Manila* may offer an explanation to the Japanese attitude towards German Jews. In a conversation between Rabbi Schwarz and the Lt. Col. Narusawa, one of the heads of the “Religious Section” of the Japanese army, the officer admits not fully understanding the *Judenfrage*. After an hour of explanation and negotiation for German Jews to be considered as “third-party citizens” or neutral foreigners ([23], p. 92), the Rabbi finally received the Lieutenant’s promise of protection for his people ([23], pp. 93–94).

However, around 1943, attitudes towards Jews started to change. The first explicit anti-Semitic warning came on 25–26 January 1943: “Jews given stern warning. Chinese profiteers also warned by administration” ([23], pp. 107–8). (It is interesting to note that Jews and Chinese were put under the same umbrella. The Roma are not the ones discriminated along with the Jews, rather, the Chinese. Such a situation reminds us that Nazism, in this case, is experienced in an Asian setting). After an increase in Jewish restrictions on February 1944 ([23], p. 117), the Japanese started unjustly arresting aliens who, if they were unfortunate, were brought to the infamous Fort Bonifacio, a place of torture ([23], pp. 119–25).

Finally, even the Temple Emil was occupied on 14 October 1944 ([23], pp. 130–31) and set afire in February 1945 ([23], p. 156). For Frank Ephraim, this “act of desecration”, “brought back the terror of Kristallnacht seven years earlier” ([23], p. 156). This statement by Ephraim is interesting because it encapsulates two referential memories of WWII: the Holocaust and the Japanese Occupation.

Tirol writes that, of the more than a thousand original refugees, only 250 remained at the end of 1948 ([11], p. 194). Indeed, most Manilaners would migrate to the U.S. after the War. In contrast, some,



like the Hoefleins, stayed on until the Marcos regime ([23], pp. 190–91). Indeed, even some years later, Ephraim maintains his affiliation with the Philippines:

After spending a couple of days in Berlin, I realised that this was not my land anymore...even though we spoke the same language...The more than twelve hundred German and Austrian Jews who found refuge in the Philippines would soon fade into history, and that is why I sought out my surviving fellow “Manilaner”, as we call ourselves, to tell their stories in this book ([23], p. 4).

The particular story of a certain Ernst Juliusberger is an interesting example of cross-traumatic affiliation. Only 18 when he escaped Kristallnacht, Ernst was later captured by the Japanese. After being informed of his pending execution, he suddenly likened himself, interestingly, to Filipino hero Jose Rizal who “was shot nearby on the grounds of the Luneta Park” ([23], p. 124). Although the Japanese apparently drew their pistols after his remark, nothing happened. Hailed as the (unofficial) national hero, Rizal embodies the Filipino who gave his life for his country, both in his lifetime and in his death. Author of two novels which contributed to fuelling the Philippine revolution against Spain, Rizal was also a linguist, a medical doctor and a romantic personage. That a European would identify himself to Rizal is proof of enculturation.

Similar to Quezon, Juliusberger’s own experience allowed him, not only to relate to the atrocities suffered by a different people, but even to turn to their own reference: colonisation. In other words, cross-traumatic affiliation allowed solidarity between a European and an Asian people.

As shown in the examples above, although the types of trauma of two peoples were different to and, up to a certain extent, unexperienced by the other party, the familiarity to injustice was sufficient, not only to express, but to show solidarity to one another. Again, cross-traumatic affiliation allows for differentiation and solidarity, each group considering the others’ experience for their own sake and in their own terms.

### 3. Results and Discussion: Manileños’ Colonisation

Until this point in the essay, I have almost only focused on the main plot of the two memoirs: the exodus of Europeans from Nazism and their unfortunate experience under Japanese Occupation in Manila. However, one should not forget that what constituted as backdrop of the escapes was the colonisation of the Philippines.

As a reminder, the Philippines was colonised by Spain for over 400 years (from 1565 to 1898) until the U.S. occupied the islands from 1898 until the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour on 8 December 1941. Thus, Japan subjugated an already-American-occupied Philippines. After the Second World War, Manila has been described by MacArthur as “the most devastated city in the world, next to Warsaw” [28].

Shifting my analysis now from the European refugees to the Filipinos who underwent colonial domination, I inquire how Filipinos were represented in *Escape to Manila* and in *Manila Memories*. In the following sections, I will thus employ a postcolonial reading and argue for evidences of orientalism in at least one book. Although the depiction of Filipinos remains understandably limited in both works, I observe that, while Filipinos are described in a more positive light in *Escape to Manila*, this is not the case in *Manila Memories*.

### 3.1. Representing Filipinos in Manila Memories

When Juergen Goldhagen arrived in Manila on 8 December 1937, his first reaction towards the new country was naturally in a mode of surprise: “Filipinos were brown, and I was totally surprised and bewildered” ([24], p. 19). Later, as the only white child in English class in Philippine Normal School, he understandably felt alone: “I was so lonely that I wished I had black hair and brown skin like a Filipino, instead of being blonde and white” ([24], p. 19). At first, therefore, the boy felt the weight of his foreignness through the difference of skin colour.

This initial yearning for belongingness continued some years later, but in a different way: “Boba, Florence and I often had stone fights with the Filipinos...They would call us ‘white monkey’ and we would reply ‘Black monkey, white monkey better than black monkey’” ([24], p. 20). A few years after the initial reaction, therefore, Goldhagen would participate in mutual racist name-calling.

In other sections of Goldhagen’s testimony, his few descriptions of Filipinos allude to disloyalty, theft and menial jobs. For instance, he would chance upon Filipinos singing “God bless Japan” ([24], pp. 48–49); or stealing: “Around this time, probably in 1943, a rash of electric wire thefts started. The Filipinos would cut the electric wires from the poles and sell the copper wire. Many people were poor and desperate for food money” ([24], p. 54).

Goldhagen’s elite background can also be deduced from the following excerpts: “The goat herd was under the care of a Filipino because labor was cheap and my parents felt it was too hot for me to be out in the sun” ([24], p. 56). There is one instance, however, when the boy Juergen was mentioned playing again with a Filipino, Peping, the son of Mr. Egea, mayor of Cubao whose compound was let to the Goldhagen family ([24], p. 59).

Likewise, Hans Hoeflein, who also escaped from Germany, betrays his family’s elite status and only mentions the Filipinos in the following light: “As was typical of most of the foreign families, my family did not have much to do with Filipinos on a social level ([24], p. 26); “Most of my playmates at that time were Spanish or mestizos, namely, half-Spanish and half-Filipino” ([24], p. 65). With Filipino kids, however, as with Goldhagen, he “occasionally got into stone fights” with them ([24], p. 27). Elsewhere, Hoeflein admits assuming that Filipinos were behind some thefts: “I did not see any atrocities committed by the Japanese during the Occupation, though from time to time I would see some Filipinos tied to telephone poles and just left there. They were still alive when I saw them. I assumed that they had been thieves who had been caught in the act” ([24], p. 65).

Like Goldhagen, Hoeflein’s memories of Filipino natives—not mestizos—were associated to stone fights, theft and lower social status. It is interesting to note as well that Goldhagen and Hoeflein restricted their relationships to mestizos and the elite of Philippine society, such as the mayor of Cubao.

Unlike Goldhagen and Hoeflein, Roderick Hall was born to a Scottish father and a Spanish-Scottish mother on 7 November 1932 in Makati, the commercial district ([24], pp. 15–16). Hall recalls how, in his family, they “all spoke Tagalog and changed from one language to another depending on whom we were with” ([24], p. 25). At that time, a lot of the Manilaners attended Filipino colleges. While most boys were sent to the Christian Brothers of De la Salle College, the women attended St. Scholastica’s. It is no surprise then that some Jewish children, among whom, Rod Hall, would learn some Tagalog. Growing up with the elite of Manila ([24], pp. 61, 63), most of whom mestizos and mestizas, Hall would soon meet President Quezon himself: “I well remember Ian and I being presented to Manuel Quezon” ([24], p. 25).

Finally, Hans Walser was also born in Makati on March 1933. His father was a French-speaking Swiss who arrived in Manila in July 1920, while his mother was an American who came to teach in the University of the Philippines ([24], p. 18). Like his other friends, Hans Walser's environment was privileged: "My parents played bridge monthly with the MacArthurs and the Eisenhowers" ([24], p. 28). His memories of Filipinos are only described at the end of Liberation: "More and more of the young Filipino kids were walking around the neighbourhood with bodies showing a lot of bone under their skin, but also with distended bellies, the sign of beri-beri" ([24], p. 91); "Filipino looters moved right in and stripped the houses of everything" ([24], p. 91). In his short testimony, Walser portrays Filipinos as sickly, a normal situation in war, but again, like Goldhagen and Hoeflein, as looters. Once more, his family was among the privileged few, frequenting the MacArthurs and Eisenhowers.

Among the four boys, Hall appears to be the one more integrated in local society. His capacity to speak Tagalog is, at the very least, a gauge of enculturation. However, except for mestizos and mestizas, the general description of Filipinos in *Manila Memories*—whether true or not, since what I am interested in is representation—is associated with disloyalty to Americans, stone fights, theft, lower social status and sickness.

### 3.2. Representing Filipinos in *Escape to Manila*

On the contrary, in *Escape to Manila*, Frank Ephraim's representation of Filipinos can be divided into three classifications: a generally positive one; a more specific one which is mediated through the person of Manuel Quezon; and one negative portrayal only.

The first series of excerpts describe the hospitality and care Filipinos are known for: "Filipinos knew little about Jews, but the few Jews living in Manila in 1924 were accepted and never threatened" ([23], p. 15); "The Philippine press was quick to respond to the events of Kristallnacht" ([23], p. 38); "Filipinos were a tolerant people... Temple Emil on the Taft Avenue was very visible and Jews attended services and congregated in front of the temple without the slightest disturbance. There was never a ghetto in Manila, and Jews lived in close proximity with Filipinos" ([23], p. 53). Likewise, when Ernst Juliusburger was confined to the hospital, his recovery is described as follows: He "began to gain strength with the extraordinary care of the Filipino medical and nursing staff. With insufficient food at the hospital, the nurses picked vegetables from the gardens in the area and cooked them for their patients" ([23], p. 127). In short, Filipinos were first of all seen as welcoming and caring.

Undoubtedly, *Escape to Manila* allotted a lot of space in portraying Manuel Quezon: "President Quezon has indicated his willingness to set aside virgin lands in Mindanao for larger groups of Jewish refugees" ([23], p. 43); "Quezon was prepared to accept two thousand Jewish refugee families for settlement in Mindanao in 1939 and five thousand families yearly thereafter until thirty thousand families had been landed" ([23], p. 43); "President Quezon had donated three hectares, seven and one-half acres, of his country property [in Marikina] for the establishment of a working farm for Jewish refugees" ([23], p. 68). It is therefore no surprise that, when Quezon died on August 1944, the "Jewish community mourned—who could forget his determined speech welcoming the immigration of Jewish refugees at the dedication of the Jewish home in Marikina in 1940, on land he had provided" ([23], p. 126)?

So far, the Filipinos in *Escape to Manila*—care givers, sponsors and hosts—are a far cry from the thieves and black monkeys in *Manila Memories*. In the former memoir, the only negative portrayal of

Filipinos is found in the following excerpt, confirming a difference in cultures: “Filipino staff were slow, late, or capable of making up a hundred excuses for not showing up for work. The refugees had to adapt to delays, a major change from the typical German promptness and precision” ([23], p. 52).

To be fair, it is only proper to mention that not all Filipinos were as hospitable as Quezon. General Emilio Aguinaldo himself opposed to the Mindanao plan because, according to him, some Filipinos might want to settle there and therefore should be given preference. Moreover, he was quoted saying that “the Jews are dangerous people to have around in large numbers” ([23], p. 45). Indeed, isolated anti-Semitic statements such as this can also be identified.

Unlike the boys in *Manila Memories*, Ephraim’s witnesses were most of the time poor Europeans who sometimes even had to take on jobs as *cocheros* or horse-drawn drivers. According to Ephraim, Siegfried Eichholz and sons, for example, were the only white *cocheros* in Manila at that time ([23], p. 110). Ephraim adds: “we were probably the first whites they [the Filipinos] had met who were not rich” ([23], p. 39).

The fact that most refugees that Ephraim interviewed were beneficiaries of the Quezon plan perhaps contributes to the more thankful tone in *Escape*. Additionally, a statement like the following reveals Ephraim’s empathy towards the Filipinos: “To the Filipinos, a white man always seemed to have advantages denied them, and the occupation sometimes brought this into sharp focus...this situation (the Japanese change of opinion against German Jews) became a leveller” ([23], p. 109). In a nutshell, he goes a step further by trying to understand their situation under colonial eyes.

In *Manila Memories*, the four boys who attended the American school in Donada Street in Pasay naturally saw the Americans as their heroes: “[I] dream of the Americans’ return” ([24], p. 56); “The Americans were our friends. How could they hurt us” ([24], p. 77)? Moreover, in a television interview, Goldhagen shares: “My thoughts were the States. I was oriented in being an American. I didn’t feel Germanic” [26]. One can therefore imagine and understand the status and mentality of American-educated children in a society under U.S. domination. Perhaps such context and upbringing explains the latent orientalist [29] representations of Filipinos in *Manila Memories*.

Furthermore, in both works, but especially in *Manila Memories*, the question of epidermal colour comes to fore. How ironic that some refugees would acquire, not only jobs and homes, but also, by virtue of white skin colour, a higher social status than the natives of a host country. More than just a skin colour, whiteness or brownness/blackness signified a certain social status, a situation typical of postcolonial states. Such bias was so strong that separating whiteness from its usual high social status at that time would create confusion, as this comment from Hans Walser attests: “When we first saw the soldiers, we did not think they were Americans. They were very tan. In Manila, the Caucasians tried very hard to stay white and we just assumed that the American soldiers we would see would be white. It took us about a minute to really believe they were American” ([24], p. 111). The question of colour bias, therefore, which was brought on by colonisation, was therefore an inseparable reality for both Manilaners and Manileños. This question of racism brings me back to what I have already alluded to in the introduction, the appeal to other trauma paradigms.

#### 4. Results and Discussion: Postcolonial Considerations in Trauma Studies

In line with other postcolonial trauma critics, I would therefore like to interrogate the place of other possible trauma paradigms which, I think, not only apply to the Philippines, but also to other countries. I briefly name at least three here: serial colonisations, martial law and natural disasters. Lastly, I argue for a consideration of “the sacred” as part of the postcolonial turn in Trauma Studies.

It is not the first time that an appeal to include colonisation as traumatic event is introduced. Mengel and Borzaga’s important volume [6] precisely draws attention to the effects of colonisation on the African continent. By suggesting colonisation to be included in trauma discourse, the authors depart from the one-time trigger event of wars or the Holocaust, thus interrogating the status of PTSD as exclusively event-based.

Similarly, many Asian nations have experienced colonisation, not only from one country, but from two or several. The Philippines is no exception. Colonisation has been one of the main topics, if not the subject of predilection, of fiction over the centuries since Jose Rizal’s *Noli Me Tangere* [30] and *El Filibusterismo* [31] in the 19th century. Until today, Miguel Syjuco’s Man Prize 2010 novel, *Ilustrado* [32], for example, generously refers to years of colonisation under the Western and Japanese powers. Is the perennial apparition of colonisation as theme an attempt by authors to articulate and come to terms with the past? Is it a case of using the narrative in order to address a historical *nachträglichkeit* [33]? It could well be. At the same time, narration can also be an act of resistance and resilience. Indeed, although Rizal’s novels would cost him his life, his acts would bear fruit with the breakout of the revolution.

Considered as a “true trauma” by writers such as Pantoja-Hidalgo [34] and Montiel [35], the Martial Law years of Ferdinand Marcos, are a second favourite theme among fictionists. Gina Apostol’s *Gun Dealer’s Daughter*, for example, can certainly be read as trauma fiction—even on Western aesthetic standards of fragmentation, non-linearity and aporia. However, the content definitely distinguishes itself as part of Philippine history with Filipino concerns.

In addition, proposals for a disaster-based trauma, combined with postcolonial theory, would absolutely benefit a typhoon-prone country like the Philippines. Not only these 7100 islands are visited by approximately 20 typhoons per year, they are also home to volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, storm surges and drought [36]. The most recent disaster is undoubtedly the infamous super typhoon Haiyan in November 2013 which claimed approximately 6000 lives [36]. Latest studies, such as “Obligated to be Grateful”, interrogate the conflicts that ensue from contacts between foreign aid and local cultures [37]. This document problematizes the Filipino principle of debt of gratitude or *utang na loob* which underpins social relations. It implies reciprocity or gratitude towards someone who has extended aid. However, when combined with the long history of the Philippines’ colonial relations where benefactors can also be regarded as patrons, how relevant is feedback from affected communities towards humanitarians to whom they owe a debt of gratitude? Furthermore, the same document also interrogates the effectivity of targeted aid in local communities which value group culture. The Filipino sense of *kapwa* which “implies that people’s sense of self is most intensely relational” comes into conflict with targeted interventions “within tight-knit communities...when people are excluded from aid” ([37], p. 8). Thus, petty jealousies may result if one neighbour does not benefit and the other does. One low-income woman, aged 40, thus exclaims: “[T]hese NGOs have only caused conflict among my neighbours...Whenever I receive help

and my neighbour does not, they'll stare at me down and look at me from head to toe like it is all my fault!" ([37], p. 40). Other studies, such as those by Anthony Carrigan and Elizabeth Deloughry, also seek to theorise natural disasters, thus bringing such events to the fore of literature and postcolonial inquiry. Such research would also be relevant for other Southeast Asian countries which are constant preys to drought, earthquakes, floods, landslides, storm surges and tsunamis.

A final point, which Trauma Studies still has to develop, concerns the importance of the "sacred" in the process of healing. Asia is home to the oldest religions of the world whose influence to the mental and philosophical outlook of its peoples should not be underestimated. Van der Merwe makes the same case for Africa where religion becomes "a provider of inspiration, strength, and creativity in both the Muslim and Christian traditions in South Africa" ([38], p. 214). Likewise, Craps draws from Watters to argue that, in the context of the Sri-Lankan tsunami in 2004, "the remarkable psychological resilience shown by the Sri Lankan population, its capacity to live in the face of horror, can be partly accounted for by protective beliefs in Hindu and Buddhist traditions" ([1], p. 23). Against the colonisation of Western secularism towards cultures steeped in spirituality, acceptance of the sacred marks a postcolonial turn. For instance, in the recent edition of *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin maintain that:

The sacred has been an empowering feature of post-colonial experience in two ways: on one hand indigenous concepts of the sacred have been able to interpolate dominant conceptions of cultural identity; and on the other Western forms of the sacred have often been appropriated and transformed as a means of local empowerment. Analyses of the sacred have been one of the most neglected, and may be one of the most rapidly expanding areas of post-colonial study ([39], p. 8).

## 5. Conclusions

This essay, hopefully, contributes in examining the Holocaust in the context of a colonised Philippines. This has been delineated through at least five points. Firstly, it sought to offer a Filipino perspective on the traumatic references of the Second World War which, contrary to a European point of view, does not look to "the Holocaust" as a signifier; rather, "colonisation", the "Japanese Occupation", "Hiroshima" and "Nagasaki". Such a view thus tempers the paradigmatic status of the Holocaust in Trauma theory.

Secondly, rather than pitting one traumatic referential event over another, I attempted to develop Stef Crap's notion of cross-traumatic affiliation as way of bringing different historical traumas into contact in an ethically responsible manner. As a disposition which underscores difference and solidarity in relations of empathy, cross-traumatic affiliation avoids collapsing different traumas into one another, thus preserving the distance between them, allowing each culture's trauma to be considered in their own terms.

To exemplify cross-traumatic affiliation between a group of Europeans and Filipinos, thirdly, two memoirs, Juergen Goldhagen's *Manila Memories* and Frank Ephraim's *Escape to Manila* were studied. In particular, the examples of Manuel Quezon towards the Jews and Ernst Juliusberger towards the Filipinos proved how each one used their own referential atrocities or traumas, not only to relate the other, but to go further by extending solidarity. Moreover, such narratives further highlight the almost

unknown role of the Philippines in the rescue of more than a thousand Jews, a story which a monument in the 65-hectare Rishon Lezion National Park near Tel Aviv now stands for. Aptly called the “Open Door Monument”, it fittingly commemorates Quezon’s “open door” plan ([11], p. 264). Also of interest in the study of the two works is the fact that they gather the memories of both the Holocaust and the Japanese Occupation in Asia.

Consequently, fourthly, this essay also pointed to another Asian-based referential traumatic event, namely, colonisation in the Philippines. By shifting the focus of the essay to representations of Filipinos, one could note, however, latent orientalism in *Manila Memories*. With and in spite of the solidarity that Goldhagen’s memoir reveals, unfortunately, the colonised situation of the natives, mostly portrayed as thieves and “black monkeys”, almost only served as a backdrop to the Holocaust escape and Japanese Occupation survival story of four American-educated boys. In *Escape to Manila*, on the contrary, a more favourable representation of the host country is shown. That most testimonials from *Escape* were gathered from beneficiaries of the Quezon plan perhaps accounts for its more thankful tone.

Hence, fifthly, the orientalist underpinnings in *Manila Memories*, for instance, those which pertain to the “colour line” in the context of colonisation, led me, in agreement with other postcolonial trauma critics, to interrogate the place of other possible trauma paradigms, such as serial colonisations, Martial Law and climate disasters. Lastly, I also discussed the importance of including the sacred as part of the postcolonial reconsideration in trauma discourse.

The names Manileños/Manileñas and Manilaner, as they are morphologically constructed, betray a hybrid origin which is both European and Filipino. The two indicate a belonging to Manila and to either Spain or Germany and Austria. While both designations reveal Manila’s colonial subjugation and the city’s open doors; a land invaded and a hospitable abode, they also allude to Europe as colonisers and Europe as victims. While the label Manileños/Manileñas embody, on the one hand, Filipinos’ suffering under colonisers, this name also testifies to appropriation and decolonisation. Likewise, while the designation Manilaner cannot be dislodged from recalling its origin—the pain of escaping Nazism—at the same time, the name has also been appropriated by this small group of European settlers to signify their freedom in the Philippines. Thus, the names Manileños/Manileñas and Manilaner are both charged with significations of difference and solidarity, trauma and resistance.

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### **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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