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Editor's Introduction

This issue features three articles by graduates of Kyoto University's Ph.D. program in Southeast Asian Studies. Established ten years ago through the joint efforts of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies and the Center of African Area Studies, the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies aims to train specialists in developing alternatives to the traditional discipline-bound, comparative framework that focuses on delineating the similarities and differences between "Asia" and the "West" (Europe and America).

The graduate school's emphasis on "fieldwork"—the acquisition of detailed, intimate knowledge through immersion in the lifeworld of a research site—is evident in these case studies of management practices in a cement plant, land-dispute activism, and migrant narratives. The geographical scope of the scholarship is spread out across, and frequently moves between and beyond, Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao. Also noteworthy is the fact that an overwhelming majority of its students who work on the Philippines are women (another graduate, Kiyoko Yamaguchi, published an article on "American"-style architecture in volume 54, number 3).

Mari Kondo revisits the concept of patron-clientelism in her analysis of the organization and management of a cement plant in Central Luzon. Modern Filipino corporations operate in a business environment that is markedly hierarchical, status-conscious, family-centered, and characterized by the high mobility of professional labor and the generally low level of public trust in individuals as well as institutions. Mindful of the "ideal" models of doing business propounded by globalized discourses of business management, these corporations have developed a hybrid management style that combines elements of *bata-bata* patronage with the check-and-balancing potentials of

meritocracy. Kondo argues that the bata-bata system functions as an informal system for relaying information and for monitoring and motivating managers and key employees. But while merito-patronage is a rational strategy for enabling companies to remain competitive within the particular socioeconomic contexts of Philippine capitalism, it also serves to further promote and perpetuate the Filipino elite's accumulation of wealth and political power.

Hybrid political technologies for mass mobilization are the centerpiece of Akiko Watanabe's article on the dispute involving the Salam Mosque Compound in Metro Manila. Muslim activists relied on "strategic essentialism" to win the court battles by projecting themselves as militants and recasting the land dispute as a religious conflict. Watanabe argues, however, that the homogenizing impulse of a strategic essentialist deployment of "Muslimness" belies the ethnolinguistic diversity of the migrants living in the compound, as well as the role of gender and generational differences in accounting for the motivation of activists and the heterogeneity of tactics employed. Older Muslims who had experienced the war in Mindanao armed and barricaded themselves while younger Muslims, schooled in post-EDSA techniques of mass mobilization, organized rallies and staged media appearances.

Naomi Hosoda looks closely at the Waray-Tagalog idioms and norms by which Samaron migrants in Manila and abroad make sense of their outbound journeys, the risks they take, and their ties to those whom they left behind. Samarons' notion of *suwerte* strikes a fine balance between luck as a "godsent" gift and as an actively sought opportunity. Far from being a mere index of individual success, *suwerte* requires recognition by one's fellow villagers back "home." Its moral dimension is founded in the social virtues of intimacy and compassion that move the migrant to share the resources she acquires with relatives, friends, and fellow villagers.

All three articles are attentive to the everyday sociocultural contexts within which people think, communicate, and act, while also recognizing that these contexts are linked to larger regional and global histories, processes, and flows of peoples, goods, ideas and discourses, and technologies. Locally-grounded and linguistically sedimented terms such as bata-bata, waqf, and *suwerte* reveal the variegated landscapes of shared, often hybrid, understandings and practices through which Philippine social relations are defined and regulated, power and prestige accumulated, needs and expectations articulated, identities created and contested, solidarity forged, and action enabled and coordinated.

Caroline Sy Hau