

# Appraising the Significance of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies' (CSEAS) Library Collection for Philippine Studies

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*The library at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) has been the most essential foundation for the promotion of research activities in the field of Southeast Asian studies. It has continually expanded and developed its collection by focusing on academic publications on Southeast Asia, and holds approximately 180,000 items. It assures access by both domestic and overseas patrons through its open access policy and reference services. Alongside materials collected in print, the library also collects many archival materials from the colonial period in Microfilm form. Suzuki Nobutaka focuses on a recent additions to the collection from the Philippines and their significance for Philippine Studies.*

Collecting research materials such as newspaper articles, public documents, information, and data from field research is undoubtedly important not only for specialists in Philippine Studies, but also in Southeast Asian Studies in general. However, gathering and exploring such research materials in Southeast Asian countries, can, at times, be discouraging because they are often poorly preserved. For this reason, it is necessary for researchers to go abroad, where rich archival collections are available.

To my knowledge, as far Philippine Studies is concerned, a lot of precious and rare research materials and documents are available in Japan. The library at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University is no exception for the collections it possesses. Between 2011 and 2012, I worked on a collaborative research project sponsored by the Center and had an opportunity to purchase the microfilms (a total of 109 reels) of the *Tribune* (1930–1945) from Cornell University. This collection allowed me to gain a firm understanding of the early 20<sup>th</sup> colonial Philippines.

The most useful part of the research materials is the daily newspaper's articles which are indispensable for analyzing past historical events. Good examples for Philippine Studies, using extensive newspaper's articles in addition to public documents, are *The Philippine Independence Missions to the United States 1919–1934* (1983) by Bernardita Churchill which attempts to depict the Filipino elite's diplomacy toward its own independence from the United States, and *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (1977) by Benedict Kerkvliet, which focuses on the *Hukbalahap*, the anti-Japanese resistance movement in the Central Luzon Plain in pre-war times. English newspapers were first published when the Philippines became an American colony in 1898. The library has deposits of the microfilms of the English daily newspaper, *Manila Times* (1898–1930). Prior to my research project, one of the most serious problems Philippine Studies specialists and scholars faced was the absence of English newspapers in Japan from 1930 to 1945 in collections. However, in cooperation with Cornell University and thanks to the kind assistance of Mr. Greg Green and Ms.

Carole Atkinson, both curators of the library's Southeast Asian Collection, the Center was able to purchase microfilms of the *Tribune* following the *Manila Times*. This Manila-based nationwide English newspaper, originally published in 1925 is without doubt an important source of research materials, filling a gap between 1930 and 1945.

Scholars who used to go the Library of Congress and American universities to investigate this period can now benefit from this acquisition. The 1930s was a period of diplomatic negotiations with the United States, which were followed by the establishment of a Commonwealth government in 1935 in preparation for absolute independence after a 10-year transitional period. Since only three major nationwide English newspapers — the *Tribune* (1925–1945), the *Philippines Herald* (1920–1941), and the *Manila Daily Bulletin* (1907–1942, 1946– to present) — were published, the purchase of the first is of great interest to library users.

With this new acquisition, along with help of the Foronda and Ocampo Collections preserved in the Center, researchers and scholars will be able to explore interesting agendas from new perspectives. The latter includes very rare excellent collections which are available in the Center, such as the *Constitutional Convention Record* of 1935 (11 volumes), which include a legislative debate and argument over the new constitution promulgated in 1935, and the *Annual Report of the Governor-General of the Philippines* (1916–1935).

If more users are aware of the strengths of the Center's collections in comparison with other libraries, material collection in Japan could become easier. For example, when scrutinizing the newspapers of the post-independence period for research purposes, the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE), in Mihamaku, Chiba, is often recommended. The most comprehensive statistical data on the Philippine economy during the American colonial period is available at the Institute of Economic Researches, Hitotsubashi University.<sup>1</sup> It also offers two distinctive administrative reports in microfilm form, which include *Manuscript Reports of the Governor-General of the Philippines* (1916–1935) and *Manuscript Reports of the U.S. High*

*Commissioner to the Philippine Islands* (1936–1940). Additionally, the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (ILACCA) at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies provides researchers with one of the most important public reports entitled *Manuscript Reports of the Philippine Commission* (1900–1915).

In addition to the library's collection, a number of rare documents are easily accessible in Japan. To carry out efficient and practical library research in Japan prior to going abroad, knowledge of the latest repository conditions of each library, particularly those that focus on the early 20<sup>th</sup> colonial Philippines can help improve our scholarship. It is hoped that these kinds of collections at the Center will play a vital role in becoming a "hub" of Southeast Asian Studies open to scholars not only Japan, but also those from abroad.

### References

- Churchill, Bernardita R. 1983. *The Philippine Independence Missions to the United States 1919–1934*. National Historical Institute.
- Kerkvliet, Benedict J. 1977. *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines*. University of California Press.

Nagano, Yoshiko. 1998. The Location and Composition of Philippine Historical Statistical Materials. Asian Historical Statistics Project Newsletter.

<http://www.ier.hit-u.ac.jp/COE/Japanese/Newsletter/No.8.english/yoshiko.htm> (Accessed 6 January 2014).

### Newspapers

*The Tribune* (1925–1945)

*The Philippines Herald* (1920–1941)

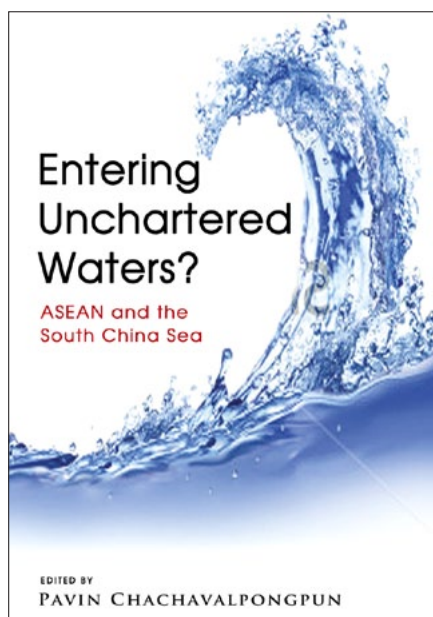
*The Manila Daily Bulletin* (1907–1942, 1946 – to present)

*The Manila Times* (1898–1930)

### Note

- <sup>1</sup> For more information, please see a short essay written by Nagano Yoshiko entitled The Location and Composition of Philippine Historical Statistical Materials.

## Publications



### ***Entering Uncharted Waters? ASEAN and the South China Sea***

Edited by Pavin Chachavalpongpun. 2014. Singapore: ISEAS Press



**Kyoto CSEAS Series of Asian Studies No. 10**

### ***Living With Risk: Precarity and Bangkok's Urban Poor***

Endo, Tamaki. 2014. NUS Press and Kyoto University Press