

**Filipino American History,
Identity and Community
in Hawai'i**

**In Commemoration of the 90th Anniversary
of Filipino Immigration to Hawai'i**

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Guest Editor

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Foreword

This issue of the Filipinos in Hawai'i is in commemoration of the 90th anniversary of Filipino immigration to Hawai'i. It represents the second milestone in being the second issue of *Social Process in Hawai'i* which focuses with rich description and analysis of the experience of Filipino immigrants and their descendants in the creation of identity, community, and participation in Hawai'i, in impacting upon the region of origin, and upon the larger Hawai'i and American society.

The Filipino experience in Hawai'i has occurred in a context which has been highly controlled and regulated from the inception of contract labor work on the plantations. Previous experiences and events continue to leave their mark on present efforts to create a robust and supportive setting for members of the Filipino community. These struggles and adaptations are well documented and interpreted as to legacy and future in the articles of this issue.

The active involvement of members of this population in responding to their life-conditions and challenges in family life, in presenting themselves as individuals and as members of associations and communities in the educational setting, in the work-a-day world, in overlapping circles of linguistic, national, and cross-national identities and networks represents important comparative data and ideas on human relations and understandings.

Kiyoshi Ikeda, Ph.D.
Executive Editor

Preface

Sixty years ago in 1936, Roman R. Cariaga, who initiated Filipino American studies in Hawai'i, published an article on "Some Filipino Traits Transplanted" in the second volume of *Social Process in Hawaii*. This year, 1996, we are pleased to be able to devote an entire volume of the *Social Process* journal to *Filipino American History, Identity and Community in Hawai'i*. This year is especially significant because it marks the ninetieth anniversary of Filipino immigration to Hawai'i which began in 1906. This collection of articles is intended as the authors' collective contribution to the "Pagdiriwang (celebration) '96" anniversary commemoration. One of the contributors to our volume, Leonard Andaya, is co-chair of the Pagdiriwang '96 Coordinating Committee that has been planning and organizing the ninetieth anniversary observance, and a few other authors are committee members.

One of the major ninetieth anniversary events is a statewide series of monthly forums addressed to significant issues confronting the Filipino American community. These issues include sex, drugs and youth; employment patterns; the changing role of women and the family; political participation; educational access and achievement; and ethnic identity expression. These public forums, which are being led by University of Hawai'i faculty and community leaders as resource persons, provide a timely and unique opportunity for Filipinos as a community to reflect upon and discuss their collective achievements, concerns, problems and aspirations in the above and other relevant areas.

Certainly, ninety years after their arrival in Hawai'i to labor in the plantation fields for low wages, the 169,000 Filipino Americans in the islands representing 15 percent of the state population remain a socioeconomically disadvantaged minority. United States census data for 1990 indicate that Filipinos are still greatly overemployed in blue collar work as service workers, operatives/laborers, and agricultural workers and continue to be significantly underrepresented in professional and executive/managerial employment. While they rank third in median family income (\$42,000 after Japanese and Chinese), which can be attributed to the prevalence of extended family households especially among immigrants, both male and female Filipino Americans are among the lowest ranked groups in median personal income (before African Americans and Samoans). In education, Filipinos (12%) are well below the state median (23%) in terms of the percentage of persons 25 years and over with a bachelor's degree or higher, and some of these college graduates received their education in the Philippines before immigrating to Hawai'i. Nonetheless, higher education is one of the encouraging areas in the socioeconomic status of Filipino

Americans since 1980 insofar as they are at the state median (30%) for 18 to 24 year olds enrolled in college, and at 20 percent they are the largest group in the UH community college system, although they are still underrepresented among undergraduate students at UH Mānoa (12%). As Filipinos prepare to enter the next millenium, our volume represents an effort towards greater appreciation and understanding of their history, identity and community in Hawai'i.

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Jonathan Y. Okamura
Guest Editor

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Dean T. Alegado is an assistant professor in the Department of Ethnic Studies and the Center for Philippine Studies at UH Mānoa. Born in the Philippines, he received his BA degree from the University of California, Berkeley in 1974, MA from Goddard-Cambridge in 1975 and PhD from UH Mānoa in 1991. He teaches courses on the Filipino American experience, ethnic/race relations, and immigration to the United States.

Leonard Y. Andaya was born and raised on Maui. He graduated with a BA degree in history from Yale University in 1965 and received a PhD degree in Southeast Asian history from Cornell University in 1971. He has held research and teaching positions in the Netherlands, Malaysia, Australia, Indonesia and New Zealand. At present Dr. Andaya is a professor of history and the director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at UH Mānoa. He is the author of five books on Malaysian and Indonesian history.

Jeff Chang received his master's degree in 1995 from the Asian American Studies Center at the University of California, Los Angeles for his thesis on "Lessons of Tolerance: Ethnicity, The Local and Affirmative Action in Hawai'i" from which his article is drawn. He is currently living in the San Francisco Bay Area where he writes on race and popular music and produces records.

P. de Los Santos works as an educational specialist with the New Intensive Courses in English (NICE) Program of the UH Summer Session. He previously coordinated a U.S. Department of Education funded Family English Literacy project which provided literacy skills training to immigrant and local Filipino families. He also is a contributing writer to the *Fil-Am Courier*, a bimonthly Filipino community newspaper published in Hawai'i.

Melinda Tria Kerkvliet was the director of Operation Manong at UH Mānoa for several years before relocating to Canberra, Australia in 1991. She has a PhD degree in history from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She is the author of *Manila Workers' Unions, 1900-1950* and has also completed a biography on Pablo Manlapit. Dr. Kerkvliet recently began conducting research in Vietnam.

Jonathan Y. Okamura is a researcher with the Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity office at UH Mānoa and a frequent lecturer in the Ethnic Studies Department. Born and raised on Maui, he received his PhD degree in anthropology from the University of London and conducted his dissertation fieldwork with Filipino immigrants in the Kalihi area of Honolulu. He has researched and written on Filipino Americans, ethnic identity and relations in Hawai'i, and cultural minorities in the Philippines where he taught in Manila for three years in the mid 1980s. His current research interests include the global Filipino diaspora and racialization in Hawai'i.

Teresita V. Ramos is a professor in the Department of Hawaiian and IndoPacific Languages and Literatures at UH Mānoa where she teaches courses on Pilipino language and culture. She has a PhD degree in linguistics from UH Mānoa. She is coordinator of the Pilipino Language and Literature Program and the author of several instructional books on teaching Tagalog. Among her publications are *The Case System of Tagalog Verbs* and *Modern Tagalog Grammar*.

Linda A. Revilla is research health scientist with the Veterans Affairs Pacific Center for PTSD in Honolulu. She has a PhD degree in psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles. She previously was an assistant professor in the Department of American Ethnic Studies at the University of Washington and a visiting professor in the Department of Ethnic Studies at UH Mānoa. Dr. Revilla is currently working on a documentary of the First Filipino Infantry Regiment.

Albert Britton Robillard received his PhD degree in sociology from the University of California, Los Angeles, and held an appointment in the School of Medicine at Michigan State University before moving to UH Mānoa in 1980. He was a Fulbright research professor at Ateneo de Manila University, and has conducted training programs and research in mental health services in the Marshall Islands, Pohnpei, Truk, Yap, Palau, Guam, Saipan and Hawai'i. Dr. Robillard is the author of many papers on health services in the Pacific and the Philippines and is currently doing disability studies. He is the director of the Health and Social Sciences Project at the Social Science Research Institute and associate professor of sociology at UH Mānoa.

Steffi San Buenaventura is assistant professor of ethnic studies at the University of California, Riverside. A resident of Hawai'i for sixteen years, she received her PhD degree from UH Mānoa in 1990 and later was a postdoctoral

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