

- Peer-Reviewed, Open Access Journal
- Index in NepJOL
- Permanently Archived in Portico



Department of English
Padmakanya Multiple Campus
Bagbazar, Kathmandu
Tribhuvan University
URL:

Research Article

Carlos Bulosan's *America is in the Heart*: Witnessing American Colonialism in Asia

Dr. Cheng Lok Chua

Retired Professor Emeritus of English,
California State University, Fresno, U.S.A.

Corresponding Author: Cheng Lok Chua, Email: chengc@mail.fresnostate.edu

Copyright 2023 ©The Author(S). The publisher may reuse published articles with prior permission of the concerned author(s).

Abstract

Carlos Bulosan's America Is In the Heart (first published in 1943) is a masterpiece of autobiographical fiction about the Asian American (specifically the Filipino American) immigrant experience. Its setting is the Philippines and the western United States (particularly California) during the years between World War I and World War II. Its structure is patterned after the success story trajectory of the bildungsroman that culminates in the protagonist's attainment of the American Dream. But the narrative matter of America Is In the Heart forms an unrelenting witness to the persistence of pernicious American colonial policies vis-à-vis the military, land ownership, and education which exists alongside the ubiquitous demeaning prejudices of racism and classism permeating American attitudes and behavior. This narrative testimony prompts the attentive reader to interrogate the achievability of the American Dream for Bulosan's first-person narrator-protagonist. Many readers, therefore, come away from a scrutiny of Bulosan's book with a sense of aporia, a tension that paradoxically adds a layer of complexity to this canonical text even as it may disrupt its ostensibly conventional bildungsroman template.

Key words : colonialism, racism, Filipino American, *bildungsroman*, aporia.

As an Asian American who spent my infancy in Shonan-to (as my native Singapore was called when it was in the Empire of Japan), my youth in the Straits Settlements of Great Britain (after Japan's defeat in World War II), and my student years in the segregated United States (of the "Jim Crow" 1950s and 1960s), I have a personal interest in the colonial inflections of Carlos Bulosan's autobiographical novel *America Is In the Heart* (1943). Carlos Bulosan (1913-1956) was a Filipino, thus a native of the only Asian country to have been a classic colony of the U.S., and his book bears witness to the effects and contradictions of U.S. colonialism in Asia.

Indeed, Carlos Bulosan's *America Is in the Heart* (henceforth *AIIH*) is "one of the core works of Asian American literature" (Lisa Lowe 45), so highly regarded that the sociologist

Ronald Takaki devoted fully 10 pages of his own book *Strangers from a Different Shore* (New York: Penguin, 1989) to merely summarizing it (343-355). Subtitled “A Personal History,” *AIIH* is generally read as an autobiographical fiction (Kim 48, Morante 131-132) shaped like a *bildungsroman* (Lowe 45) in four parts about a Filipino sojourner in the United States. Part One describes the origins of an unlettered Filipino peasant boy Allos. In Part Two, he arrives in the American West during the 1930s Depression, becomes a migrant laborer, and experiences harsh poverty, violent racism, and the temptation of criminality. Part Three sees him becoming a labor union organizer encountering more racist hate and police brutality, surviving two years’ hospitalization with life-threatening tuberculosis, and miraculously self-educating himself to the point of publishing poems, stories, and essays. In Part Four, he publishes his first book of poems, embraces socialism over communism in his union affiliation, and balances his contradictory feelings of repulsion and attraction to America as World War II breaks out. In one sense, Bulosan’s protagonist realizes an American Dream of success as a man of letters published in *Poetry Magazine*, the *New Yorker*, and even being selected by President Roosevelt to pen one of his iconic Norman Rockwell-illustrated “Four Wants” in the *Saturday Evening Post* (*San Juan On Becoming*, 131-134; Espiritu 50). However, the road that Bulosan has had to travel has been a nightmare of deprivation, humiliation, violence, and racism. Many readers feel, therefore, that Bulosan’s closing declaration of faith in America is problematic, even ironic.¹ Bulosan’s *bildungsroman*, then, leaves many readers not with the customary affirmation of achievement but with an unconventionally undecidable sense of paradox and aporia.

From its very beginning, *AIIH* is already unconventional as an immigrant narrative. Traditionally, such narratives begin near the time of arrival in America (Libretti 28). But Bulosan flouts convention and apports fully a third of his book (all of Part One) to Allos’ formative years in the Philippines of 1913-1930. By then, the country was indisputably an overseas American colony gained after the U.S. had defeated Spain (the Philippines’ original colonizers since 1565) in the Spanish-American War of 1898, and after the U.S. forces (commanded at one point by General Arthur MacArthur) had defeated the regular forces of the First Filipino Republic in 1902 and then brutally suppressed its remaining guerillas in 1907 causing an estimated 250,000 to 1,000,000 Filipino deaths (Schirmer 19, Agoncillo 228-263, Pomeroy 47-50). Part One of Bulosan’s book, then, constitutes an unique Asian American literary witness to American colonialism in Asia, a subject too frequently ignored in the mainstream American conscience. Accordingly, a leading Bulosan scholar, Professor Epifanio San Juan, Jr., has chided us: “Most readers of *America* have ignored, by virtue of dogmatism or inertia, . . . the whole of part one” (*Philippine* 146).

Part One of *AIIH*, however, does not provide an uncomplicated view of American colonialism. For immediacy and empathy, Bulosan narrates Part One through the viewpoint of a naive first-person narrator, Allos (as Bulosan’s persona is called in the Philippines), aged 5 through 17. But complementing and counterpointing this naïve reportage is the more experienced voice of “Carlos” (as Bulosan is called after landing in the U.S. [124]) and, in addition, the more contemplative voice of “Carl” (as Bulosan begins to be called [182] when he becomes a labor union organizer and a writer—perhaps a sly nod at Karl Marx). Part One, therefore, is a triple-layered ironic reading experience. As we empathize with Allos’ naïve tale of his nuclear family’s tragic economic meltdown, the sidebar comments of Carlos/Carl reveal the part played by the ideological and repressive state apparatuses² of American colonialism, especially the apparatuses of the military, the economy, and education.

The American military apparatus makes itself felt in the very opening episode of the

book when Allos describes “how I *met* my brother [Leon] who had gone to fight a *strange* war in Europe” (4, emphasis added). The naïve narrator’s wondering epithet “strange” nudges us to think of harsher words for the horrors of World War I and of the absurdity of a Filipino with no quarrel with any German going to fight in a war a continent away. “Met” further emphasizes the War’s alienating effect: it has estranged Leon from Allos (who was born in 1913), and indeed from his family—their father, too, says: “Maybe he [Leon] is dead now. I have not heard from him” (4). The cause of this estrangement is, of course, the military apparatus of the American empire which enlisted 25,000 members of the Philippine National Guard to fight in the U.S. armed forces during World War I.³ Another of Allos’ brothers, Luciano, illustrates the destructive effect of the U.S. military even during peace time. Luciano serves three years in the colonial “Philippine Scouts, a native detachment of the U.S. Army” (10), during which time he contracts tuberculosis. Honorably discharged, he returns home “sick, tired, and disillusioned” (50), eventually dying of tuberculosis. We are not surprised, then, when Allos’ father cryptically mentions that he had fought *against* the U.S. army’s colonization of the Philippines: “When the revolution was broken in southern Luzon, I fought with them, and we were called guerrillas. Someday you will understand, . . . when you grow up . . .” (26).⁴ Bulosan is challenging us grown-up readers. We must understand. So the colonial American military apparatus has had a multi-generational negative impact on Allos’ family, one that resurfaces in the novel’s penultimate chapter when Allos’ two remaining brothers risk their lives in the U.S. navy and army in World War II.

But the apparatus of American colonialism most responsible for the tragic dissolution of Allos’ family is socio-economic in nature. Allos’ father is the unlettered scion of a family that has tilled their land for generations. When the youngest son, Allos, is born in 1913, the father has “four hectares of land, . . . sufficient to keep our family from starving” (5). Allos’s father, then, is a subsistence farmer. But the U.S. colonial government was engineering socio-economic changes supposedly to open up “new opportunities” (14). Education was touted as an important driver of this change: the “free education that the U.S. had introduced spread throughout . . . ; every family that had a son pooled its resources and sent him to school” (14). Allos’ parents decided to invest in the education of their second son, Macario, banking on his becoming a schoolteacher and supporting the family in the future with his cash earnings. In effect, they are commodifying Macario’s future skill set as a marketable product.⁵ The family thus expects to transition from a subsistence economy into a cash/market economy, a classic transition encouraged by the capitalist-based economic apparatus of American colonialism. But unforeseen circumstances steer this transition to an eventually tragic end. For instance, to access the American “free education,” Macario must attend the province’s only high school in Lingayen, fifty kilometers away (28). Thus the family must pay cash for his room, board, and clothing (14). The only possession of cash value that the family possesses is their ancestral land. Year after year of Macario’s “free education,” they must sell off their land in one “usurious arrangement” (15) after another, until it is all gone.

But Macario does graduate and obtains a well-paid teaching job, so the family’s investment initially appears successful. However, in a cruel turn of fortune, a willful young woman takes a fancy to Macario and unceremoniously moves in with the family (43). When Macario refuses to marry her, she complains to his school principal who forces him to resign and seek other employment in Mindanao, then in Manila—relentlessly pursued by the importunate woman (48). To shake her, he finally leaves for the U.S. Eventually, then, the family’s decision to transition from their traditional subsistence economy into the cash/market economy causes the tragic loss of their ancestral livelihood *and* their son. Their subsistence plot of land, their ancestral center, cannot hold. Their family falls apart. All their sons are dispersed by the winds of diaspora. By end of Part One,

Amado has left for America. And then Allos goes too.

Under the ideological state apparatus of American colonial capitalism, many other peasant (or *tao*) families crumbled, resulting in societal upheaval: Allos reports, “My uncles were already dispossessed of their lands One . . . resorted to violence and died violently, and another entered a world of crime and criminals. . . . The common man or *tao* was dehumanized by absentee landlordism” (23-24). This turn towards the dark side of anti-social behavior also afflicts Allos’ generation, for when his brother Amado migrates to America, he turns into a gangster and almost knifes Allos by mistake (123).

In contrast to the plight of the proletariat *tao*, the bourgeoisie and landed *caciques* thrived under American colonial capitalism: “the sons of the professional classes” made careers of “victimizing their own people and enriching themselves at the expense of the nation” (24). Allos encounters two of these young Filipino bourgeois. One is a beautiful rich girl accoutered with an “elegant dress . . . and silk umbrella” and chaperoned by “two . . . obedient servants” (38). She “walked like a queen” through the farmers’ market where Allos and his mother are selling their produce. When the girl notices Allos’ mother looking at her admiringly, she takes offense at her gaze and upends her bean basket, compelling Allos’ mother to “crawl . . . on her knees scooping up the beans” (38). The effect on Allos is indelible: “It was . . . my first clash with the middle classes Afterward I came to know their social attitude, their stand on the peasant problem. . . . I hated their arrogance and contempt for the peasantry” (38). (As Professor San Juan observes, “From this period dates his [Bulosan’s] distrust of the middle class” [*Carlos Bulosan* 96]). The other wealthy Filipino is Juan Cablaan whom Allos meets on the train to Manila. Juan is the son of a provincial governor and a university student who regards “books contemptuously” (90)-the antithesis of Allos who is poor and loves books passionately. Although not unkind, Juan is devoid of *noblesse oblige* and regards the struggles and difficulties of the lower classes as a spectacle for his entertainment, not a condition for him to help ameliorate. He gives Allos a pair of old shoes and advises Allos about big city do’s and don’ts to gratify his own sense of superiority over a penniless country bumpkin (90). He attends a cockfight “to see how the people live . . . [and] also . . . for a good time” (91). He derives a voyeuristic pleasure from watching prostitutes at work, is amused by a mother pandering for her daughter, and encourages Allos: “Do you want to try it?” But Allos, overcome by disgust, frustration, and anger, “ran furiously from him I wanted to cry. Suddenly I started beating [a] post with my fists” (90-91). For Allos, that young girl might have been his sister;⁶ for Juan, she is merely an object of derision and amusement. For Allos, then, Juan demonstrates the callousness of the bourgeoisie just as the elegant girl in the market embodies its malice. Each is a product of American colonialism.

The tragedy that befalls Allos’ family is Bulosan’s exemplum of the fact that “the Philippines was undergoing a radical social change . . . plunging the nation into a great economic catastrophe that tore the islands from their roots” (5). Bulosan is not exaggerating.⁷ A government survey conducted in the 1930s reported that each member of the typical farm family had “less than two centavos a day for his food and clothing . . . indeed a starving income” (quoted in Ofreneo 24). No wonder, then, that when Allos and his mother are forced to find work in Tayug (Chapter VII), he witnesses a violent and bloody revolt led by the Colorums pitting armed peasants against the colonial Philippine Constabulary, one of several similar contemporaneous revolts (Ofreneo 24). Significantly, during the revolt, Allos befriends a precocious boy rebel leader, Felix Razon (59), whom Carlos later meets again in the U.S. where they become co-workers for the labor union movement until Felix enlists in the Spanish Civil War (239). Through this activist figure of Felix

Razon, whose name implies a just cause, Bulosan suggests a commonalty between resisting colonialism in the Philippines, struggling against anti-union forces in America, and fighting fascism in Europe.

Because the Catholic Church was such an extensive Philippines landowner (dating to the land grants of the Spanish monarchs), it also contributed to the economic ruin of Allos' family. When Allos' father loses his farm, he still attempts to retain connection with the land by becoming a sharecropper on land owned by the Church under the *kasamahan* system which the American colonial administration retained from their Spanish predecessors' institution of friar land ownership (Ofreneo 6, 13). Without land of his own, Allos' father agrees verbally to clear a Church-owned plot and cultivate it indefinitely, rendering 30% of his annual crop to the Church. But after 15 months of backbreaking labor clearing the jungle and planting his first crop, Allos' father receives notice that the Church has sold the land to a Manila investor--presumably for a price enhanced by Allos' father's labor! (27). Thus does the Church exploit its sharecroppers, and Allos' father is then left completely bereft of his ancestral livelihood.

A third ideological apparatus of American colonialism highlighted in Part One is education. As U.S. President William McKinley expressed it high-mindedly in an explanation of his 1898 Proclamation of Benevolent Assimilation (<http://www.msc.edu.ph/centennial/benevolent.html>), Filipinos "were unfit for self-government, and there was nothing left for us to do but to . . . *educate* the Filipinos, and uplift and Christianize them" (quoted in Schirmer 22, emphasis added). His Military Governor, General MacArthur, more candidly considered Filipino education "an adjunct to military operations calculated to pacify the people" (quoted in Algoncillo 436) and allocated almost half of his budget to it. Hence the Department of Public Instruction remained the responsibility of the American Vice Governor until 1935.⁸

In *AIHH*, Allos only has a third-grade education (18).⁹ But his teacher-brother, Macario, brings home texts from the American colonial school curriculum to teach him reading. Particularly memorable is *Robinson Crusoe* (32), which is later mentioned repeatedly by the mature Carlos/Carl (252, 323). One didactic theme of Defoe's novel is about surviving alone in an alien environment, a theme that would resonate with Carlos as he fashions himself in metropole America. But another important theme of *Robinson Crusoe* is the imperialist one of a white man who conquers and colonizes a primitive island with his European technology/gadgetry and establishes a benevolently racist master-servant relationship with a swarthy native, Friday¹⁰--this theme, too, would have resonance for Allos' subjectivity and his future experience of racism and poverty in America as he negotiates the discriminatory "ethclass" stratifications of American society.¹¹ But "colonial racism is no different from any other racism" (Fanon 88), and Allos experiences an instance of colonial racism which foreshadows the gauntlet of racism that he will run in America. At age 13, Allos leaves his impoverished home to seek employment in the touristy resort city of Baguio (Chapter IX). Hitherto, Allos has not been self-conscious of his racial difference, for his ethnicity is the norm. But in Baguio, when he is homeless and eating out of garbage cans, Allos is one day interpellated by "an American lady tourist [who] asked me to undress before her camera" for ten centavos (67). Allos understands that in the gaze of this woman, and other like-minded Americans, he is a Friday figure; consequently, he begins to commodify his subjectivity, mimicking the object of the hegemonic whites' desires: "Whenever I saw a white person with a camera, I made myself conspicuously ugly, hoping to earn ten centavos" (67), even going so far as to practice a rudimentary blackface by making "charcoal marks on my face" (68).

As Professor San Juan has decried, Part One of *AIHH* often receives scant attention in

American academia. But a closer reading of this complicated Asian American text reveals much about the actual maleficent effects of the ostensibly benevolent policy in the Philippines, America's prime colony in Asia. Perhaps such distressing consequences of American colonialism abroad should be allowed to fade away into a comfortable collective amnesia. An attentive reading of just Part One of *AIIIH* would forbid it.

In fact, it reinforces the sense of aporia that many readers have felt as Bulosan strains to bend the arc of his narrative to the template of the conventional, self-congratulatory immigrant *bildungsroman*, i.e., the tale of a naive and penniless fresh-off-the-boat refugee disembarking in the land of opportunity and working his/her way up into being a savvy and solidly wealthy American citizen realizing the American Dream. On the contrary, as noted earlier, several readers feel that the optimistic affirmation of Bulosan's conclusion is forced and unconvincing. For, contrary to the racism, violence, and brutality that permeates *AIIIH*, Bulosan chooses to close his book with an eloquent image praising America as a warm and welcoming heart that will assimilate him forever: "I . . . discover with astonishment that the American earth was like a huge heart unfolding warmly to receive me. I felt it spreading through my being, warming me with its glowing reality. . . . No one at all could destroy my faith in America . . . that had sprung from all our hopes and aspirations, ever" (326-327).

It could be argued that this affirmation surprises even Bulosan himself: he "discovers" it "with astonishment"! And ultimately, it is an affirmation that rests upon "faith" in the American Dream, not on the facts of the Filipino American experience to which he has borne witness through his narrative. Furthermore, although Bulosan may have achieved success and recognition as an American man of letters, he remained throughout his lifetime only an American "national" like his fellow Filipinos who were disqualified from becoming naturalized as citizens because they were not Caucasian enough, and by the end of Bulosan's 43-year-old life, it was found that the FBI had already accumulated a 200-page file on him (Alquizola, "Carlos" 34). Nevertheless, in spite of its aporia, Bulosan's *AIIIH* remains a valuable and canonical witness to American colonialism, and perhaps precisely because of its aporia, it is also a testimony as about how a subaltern American may speak and about what he might have been expected to say.

Notes

- ¹ For instance, Alquizola, "Introduction" xxix-xxxi, "Fictive Narrator" 211-217, and "Subversion" 199-209; San Juan *Philippine* 138-139; Lowe 45-46; Keith 20, 42-48.
- ² To adapt the terminology of Louis Althusser in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127-186.
- ³ Bulosan, "The Soldiers Came Marching," in *Laughter* 11. In this short story, the Filipino boy narrator recounts how 11 men from his village left to fight in Europe and only 3 came back suffering from shell shock (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and unable to find employment. The story is an indictment of the military's neglect of ex-servicemen and the callousness of the village's rich people. See also L.M. Grow, "The Laughter of My Father: A Survival Kit," *MELUS* 20.1 (summer 1995): 35-46.
- ⁴ In the short story "Education of My Father" (Bulosan, *Laughter* 169-178), the narrator's father was a "trumpeter in the revolution" of 1899 against the U.S. When the principal of the village

elementary school hires him, the school superintendent fires them both—perhaps symbolizing the educational system’s suppression of knowledge of Filipino resistance against American imperialism.

- ⁵ See Karl Marx, *Capital* (New York: Modern Library, 1906), 184-196; Godoy, Ricardo *et al.* “Why Do Subsistence-Level People Join the Market Economy?” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 61.2 (summer 2005): 157-178.
- ⁶ A Bulosan short story “Homecoming” describes a Filipino American dying of tuberculosis after returning to his native Philippine village for solace only to find his father dead and his sister a prostitute. Such a scenario would be a plausible fear of many poor men forced to leave their womenfolk and elders unprotected while working abroad.
- ⁷ The economic distress of Allos’ father is an indicator of the American colonial administration’s failure to help those who work the land own it. For instance, after Governor Taft and Pope Leo XIII had agreed on the sale of 161,000 hectares of the Church’s friar land, the distribution/resale of this land to its cultivators was unsuccessful. Instead, it was bought up by American and international speculators or affluent Filipinos who used it not to produce life-sustaining food crops but exportable cash crops such as sugar (dominated by Chinese mestizo “sugar barons”) and hemp/*abaca* (dominated by Japanese and American absentee landlords)—the Philippines, in fact, gained a world monopoly on *abaca* (Ofreneo 26). Meanwhile the U.S. Congress’s Payne-Aldrich Act (1909) instituting “free trade” (i.e., no tax) for U.S. manufactured goods and Filipino raw products enabled U.S. merchants to buy cheaply and sell expensively, “blatantly an imperialistic arrangement” (Thomas Birnberg and S. Resnick, *Colonial Development: An Econometric Study* [New Haven: Yale UP, 1975], 31).
- ⁸ Two excellent articles examining the element of education in Bulosan’s work are Meg Wesling’s “Colonial Education and the Politics of Knowledge in Carlos Bulosan’s *America Is in the Heart*,” *MELUS* 32.2 (summer 2007): 55-77; and Angela Noelle Williams’ “Border Crossings: Filipino American Literature in the United States,” *Beyond the Borders: American Literature and Post-Colonial Theory*, ed. Deborah L. Madsen (London: Pluto Press, 2003), 122-134. A book-length treatment of the topic is available in Meg Wesling’s *Empire’s Proxy* (New York: New York UP, 2011).
- ⁹ It is generally agreed that Bulosan actually had up to three years of *high school* in the Philippines, despite what his writings may suggest. His brother Aurelio (Macario in *AHH*) confirms this in Christopher Chow’s “A Brother Reflects: An Interview With Aurelio Bulosan,” *Amerasia Journal* 6.1 (May 1979): 155-166.
- ¹⁰ Cp. Michel Tournier’s novel *Vendredi, ou les limbes du Pacifique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972) which re-inscribes the Crusoe-Friday dynamic, and Friday (Vendredi) becomes the title protagonist. Also, James Kim uses Crusoe’s dog as the starting point of an insightful essay on pets and colonialism in Bulosan (and Jade Snow Wong) in “Petting Asian America,” *MELUS* 36.1 (spring 2011): 135-155.
- ¹¹ To borrow the term of sociologist Milton Gordon whose *Assimilation in American Life* (New York: Oxford U P, 1964) describes America as being stratified along lines both of economic class and ethnicity/race.

Works Cited

Agoncillo, Teodoro A. and Milagros C. Guerrero. *History of the Filipino People*. Malaya Books, 1970.

- Alquizola, Marilyn. "The Fictive Narrator of *America Is in the Heart*." *Frontiers of Asian American Studies: Writing, Research, and Commentary*, ed. by Gail M. Nomura et al., Washington State UP, 1989, pp 211-217.
- "Subversion or Affirmation: The Text and Subtext of *America Is in the Heart*." *Asian Americans: Comparative and Global Perspectives*, ed. by Shirley Hune, Amy Ling, et al. Washington State UP, 1991. 199-209.
- and Lane Ryo Hirabayashi. "Carlos Bulosan's Final Defiant Acts: Achievements During the McCarthy Era." *Amerasia Journal*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2012, pp 29-50.
- Introduction. *America Is In the Heart*, by C. Bulosan, U of Washington P, 2014, pp xxvi-xxxviii.
- Blauner, Robert. *Racial Oppression in America*, Harper Row, 1972.
- Bulosan, Carlos. *America Is In the Heart: A Personal History*, U of Washington P, 1973.
- *The Laughter of My Father*, Harcourt, Brace, 1944.
- *On Becoming Filipino: Selected Writings of Carlos Bulosan*, ed. with Introduction by E. San Juan, Jr., Temple UP, 1995.
- Espiritu, Augusto Fauni. *Five Faces of Exile: The Nation and Filipino American Intellectuals*, Stanford UP, 2005.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Markmann, Grove, 1967.
- Keith, Joseph. *Unbecoming Americans: Writing Race and Nation from the Shadows of Citizenship, 1945-1960*, Rutgers UP, 2013.
- Kim, Elaine H. *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context*, Temple UP, 1982.
- Libretti, Tim. "America Is in the Heart, by Carlos Bulosan." *A Resource Guide to Asian American Literature*, edited by Sau-ling Wong and Stephen H. Sumida, MLA, 2001, pp 21-31.
- "First and Third Worlds in U.S. Literature: Rethinking Carlos Bulosan." *MELUS*, vol. 23, no. 4, 1998, pp 135-155.
- Lowe, Lisa. *Immigrant Acts*, Duke UP, 1996.
- Morante, P.C. *Remembering Carlos Bulosan (His Heart Affair With America)*, New Day Publisher, 1984.
- Ofreneo, Rene E. *Capitalism in Philippine Agriculture*, Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1980.
- San Juan, Jr., Epifanio. *Carlos Bulosan and the Imagination of the Class Struggle*, U of the Philippines P, 1972.
- *The Philippine Temptation: Dialectics of Philippines-U.S. Literary Relations*, Temple UP, 1996.
- Schirmer, Daniel B. and Stephen Shalom, eds. *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Neocolonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance*. South End, 1987.

Acknowledgment

The article is an abbreviated version of my paper presented at the 25th Annual International Forum of the Asian American Literature Association (of Japan), on 27-28 September 2014 in Kyoto, Japan. Many of the ideas in this paper emerged from my interaction with the M. Phil. (English) students of my seminar at Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, in 2012-13 when I was a Fulbright lecturer in Nepal. That this topic might become a paper of interest to Japanese scholars was suggested by Professor Sachi Nakachi of Tsuru University, Japan, when she visited Kathmandu to give a public lecture at Padmakanya Multiple Campus on 4 November 2012. I am deeply indebted to my M. Phil. students, Professor Nakachi, and USEF--Nepal.