Imagining Manila: Literature, Empire and Orientalism

by
Tom Sykes
Synopsis

The city of Manila is uniquely significant to Philippine, Southeast Asian and world history. It played a key role in the rise of Western colonial mercantilism in Asia, the extinction of the Spanish Empire and the ascendancy of the USA to global imperial hegemony, amongst other events. This book examines British and American writing on the city, situating these representations within scholarship on empire, orientalism and US, Asian and European political history. Through analysis of novels, memoirs, travelogues and journalism written about Manila by Westerners since the early eighteenth century, Tom Sykes builds a picture of Western attitudes towards the city and the wider Philippines, and the mechanics by which these came to dominate the discourse. This study uncovers to what extent Western literary tropes and representational models have informed understandings of the Philippines, in the West and elsewhere, and the types of counter-narrative which have emerged in the Philippines in response to them.

Sort review

“Tom Sykes demonstrates how Manila functions as the metonym for the Philippine meta-archipelago, often with breath-taking reductiveness and strikingly telling material effects. Imagining Manila has much to teach us on the matter of representations, and why representations matter.” —Oscar V. Campomanes, Ateneo de Manila University“Sykes provides a powerful antidote to the orientalist worlding of Manila in Anglo-American literature. Rigorous, engaged and insightful, his postcolonial critique of 'Manilaism' exposes the poverty and hypocrisy of this discursive paradigm and presents cogent analyses of anti-Manilaist writing, thereby offering a radically different imagining of Manila.” —Roderick G Galam, Oxford Brookes University, UK--This text refers to the hardcover edition.

About the Author

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Imagining Manila
For my father Simon Sykes, a man with many gifts. I'm proud to have inherited at least some of them.

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Introduction

Manilaism as an Orientalism

I lived in Manila in 2009–10 and have been travelling back there frequently ever since. Over this time, I have grown weary of reading and hearing the countless stereotypes, half-truths, myths and misperceptions that Westerners have about the city in particular and the Philippines in general. If I'd been given a proverbial pound for every time a British person has asked me if I go to the Philippines because I am a sex tourist, I could have retired in luxury by now. The ubiquity of child prostitution is brought up almost as often. In 2015, when my then-partner, a Filipina, accompanied me to view some properties for sale in my hometown of Portsmouth, the white British female estate agent asked if we had met online. Perhaps realizing that she might have implied that I had paid a fee for my girlfriend via some sordid ‘Asian brides’ website, the estate agent hurriedly qualified her question with the claim that most romances begin on the internet these days anyway. She then offered what I am sure she, albeit in her cack-handed way, intended to be a compliment but that was nonetheless grounded in problematic assumptions about the sexual willingness and availability of Asian women: ‘They’re all beautiful over there,’ she said to my girlfriend, and then, looking at me, added, ‘aren’t they?’

During a spell in a British hospital a few years earlier, I met two white middle-aged male patients who had holidayed in and around Manila. Both condemned the grinding poverty of the city while commending the zero-tolerance approach to crime and the effectiveness of strongman leaders within the police, the judiciary and politics. They felt that overly liberal, namby-pamby Britain could do with a dose of the same. One of the men remarked on the extraordinary optimism of Filipinos, especially in the teeth of adversity, violence and exploitation. The other man had, perhaps inevitably, dated a Filipina during his trip which had stoked mixed feelings in him. ‘These girls are naturally caring,’ he said, raising his eyebrows at one of the numerous Filipina migrant nurses as she rushed past our beds. ‘Trouble is,’ he went on, ‘they’re all a bit simple, a bit superstitious’. He then tried to corroborate his homogenizing allegation about all 50 million Filipinas with an anecdote about just one of them: his date had accused him of ‘treading on her grave’ when he had stepped over her while she was sitting on the floor of their hotel room watching TV.

From these and other encounters with Westerners and from popular Western books, films and TV programmes, I started to form a mental image of Manila that was irreconcilable with my lived experience of the city as a foreigner who had formed close friendships there; made professional connections with some of its universities, NGOs and media outlets; interviewed a wide range of Manileños for both journalistic and academic assignments; and undertaken archival research in its libraries and museums. The Manila constructed by the estate agent, the hospital patients, po-faced documentaries and sensationalist novels was a miserable landscape of crime, corruption, deprivation, sleaze, authoritarianism and backward beliefs. Although of course not without its social, political and economic problems, the Manila I knew was considerably more nuanced than that. (I will delve
I then started to wonder exactly why my appraisal of the city so diverged from the perspectives above. Was it merely because my engagement with Manila had been more focused and sustained than other Westerners? But then how to account for the peculiar notions of those, like the estate agent, who had never been to Manila and were never likely to? How had their guesses and generalizations been informed by cultural, political and ideological factors? I wondered how old were these boilerplates of people – highly sexualized women, tyrannical kingpins, simpering paupers – and places – slums, crime scenes, red light districts. Given that the Philippines was a Spanish colony from the late sixteenth to the late nineteenth centuries, then was indirectly ruled by the United States and, since 1946, has been economically and politically subordinate to the United States and, increasingly, regional powers including China and Japan, I assumed that these tropes were epiphenomena of certain pre-eminent Global Northern attitudes towards the Global South. But what were the exact mechanics of that process? How have these tropes then fed back into the popular consciousness in both the West and in the Philippines? In which ways has this time- and culture-specific episteme accorded with – and deviated from – other, what we might call 'Orientalist' discourses, that have tried to explicate peripheral spaces elsewhere?

This book attempts to answer these sorts of questions albeit within the confines of literary history. I focus on literature for several reasons. While over the years, films, television programmes, advertisements, public relations brochures, political speeches, online content and other media have helped to manufacture external perceptions of Manila and the Philippines, there have not been enough of them over a lengthy enough period to constitute a coherent discourse as such. However, my research over the last decade has revealed that Westerners have been writing novels, travelogues, memoirs and works of literary journalism set in Manila since the early eighteenth century, and that common concepts, sentiments and symbolic devices can be traced through them up to the present day.* * *

The objective space of a house – its corners, corridors, cellar, rooms – is far less important than what poetically it is endowed with, which is usually a quality with an imaginative or figurative value we can name and feel; thus a house may be haunted or homelike, or prisonlike or magical. So space acquires emotional and even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant or anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us here.1 In his pioneering study Orientalism (1978), Edward Said uses the above analogy to illustrate his notion of an 'imaginative geography' of 'a geographical, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic unit called the Orient'2 that, since the fourteenth century, has been 'made by the mind[s]' of European writers and scholars labouring under the hypothesis that 'both their [the Orientals'] territory and their mentality are [. . .] different from "ours"'.3 Furthermore, Said argues that Orientalist representations of the Orient are defined by 'typical encapsulations: the journey, the history, the fable, the stereotype, the polemical confrontation',4 and that, by the
1800s, the Orientalist project came to be ‘tinged and impressed with’ the project of European empire-building in Asia and Africa: ‘an Englishman in India or Egypt in the later nineteenth century took an interest in those countries that was never far from their status in his mind as British colonies.’5 While in Orientalism Said’s critical purview encompasses mainly French and British discursive constructions of North Africa and the Middle East, in the almost forty years since the book was first published, other scholars have adapted its theoretical framework to cross-examine imaginative geographies relating to the Indian Subcontinent, Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and Latin America. In the same spirit, this book applies some of the techniques of Orientalist discourse analysis to a lineage of signifying practices related to Manila, a part of the world largely overlooked by critics working in Said’s slipstream.6 In a conscious allusion to Orientalism, I have coined the term ‘Manilaism’ to describe a trajectory of Anglo-American writing on Manila from roughly the early eighteenth century to the present day, which imagines the city as a textual space founded on a number of (neo-)imperialist, (neo-)colonialist and ethnocentric assumptions. Over the course of Manilaism so far, these assumptions have compelled writers to pass generally negative value judgements on a host of issues affecting Manila such as class, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, business, labour, human development and governmental policy. As with other Orientalisms, such judgements are a concomitant of, as Robert J.C. Young terms it, ‘the project and practice of colonial modernity [. . .] constituting and generated by a specific historical discourse of knowledge articulated with the operation of political power’.7 While this book is indebted to Said’s methodology, it is also mindful of the tension between Said’s ‘social constructivism and his epistemological realism’ which causes him to oscillate between post-structuralist claims about the inherent instability of all linguistic apprehensions of reality and a more materialist approach that evaluates the truth status of propositions about the Orient.8 I am therefore more aligned with the materialist dimension of Said’s thought because I practise what the postcolonial critic Benita Parry calls ‘intertextual confirmation’9 – wherein the validity of a data source is established by comparing it to other relevant sources – in order to test the credibility of Manilaist adumbrations against Western and Filipino texts that, in the Argentine historian Walter D. Mignolo’s formulation, can be termed ‘decolonial’ because they defy Manilaism’s reactionary and supremacist sentiments.10 Furthermore, in Parry’s view, Said and those other trailblazers of postcolonial theory, Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, advance ‘an essentially textualist account of culture’11 that foregrounds the ‘discursive violence’ of signifying practices to the detriment of interrogating the repressive, real-life colonial apparatuses that produce such discursive violence.12 Thus, informed by the ‘philological’ discipline of literary criticism in which ‘the historical context of a literary work [. . .] is integral to a proper understanding of it’13 and Jennifer M. McMahon’s suggestion that postcolonial analyses of ‘culture and language’ should be ‘grounded by historically contextualizing these phenomena and always keeping in mind both the physical and cultural violence of [. . .] colonization’,14 I have tried to reconcile these textualist and materialist modes by closely reading the tropes and techniques of Manilaist texts while positing their
affiliations with the wider social, political and economic conditions of their originating periods. This could be a boundless, endless exercise, of course; indeed, an entire monograph could be written about, say, the confluence of material-historical forces undergirding just one American author's slur against the Chinese Filipinos in 1929. Therefore, while this study cannot pursue in full every line of enquiry sparked by the subject matter, I hope it can convey to the reader some sense of the complex interplay between the world and its literary epiphenomena as it relates to Manila.

If someone were able to time travel from mid-nineteenth-century Manila to the modern-day city, she would of course see that much had changed. She would also notice that other aspects had not changed enough. Then as now, Manila is assuredly located in the Global South, its rates of poverty, unemployment, overcrowding, pollution and disease far higher than in most of Europe and North America. Furthermore, our time traveller might gather that, while Manila is no longer the nexus of an official colony of a Western empire, it suffers in myriad ways from an unjust globalized capitalist system that some commentators deem 'neocolonial' because the wealthier, mostly Western nations reap immense profits from the exploitation of Global Southern markets, resources and labour. If our temponaut was also au fait with Western books about Manila from her own century, she would recognize that some of these texts' preoccupations had survived into the next millennium, if not quite in their original guises. The nineteenth-century othering of Manila's human populations and geographical features as qualitatively inferior to their counterparts in the West was rooted in, to use Martin Green's phrase, an imperial 'ideology in which freedom and morality were the main values; freedom and morality in religion meaning Protestantism; in commerce meaning capitalist enterprise; in politics meaning a gentry republic or constitutional monarchy'.

This ideology fed into the construction of peripheral spaces like Manila as sites where 'anything goes, morally and politically [. . .] once you're far from the core countries geographically'. After the Philippines' relationship with the United States altered in the 1940s from one of formal colonial subjugation to one of financial, military and political dependency, the earlier attitudes mutated according to the twists and turns of real history, and they continue to shape representations of Manila up to the present day.

My methodology for tracking the evolution of these imaginative geographies draws partly upon Jonathan Crush's literary-historical analysis of the South African city of Johannesburg. In its early days (the 1880s and 1890s), Johannesburg was portrayed in European life writing as a utopian metropolis of industrial progress. However, as 'Euroimperial' influence declined after 1930 (the Union of South Africa gained independence from Britain in 1931), the city was limned as a dystopian site of ethnic discord and economic catastrophe. Correspondingly, I have found that Western visitors to Manila in the US colonial period (1898–1941), such as the American literary journalist George A. Miller, praise the city's modernity, rational planning and spry development ('it has joined the ranks of the world's big business centres', he writes), while, later on, travelogues by DeLoris Stevenson, P.J. O'Rourke and others construct Manila less charitably after the Philippines has gained independence from the United States in 1946.

I have used several criteria to designate and delimit Manilaist texts. I chose to consider material that reflects on Manila rather than on
Other regions of the Philippines because, as the British author James Hamilton-Paterson argues, 'Manila remains the nipple from which the world takes most of its information about the Philippines'. Hamilton-Paterson wrote that in 1987, but even a cursory glance of the foreign sections of contemporary newspapers, magazines and websites shows that it is just as true today. Moreover, the vast majority of Anglo-American writing on the Philippines has engaged to some degree or other with the capital city, and much of it exclusively so. These authors' fixation on the city is attributable to its significance to Philippine, Southeast Asian and world history. Manila was, in many respects, the site in which certain key turning points occurred in the history of Western imperialism, among them the rise of colonial mercantilism in Asia (in 1697, the English seaman William Dampier thought Manila a 'place of great strength and trade') and the extinction of the Spanish Empire that precipitated the ascendancy of the United States to global imperial hegemony. Manila was also a strategic desideratum for both sides in the Pacific theatre of the Second World War and underwent such intense fighting that, by February 1945, 'an American investigation team thought Manila was the second most devastated city after Warsaw'. Come the Cold War, when the Philippines shifted from being a US overseas possession to a subject of what Pankaj Mishra dubs America's 'informal empire [. . .] shown up by military bases, economic pressures and military coups', Manila became the epitome of a Global Southern urban sprawl in the clutches of 'dollar-imperialism', both as a font of human and natural resources and as a market for US-manufactured commodities. From the late twentieth century up to the present day, Manila has been something of a bellwether for what Niall Ferguson has determined as 'the descent of the West' and the 'reorientation of the world' towards Asia; the city's economic ties to the United States and Europe have loosened – though not vanished – as the Philippines has established commercial relationships with Japan, South Korea and, most recently, China and Russia. That said, as we will see later in this book, there is a risk of overstating Manila's 'pivot' to these other nations, for, despite the current President Duterte's populist anti-American bluster, the Philippines remains economically intimate with the United States and American troops are deployed in counter-insurgency operations against Islamist and Maoist rebels in what Mesrob Vartavarian characterizes as a continuation of 'American dominance in the Philippines': Through close involvement with Philippine security forces, American policy makers have maintained high levels of influence in an ostensibly independent country. When electoral inclinations veer the country in directions deemed unacceptable by national elites and American overseers, imperial directives and personnel are deployed through capillary connections to correct deviations. This study uses a spatial definition of Manila that is sensitive to the transformations the city's built environments and land area boundaries have undergone over the centuries. In 1823, just before the first Manilaists were writing, the city of Manila had 38,000 denizens and consisted of 16 districts covering 16.56 square miles of territory on the eastern bank of Manila Bay.
Metro Manila which was to incorporate 239.22 square miles and almost 6 million residents by 1980. For this study I have chosen texts that engage with Manila as it would have been officially delineated at the respective historical moments from which these texts emerged. Be that as it may, I have occasionally afforded myself the liberty of ‘zooming out’ of the textual-geographical borders of Manila in order to consider propositions more generally made about the Philippines and Southeast Asia, but only when such propositions contribute to a comprehension of political and aesthetic questions relevant to the Manilaist symbolic order. At the same time, I have left out a fair sum of Western fiction and life writing that, while taking the Philippines as its subject, has nothing to do with neither Manila nor the discursive coordinates of Manilaism. If some texts are omitted from the Manilaist frame due to their geographical scope, so others must be by reason of their authors’ nationalities and attendant political allegiances. Although I discuss the specific lineaments of Anglo-American Manilaism at length later, at this point it may be useful to summarize what distinguishes these writers from their Spanish, Russian and German counterparts. Whereas British and American men of letters – and most are men – routinely offered uncompromising opinions on topics such as ethnicity, culture, class, religion, labour, enterprise, human development and governmental protocols, a plethora of Spanish epistles, news articles, histories and journal entries from the late sixteenth to late nineteenth centuries provided relatively constative descriptions of military or missionary expeditions to outlying provinces and of the administrative niceties of the colonial church and state. By contrast, Anglo-American Manilaist writing – at least from the 1840s until 1898 – is full of opprobrium towards Spanish rule and the archaic, under-developed society it has produced. This, as I argue in great depth later, is a corollary of British and American imperial ambitions in the Philippines that were to culminate in the amphibious invasion of Manila by the United States in May 1898. Be that as it may, some early Spanish observers promulgate hetero-stereotypes about Malay Filipinos and Chinese Filipinos that later Anglo-American writers will repurpose for their own ideological ends. Writing in 1570, Miguel López de Legazpi, the founder of Spanish Manila and the first governor of the Philippines, conceives of the indigenes as unacceptably blithe about the crucial task of gold-mining: ‘Thus does their idleness surpass their covetousness’. Legazpi’s bigotry is typical of European thought of the early modern period, which gave rise, according to Robin Blackburn, to racism as an international apparatus of domination legitimated materially by the Atlantic slave trade (of which Spain was a pioneer) and ideologically by new exclusionary conceptions of European modernity, identity and political economy. Legazpi’s outrage at the natives’ reluctance to fulfil their natural roles as menial labourers is explained in economic terms by the Filipino historian Renato Constantino. Since mineral wealth extraction, he notes, was of little monetary value to the subsistence agricultural societies of Luzon island of the time, indifference to gold-mining had less to do with idleness than with ‘the absence of an exploitative class as such’. There was a religious as well as a pecuniary logic behind this contempt towards the natives due to ‘the imperative of gaining converts to the Catholic faith’ that fostered a ‘keeping the Filipinos in line’ mood within the Spanish establishment, argues Luis H.
Francia. Three centuries after Legazpi, the Spanish literary journalist Pablo Feced Temprano, who owned a farm in the Casmarines Sur province and was a regular visitor to Manila in the 1880s, slandered members of the Tagalog ethnic group as both ‘indolent’ and so paganistic that it would be difficult to ‘elevate [. . .] to the height of the most cultured and civilised people’. Moreover, Richard Chu has written extensively about derogatory Spanish constructions of Chinese Filipinos, elements of which influenced Anglo-American Manilaist Sinophobia. Chapter 5 grapples with this topic in-depth.

At any rate, testimonies such as Legazpi’s and Temprano’s are rare. If, as John Newsome Crossley notes, there is a ‘blind spot’ in Spanish colonial historiography then there is an equivalent paucity of primary narrative sources from the Spanish era. The central reason for this, according to historian Paul A. Kramer, is the Spanish Empire’s ‘stunning metropolitan ignorance of the archipelago’ and its accompanying qualms about extracting cultural artefacts and natural specimens for placement in Spanish museums. This disposition was markedly contrary to the thirst for knowledge-as-power that galvanized American botanists, sociologists, anthropologists and ‘race scientists’ to research the Philippines after the genocidal takeover of the islands by the United States in 1898–1902. Whereas American intellectual curiosity produced copious popular books on the territory, Spanish apathy produced notably few.

In addition, my demarcation of Manilaism has a temporal dimension. For instance, the travelogue A New Voyage Round the World (1697) by the English explorer William Dampier and A New Voyage Round the World by a Course Never Sailed Before, Daniel Defoe’s 1725 roman à thèse, should be considered ‘pre-Manilaist’ for two reasons. First, they are temperamentally more akin to the generally dispassionate outlook of the early Spanish texts mentioned earlier. Second, they typically avoid the stereotypes and evaluative criticisms of Manilaism proper. Dampier’s comment that the ‘Spaniards have no place of much strength in all these islands’ is a purely descriptive statement and there is no evidence elsewhere in his account that he believes this tenuous state of affairs to present England’s empire with an opportunity to oust the Spanish and take the Philippines for itself. Although Jane H. Jack asserts that Defoe’s novel is ‘designed to enlist the sympathy of its readers for a serious scheme of colonization’, there is no proof of this intention in the sequences set in Manila. The visiting English sailors and merchants who are the protagonists of the narrative hold no opinions good or bad about Manila, do not articulate any desire to appropriate the city and enjoy good relations with the Spanish governor, despite the narrator mildly chiding the ‘supercilious punctilio’ that prevents trade with the colony on land but permits it to take place on board foreign ships. Akin to this, though in a subtextual fashion, A New Voyage Round the World provides some discursive blueprints for how subsequent Manilaists would imagine Chinese Filipinos. This is one of the concerns of Chapter 5.

The Manilaist tone alters considerably in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the UK was the Philippines’ top trading partner and the United States was massively increasing its imports of cash crops from the recently liberalized colonial economy. One upshot of this new economic landscape was a growing curiosity about the Philippines among Anglo-American readers that
exceeded that of their counterparts in Germany, France, Russia and other nations with weaker 
links to the archipelago. The Scottish businessman Robert MacMicking appears to be aware of 
this when, in his 1851 travel memoir Recollections of Manilla and the Philippines during 1848,
1849 and 1850, he writes, ‘I have attempted to give some idea of the actual state and prospects 
of this valuable colony [. . .] with the [. . .] object of directing more attention to these islands than 
hitherto paid to them by our merchants and manufacturers.’44 Considerably more 
material on Manila was published in the United States and United Kingdom than anywhere else 
outside of the Philippines; of fourteen Manila-oriented memoirs, novels and travelogues 
released between 1859 and 1900 now located in the University of Santo T omas archives, only 
one originated outside of America or Britain. The Filipinas Heritage Library of the Ayala Museum 
in Manila holds fifty-eight books written by foreigners dating from 1850 to 1900, and that 
reference Manila to a greater or lesser extent, only three of which were of non-Anglo-American 
provenance. Those few eighteenth- and nineteenth-century chronicles of Manila published 
outside the United States and United Kingdom are typically more sanguine about encounters 
with people and places. In 1852–5, the Russian novelist and civil servant Ivan Goncharov 
travelled the world in his capacity as a naval secretary, recording his sojourn in The Voyage of 
the Frigate Pallada. As he is sailing into Manila Bay in February 1854, Goncharov is seized by ‘a 
pleasant feeling of curiosity’45 about the distant church bells he can hear and, later on, is 
glowing about the ecclesiastical architecture of the fortified Spanish quarter of Intramuros.46 
These impressions deviate considerably from the habitual vilification of the Roman Catholic 
Church by his British and American contemporaries, as will be detailed in Chapter 1. Although 
Goncharov concurs with the Anglo-American Manilaist assumption that Spanish power is 
waning inexorably, he does not, as per the Britons and the Americans, regard Manila as a failed 
city in a failed state that might be redeemed by another imperial power:

‘On my way to Manila I thought, truth to tell, that the spirit of a fallen, impoverished power would blow on me that I 
should see desolation and a lack of strictness and order – in a word, the poetry of disintegration.47 Unlike 
British and American visitors in the same era, Goncharov refrains from commercially assaying 
the city and his elaborate renderings of its ‘beautiful’ (a recurring adjective throughout his text) 
outskirts appear to be driven by an artist’s yearning for ‘magnificence and [. . .] poetry’48 rather 
than an imperialist knowledge-gatherer’s exaltation of, to use Barbara Korte’s phrase, 
‘landscape aesthetics’ as an ulterior rationale for land-grabbing.49 Furthermore, Goncharov is 
notably nuanced about questions of race and ethnicity, and, in a gesture that is commendably 
ahead of its time, is inclined to deconstruct the stereotypes that Anglo-American Manilaism 
deals in almost automatically: ‘“Why indeed,” I thought, “should a Chinese not have fair hair and 
a red nose just like a European?”’50 Rather than inciting scorn or anxiety, such cultural and 
demographic ‘incongruities [. . .] very much aroused my curiosity’.51 Moreover, a note of 
compassionate pathos rings out in Goncharov’s observations of dehumanized indio natives:

‘they looked exactly like some sort of victuals put out for show between sides of mutton and
gammons of ham.'52 His more balanced dissections of the church, the colonial establishment and Manila's social mélange could have been motivated by several dynamics. He was a radical political liberal and a supporter of the Russian Decembrist movement which stood for republicanism, social equality and the replacement of feudalism with public ownership of land.53 In addition, his own nation – of which he was a loyal servant – had no interventionist designs on the Philippines and therefore no vested interest in the outcome of the rivalries hatching in the power vacuum opening up as Spanish authority was crumbling. Indeed, according to Martin Green, 'Not until the second half of the nineteenth century did they [the Russians] become English-style merchants, entrepreneurs, and engage in capitalist expansion.'54 Besides that, Green continues, Russia's limited 'continental imperialism' in Eastern Europe and Central Asia 'was not reflected in the imaginative literature in any way' because 'the conscience' of radical writers like Goncharov, Pushkin and later Tolstoy and Herzen 'was against it'.55 While the German ethnologist and explorer Fedor Jagor's Travels in the Philippines (1875) is less forgiving than Goncharov of the 'uneducated, improvident, and extravagant Spaniards,'56 it is closer to Goncharov's sensibilities when it eulogizes the 'wonderfully gentle' Spanish laws.57 Furthermore, that 'it would be difficult to find a colony in which the natives, taken in all, feel more comfortable than in the Philippines' is down, Jagor writes, to the 'uncivilised inhabitants' having 'quickly adopted the rights, forms and ceremonies' of Catholicism.58 Like Goncharov, Jagor's respect – though qualified – for Spanish governance and his resistance to appraising Manila as a potential conquest is partly determined by the fact that his mother empire had only a slight presence in Asia in the 1870s and would not express a strategic interest in the Philippines until the Spanish–American War two decades later.59 If Manilaist texts can be so-designated according to their British and American provenance, they also share certain formal affinities with one another. Whereas in Orientalism Said engages with what he admits is a 'broadly construed "field" of theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts',60 my emphasis is somewhat narrower: on popular literary genres – mostly memoirs, travelogues and novels – that have been the Anglo-American public's main source of information about Manila. The novels in particular have, according to Morton J. Netzorg, 'appealed to a mass audience' and had 'some chance of shaping American public ideas or impressions about the Philippines'.61 As well as prose fiction, Western colonialist travelogues have, so argues Debbie Lisle, a special capacity for 'disseminating the goals of empire' because 'stories of "faraway lands" were crucial in establishing the unequal, unjust and exploitative relations of colonial rule'.62 As Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan contend, such travel narratives textually produce the non-European world according to Western fixations. The examples Holland and Huggan give include the Congo having been for Joseph Conrad 'a mirror to the dark side of the soul'63 and plucky Western adventurers regarding the Ebook Tops as a 'happy hunting ground'.64 Nineteenth-century autobiographical travel writing (which constitutes the majority of early- to mid-Manilaist texts) was particularly effective in this enterprise because it reached a capacious audience and, as Said observes of analogous texts on the Near East,
contributed to the density of public awareness of the Orient'.65 I have excluded a number of reference books, scientific studies and other specialist works from the Manilaist trajectory because they do not belong to the popular genres mentioned earlier. The functions and intentions of Manilaist novels, memoirs and travelogues vary immensely. The American Associated Press correspondent Walter Robb's *The Khaki Cabinet and Old Manila* (1926) uses the format of a travel chronicle to chastise – albeit from a liberal reformist rather than anti-colonial standpoint – the American political class's questionable assertion that the Philippines is not directly run by the United States (see Chapter 5 for further elaboration of this point)67 while Edward Stratemeyer, author of the boy's own adventure novel *The Campaign of the Jungle, or Under Lawton through Luzon* (1900), declares that he hopes his fictional portrait of the Philippine–American War will have a 'general usefulness [. . .] from a historical standpoint'.68 Other texts, such as *United States Colonies and Dependencies Illustrated* (1914) by William D. Boyce, are self-professed taxonomies of architecture, urban districts, ethnic groups and civic structures, if heavily infused with personal anecdote. (In the specific case of Boyce, this formal eclecticism may be explained by his career transition from 'the original yellow journalist', who established the Saturday Blade newspaper in 1887 to disseminate gossip, scandal and true crime stories, to his later more 'laudable journalistic enterprises' as a didactic Orientalist travel writer dedicated to informing foreigners about 'how the other half live', as a contemporary critic put it.)69 More heterogeneous still, Robert MacMicking's *Recollections of Manilla and the Philippines during 1848, 1849 and 1850* is something of a patchwork of narratives about notable people and places; polemical screeds on geopolitics and economics; and catalogues of information on media, etiquette, transport, food, drink and accommodation. Whichever ways these books differ superficially in terms of style, structure or aims, they share enough of the same social, political and cultural postulations to together constitute an imaginative geography of Manila in the sense that Said means in his Orientalism thesis. For him, it matters less that Lord Byron wrote poetry, Karl Marx treatises on political economy or Edward William Lane lexicographical guides, and more that these authors viewed the Orient through the prism of – to some extent or another – Western superiority. The same is true of the Manilaist sub-species of Orientalism. While this book is not a literary history structured in strict chronological order, its earlier chapters tend to engage with Manilaist tropes that originated at the beginning of Manilaism or on historical phases or events of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (e.g. Spanish religious rule and the Philippine–American War). Later chapters on the Chinese Filipino community and the Duterte presidency focus more on recent or current affairs. My aim is that the reader will have a good grasp of the full timeline of Manilaism by the penultimate section of this book, which outlines some of the ways creative writers have critiqued or rejected the discourse over many years. If Chapters 1 to 7 try to map out Manilaism's past and present, the somewhat polemical conclusion offers some thoughts about its future, especially with regard to how it may intersect with other Orientalisms in our new age of global political, economic, social and environmental crisis. Chapter 1 concerns what I dub 'Manila-as-Hell', which is perhaps the most
memorable, dramatic and enduring lens through which Manilaists have gazed at the city over almost 300 years. In the mid- to late-1800s, British and American imperial rivalries with Spain and other European states produced a race-based 'Anglo-Saxon' consciousness which regarded Spanish politics, culture and religion (the Roman Catholic Church was a dominant force in the Hispanic Philippines) as fundamentally inferior. These prejudices percolate into the dark, corrupt and supernaturally unsettling visions of writers including the American adventurer Charles Wilkes and the British trader and diplomat Nicholas Loney. In the first third of the twentieth century, when the United States had supplanted Spain as the colonial overlords of Manila, George A. Miller and Walter Robb draw on similar imagery to reinforce a contrast between the barbaric residues of Spanish cultural influence and American promises of moral, social and technological improvement. During and after the Second World War, Western fiction writers, memoirists and correspondents construct a war-torn 'Manila-as-hell' in which the heretical, atavistic Japanese destroyed everything precious that liberal, magnanimous American imperialism had ostensibly introduced to the city: freedom, the rule of law, political progress and Protestantism. When, after the war, the Philippines was recast as a politically unstable client state of the United States, Manilaist demonology finds fresh targets: the toxic ubiquity of superstition; cruel, Faustian hoodlums and caciques (thuggish political chiefs); and diabolical scenes of third world (as it was starting to be deemed at the time) poverty caused by Western-directed globalized inequality (although these causes are seldom recognized by Manilaists). Manila as hell at the turn of the millennium coincide with new neuroses about the Philippines' drift away from exclusively Western cultural-economic domination, then-new movements in Western literature such as postmodernism and a keenness to contain the city within primitive, pre-industrial symbolism despite other Asian nations (chief among them China and Japan) now being portrayed as excessively 'Techno-Orientalist' thanks to their perceived contestation of Western economic and scientific regnance.

Chapter 2 discusses Manilaist fiction and travel writing published in the prelude to and during the American conquest of the Philippines, arguably the foundational event in US imperialism, which bore chilling parallels with later campaigns in Vietnam and Iraq. Guided by a number of colonialist and ethnocentric suppositions, William Henry Thomes, Charles King, Edward Stratemeyer, Archibald Clavering Gunter and others mobilize rhetorical devices and narrative strategies to, first of all, subtly enjoin the overthrow of the Spanish in Manila and, later on, omit, distort or excuse the often brutal conduct of the US armed forces in the Spanish–American and Philippine–American Wars. The bulk of these texts belong to what Martin Green, in his exhaustive survey of colonial fiction, Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire (1981), defines as the Western 'adventure' novel, whose propagandistic purpose was to mythologize empire and prepare 'young men [. . .] to go out to the colonies, to rule, and their families to rejoice in their fates out there'. The political raison d'être of these myths, Green writes, was to make imperialism 'palatable' to Western readerships by 'obscuring' its flaws, excesses and injustices.

Chapter 3 begins by dissecting Manilaism's Janus-faced stereotypes of Filipinos throughout the US invasion and 'pacification' phases.
These representations oscillate in tandem with the United States' rapid revisions of its military and diplomatic strategy; the protean positionality of Filipino and Asian immigrants in Western society; and hegemonic stances towards other socio-ethnic groups in Manila. When the first Manilaists, among them Robert MacMicking and Charles Wilkes, came to the city they regarded the Filipinos they met in much the same way as the Spanish, that is unreliable, docile and ultimately benign 'lazy natives'. However, by the time of the boy's own novels of the Spanish–American War of 1898, when the United States was fighting alongside Filipino insurgents against the Spanish, the lazy natives have metamorphosed into brave, decent freedom fighters in stark contrast to the ruthless, totalitarian Spanish. After the overthrow of the Spanish, it became clear that American forces would not be leaving the Philippines and a new conflict broke out between the United States and the Filipino rebels. Some of the same adventure novelists who just a year or two before portrayed Filipinos in a positive light now condemn them as terrorists, torturers and war criminals. At this time, a moral panic gripped US media and literary schema of Americans 'going native' in Manila, risking their physical health and civilizational advantages through exposure to the savage, treacherous behaviour of disease-carrying Filipinos. Over the first half of the twentieth century, Filipinos return to their status as supine lesser beings in line with elite perceptions of the rapidly growing Filipino diaspora in the United States, itself a consequence of the extraction of migrant labour that was a lucrative 'dividend' from the colonial project in the Philippines. Such modelling of Filipinos is also contoured by pseudoscientific racist theories positing 'Homo philippi nensis', the indigenous Filipino, as being close to 'Neanderthal' man. This chapter then conveys how, after the United States had consolidated its control over Manila and the Philippines, travel writers such as William D. Boyce and Frank G. Carpenter apply the same techniques as Stratemeyer, Gunter et al. to discursively negotiate the contradictions of the new American interventionist ideology of 'benevolent assimilation', which depended somewhat uneasily on tropes of modernization, partnership, tutelage and the re-imagining of the Philippines as a submissive, feminized space willing its own exploitation and domination by a foreign aggressor. Having secured the Philippines from its own people, the Americans set about renovating Manila's roads, homes, businesses, public buildings, parks and canals in order to, as the chief architect of this enterprise Daniel Burnham wrote in a 1905 letter, 'create a unified city equal to the greatest of the Western world with the unparalleled and priceless addition of a tropical setting'. Chapter 4 examines almost a century of writers, from Mary H. Fee in the early 1910s to Timothy Mo in the late 1990s, who imagine Manila as a simulation of an American city, albeit one with imperfections. The notion that Manila, in trying to replicate the best of Western urbanity, has instead been a crude, kitsch spoof of New York or Los Angeles, has always suited Manilaist agendas borne from the Philippines' junior status in international power structures and its role as a heavy importer of US cultural commodities. Transfixed by the Americophile Marcos dictatorship, Manilaists of the 1970s and 1980s seek to legitimize their observations about Manila's 'Pepsicolonisation' by emphasizing the ways in which Manileños have internalized –
and are therefore supposedly welcoming towards – the codes of Western simulation. By the 1990s, an almost century-old model of feminine allure has been re-configured by Western memoirists and foreign correspondents who portray Manila as a salacious paradise catering to the Western male libido. As with previous simulations, this one is the logical outgrowth of the Philippines' political and economic subject position as 'hooked up' as the Filipina cultural theorist Neferti Xina M. Tadiar argues, to the US desiring machine through a system of flows of labor and capital in the guise of free exchange (export-oriented, capital and import-dependent) but functioning in the mode of dialysis, which gives one the strength and life depleted from the other. As such, the Philippines is, in other words, a hospitality industry, a hostess to 'American' desires, a hooker.80 Chapter 5 examines the historical development of a 'supranational stereotype' of Chinese people in the Manila context, which draws on various cultural and ethnic canards about Chinese communities in China, wider Asia and the West. These depictions are highly convoluted because the Chinese community in Manila has historically been demonized by Western visitors, Spanish colonialists and the Malay Filipino population for a variety of contradictory reasons. The Chinese as skinflint entrepreneur is perhaps the oldest hetero-stereotype in the Manilaist repertoire, reaching back to Daniel Defoe in 1725, and bearing common attributes with the anti-Semitic modelling of Jews in Europe. A century or more later, Charles Wilkes and William Henry Thomes conflate disquiet about Chinese migration to the United Kingdom and United States with disquiet about Chinese economic activity in Manila. While these authors revere the enterprising spirit of the Chinese, they are also anxious that the Chinese are depriving other ethnic groups of jobs and opportunities to prosper; a paradoxical formulation not unlike one that British and American newspapers of the time applied to Chinese migrant workers in London and California. A new paradox came into play towards the end of the century when an ascendant middle class of mixed race Chinese mestizos produced both the wealthy businesspeople who shored up the socio-economic status quo and the leading personalities of the Philippine independence movement that sought to overturn that status quo. Manilaism invests this ambiguity in Chinese characters who are outwardly respectable yet ultimately untrustworthy when dealing with Westerners. Although such patent Sinophobia lulled as the twentieth century wore on, geopolitical events intervened to ensure that innuendos about Chinese elitism and money-grabbing survived – though faintly – in the work of Raymond Nelson and Timothy Mo. These texts are arguably responding to the swift rise of the People's Republic of China to regional superpower status and the consequences of this new multilateral world order for the Philippines. However, come the election of President Rodrigo Duterte in 2016, the anti-Chinese sentiment re-ignited, hypocrisy a crucial part of the kindling. At the same time as overlooking or vindicating the exercise of American 'hard' and 'soft' power over the Philippines, Jonathan Miller and other liberal Manilaists exaggerate China's military and economic threat to Manila, the rest of Southeast Asia and the West. Chapter 6 looks more closely at Duterte and how he constitutes a conundrum to the tenets of modern-day Manilaism. In one sense, Duterte is the apotheosis of Manilaist templates across the ages; he is the ultimate cacique – vain,
brash, impulsive, anti-democratic and unrepentantly violent – and meets most of the criteria Alain Grosrichard proposes for 'Oriental despotism', as it was articulated by French Enlightenment intellectuals fascinated by the Middle East. However, Manilaism's application of these same criteria to Duterte leaves them open to the same criticisms as their Gallic forebears, not to say the Orientalist scholars Edward Said critiques. The journalists Jonathan Miller and Tom Smith, among others, are quick to denounce the fear, populism, political divisiveness, summary executions and administrative catastrophes of Duterte's Manila, but they are oblivious to the complicity of almost forty years of Western neoliberal policy in contributing to this predicament. Furthermore, these writers' centrist insistence on categorizing Duterte as yet another 'authoritarian populist' more or less interchangeable with Vladimir Putin, Narendra Modi et al. betrays a profound ignorance about the local peculiarities of Duterte's rise and the important differences between his odious politics and those other men's. And, predictably, once again these analyses are hampered by Orientalist double standards, from the assumption that Duterte's mass-murder of 20,000 drug addicts and pushers is qualitatively worse than the millions killed by recent Western wars of choice, to the notion that Duterte's crimes are more deserving of Western ire than, for instance, Modi's connivance in communal massacres and political assassinations.

In a 2003 retrospective of his career, Edward Said argued that writers and researchers native to the Middle East can contest the 'semi-mythical construct' of Orientalism because 'history is made by men and women, just as it can also be unmade and rewritten, so that “our” east, “our” orient becomes “ours” to possess and direct’. As for those non-natives who want to avoid the problematic simplifications of Orientalism, it is, Said states, perfectly possible to obtain ‘knowledge of other peoples’ that ‘is the result of understanding, compassion, careful study and analysis for their own sakes’. The final chapter of this book evaluates a counter-hegemonic lineage of texts, produced by both Filipinos and foreigners, that have opposed, subverted or deconstructed many Manilaist paradigms. The lyrical essayist Luis H. Francia and the travel writer Maslyn Williams exhibit a refreshing self-reflexivity that acknowledges the fallibility of their observations, research ethics and (in the case of Williams at least) status as Western professional writers reporting on a postcolonial site. This provides a welcome counterweight to Manilaism's arrogant trust in the authority and authenticity of its own gaze. Furthermore, novelists Jessica Hagedorn and Gina Apostol and polymathic author Nick Joaquin defy Manilaism's generalizing caricatures of people and places by subverting those images or writing in the 'shadow' of Filipino rather than Western authors who 'reduce' or 'excise' those aspects of Manila they find distasteful. In this chapter I also demonstrate anti-Manilaism's application of parodic idioms and shadowing techniques designed to variously interrogate and provide alternatives to the clichés of Manilaist prose. Other authors such as Tom Bamforth and Jose Y. Dalisay Jr. meditate on the deep and complex material drivers of the poverty, despair and alienation that Manilaist topographies either take for granted or fetishize, while the travel journalist Madis Ma. Guerrero conveys an alternative Manila whose coordinates of working-class hope, agency, solidarity and community are distressingly absent from the
Manilaist sign system. 'A Seething Cauldron of Evil' Hispanophobia, Manila-as-hell and third world blues Western literature has been likening cities to the Christian hell for at least 700 years. At one end of this spectrum of representations are urban spaces that are mildly redolent of hell or that have hellish features which are explicable rationally in what Tzvetan Todorov, inspired by Sigmund Freud, calls 'the Uncanny'. At the other end of the spectrum are cities that are closer imitations of hell – such as the fiery metropolis of Dis in Dante Alighieri’s fourteenth-century poem Inferno – as it has been limned in religious texts, and that therefore belong to Todorov’s category of ‘the Fantastic’, where people and places in narratives are only comprehensible in supernatural terms. Furthermore, each textual city-as-hell is shaped by cultural and material determinants specific to its historical moment of origin; for example, Joan M. Ferrante observes that Dante populated Dis with suffering heretics because that sin was ‘intimately associated with politics for Dante’s audience’. The politics of the time were notable for Pope John XXII’s clampdown on opponents who rejected Christian dogma, and the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II’s conflation of religious dissent with sedition. This chapter analyses how, since the early Victorian era, a significant current within Manilaist writing has marshalled the city-as-hell motif in its constructions of Manila. These representations share many of the characteristics Todorov mentions and, like Ferrante’s critique of Dante, can be understood with reference to their various economic, social and political contexts. Moreover, they cohere with Orientalist idées fixe about the inferiority of Eastern beliefs, mores and political-economic structures, as articulated by Edward Said and, more specifically to the thesis of this chapter, Alain Grosrichard, who asserts that French Enlightenment commentators on the Arab world conceived of a ‘despotic state’ that ‘tends to reduce itself to one vast single city, surrounded by an infinity of ruins and fallow land’. Aside from targeting the ‘savage’ Asians that are the staples of Said’s and Grosrichard’s Orientalisms, the early exponents of Manila-as-hell are strongly critical of the reputedly illiberal, impious and arcane Spanish colonial regime in Manila. The Manila-as-hell model emanated from the mid-nineteenth century when Britain, France, Germany and the United States were expanding their imperial influence over parts of Africa, Asia and the Americas while the Spanish Empire was disintegrating in a process that had begun centuries before. According to Martin Green, right from its genesis in the late fifteenth century the Spanish Empire was plagued with internal divisions and revolts. When King Charles V abdicated the Spanish and Holy Roman thrones in 1554–6, the ‘idea of [Spanish] empire was discredited’ in the eyes of England, which was at this time starting its own imperial ascent. The Reformation added a theological dimension to England’s perception of Spain as a geopolitical adversary and fuelled negative portrayals of Spanish behaviour abroad. As Green avers, ‘The cruelty of the Spaniards to their Indian subjects was a constant theme of Protestant moralists everywhere.’ The growth of Protestantism was of course synchronous with the growth of capitalism, and Protestant England was able to industrialize in the sixteenth century while the Catholic Spanish Empire could not. In the 1690s, England ‘made itself the source of financial credit’ and saw itself as a consummate ‘mercantile state, and a mercantile world power’. Thus, the nation was well-
prepared for the crucial next phase of Euro-imperialism, in which empires ‘[competed] against each other for the profits to be derived from exploiting the periphery and trading with the arena surrounding the system’. Woefully unprepared for this next phase, Spain lost its West African possessions to Portugal in 1778 and its territories in North America, including West Florida, to the United States in the 1810s and 1820s. By 1865, all of Spain’s colonies in Latin America save Cuba and Puerto Rico had gained their independence. Although Spain was still clinging on to its Philippine colony by the time the first Manilaists Charles Wilkes, Nicholas Loney and Robert MacMicking were active in the 1840s and 1850s, Spanish authority had been rocked by a series of religious-inspired native revolts and the temporary occupation of Manila by the British (1762–4). Until the late 1840s, the British took full advantage of Spain’s inability to repress the Moro Muslims in the southern Philippines by ‘encroaching’ on these ‘territories’ with their navy. Predictably perhaps, these defeats and humiliations informed a consensus among early Victorian Manilaists that Spain was grievously mismanaging Manila due to a combination of anachronistic fiscal policies, administrative incompetence and authoritarian oppressiveness. These writers caricatured peninsulares (citizens born in Spain now holding influential posts in Manila society) as brutally and corruptly holding on to undeserved power in a marginal backwater. In 1851, the British trading company Kerr & Co. (which at the time also employed Robert MacMicking’s older brother Thomas) sent its rising star Nicholas Loney to Manila to evaluate its investment potential. In his letters – collected and published in 1964, almost a century after his death – he decries the decadence, greed and inertia of the then-governor of Manila, symbolized by his ownership of an excessive ‘25 horses’. A disciple of free-market dynamism and rationalization, Loney would later run his own firm, Loney & Kerr Co., which sought to increase the efficiency of Philippine sugar production by making loans to farmers and importing state-of-the-art machinery from Europe. Loney embodied a new nexus between Western economic aspirations and political imperatives regarding the Philippines given that, simultaneous to these business activities, he served as the first British vice consul to the Philippines with special responsibility for advising foreign companies on how to penetrate local markets. With similar repugnance towards the Spanish leadership of Manila, Charles Wilkes complains of cigar-smoking officials who devote their three-year terms to enriching themselves, behaving in ways ‘so cruel as to be a disgrace to the records of the nineteenth century’. Wilkes was the commander of the United States Exploring Expedition (1838–42), a colossal operation comprising seven ships ranging from 250 to 780 tonnes in size that transported sailors, soldiers, botanists, cartographers, naturalists, a mineralogist and a philologist to dozens of destinations in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. The expedition signalled the United States' ambitions to increase its global power by gathering scientific knowledge about ‘all doubtful islands and shoals’ and by ruthlessly subjugating native populations in Fiji and elsewhere. Funded by Congress and authorized by presidents John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, this staunchly patriotic mission invested Wilkes with a sense of superiority over all the regimes that he visited, Spanish Manila included. For Orientalists of Wilkes’s stripe,
having Spaniards ruling in Asia was no less rebarbative than having Asians ruling in Asia. To understand this mentality we can return to Grosrichard's observations about other Asian polities located nearer to the West than the Philippines. 'The despotic City' of the Arab world, he writes, was envisaged by French intellectuals as 'an absurd economy, its only goal the jouissance of the One [the vizier or king], not the country's enrichment'.

Rampant graft at the highest level causes an 'internal haemorrhage of wealth' and disincentivizes the masses: 'they do not work, they make no improvement in anything'. This iniquitous and dehumanizing order produces a hellish textual space, 'a silent, dismal desert, haunted by a flock of dispirited victims'.

Similarly, the lower-class Malay Filipinos of Spanish Manila are 'idle' in the view of Loney, Wilkes and Robert MacMicking, because there is little hope of social mobility within this backwardly bureaucratic peripheral site. Like Grosrichard's diabolical terra nullius bereft of European modernity, Loney's Manila is a miserably inert environment where 'Energy grows listless and benumbed'.

The common defects between Loney et al.'s Manila and the Grosrichardian despotic city might be explained by the fact that, while the Spanish in Manila were of Western heritage and therefore ought to belong to the same prestigious civilization as the British and the Americans, Manilaism casts them as a lower breed of Westerner. But why? At this time, a variety of politicians and intellectuals were setting forth the doctrine of Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism. One of them, the British Liberal parliamentarian Sir Charles Dilke, proposed the concept of 'Greater Britain' as 'a cohesive racial and political structure for the global diaspora of an Anglo-Saxon race which continued to share the same language and institutions', as Robert J. C. Young views it.

According to this conception, Greater Britain included the United States, New Zealand, Australia and parts of Canada, but did not extend to colonies or ex-colonies of other Western European nations (even, it would appear, a nation such as Germany, which could reasonably lay claim to the nomenclature 'Saxon'). Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism is covert throughout MacMicking and overt in Loney, who writes, 'Spanish and Anglo-Saxon ideas are so radically different about many things there can seldom be any sympathy.' His conclusion is based on his 'never [having] formed anything approaching to a friendship with a Spaniard' and several personal observations about the demerits of the Spanish 'dons' he has encountered. They are not interested in expanding their knowledge of the world through travel, he claims, and he considers socially inferior those who have retired from employment in the navy to set up as small businessmen. Presumably, given Loney's personal aspirations for high-ranking officialdom and involvement in large-scale commerce, it would be ungentlemanly to abandon honourable service to one's country in favour of low-level petit bourgeois money-making. His more suggestive later remark that Spaniards have too many 'French ideas' and lament that he is 'the only specimen of his race on the island' would appear to be couched in a dichotomy between Spanish and Anglo-Saxon cultural consciousnesses.

At the same time as Anglo-Saxonism was being articulated by influential Atlantic Westerners, a corresponding phenomenon known as Latinidad was emerging in both Latin America and those Euro-imperialist states whose languages were Latin based. As the Argentine historian Walter D.
Mignolo elaborates, the Colombian diplomat José Maria T orres Caicedo drew a cultural and political boundary between 'Anglo-Saxon America, Danish America, Dutch America' and 'Spanish America, French America and Portuguese America', while French 'intellectuals and state officers [used Latinidad] to take the lead in Europe among the configuration of Latin countries involved in the Americas (Spain, Italy, Portugal and France itself), and allowed it also to confront the United States' continuing expansion toward the south'.

T ensions between Latinidad and non-Latinidad interests in the Americas would result in 'the imperial imaginary' regarding 'Latin Americans as second-class Europeans'.

Such prejudices towards Spaniards and 'Latins' deriving from the Americas may have been exported to Manila, given the Philippines' colonial ties with Latin America (from the 1560s until the 1820s it was governed indirectly by Spain via the Mexican Viceroyalty) and the fact that many Manilaist writers of this phase and later were widely travelled sailors, traders and diplomats who would likely have been aware of the Latinidad-Anglo-Saxon binary. Certainly, other British and American commentators of the period were. 'The Spaniards of this period,' writes Green, 'were in fact habitually described by nineteenth-century WASP [white Anglo-Saxon Protestant] historians as Visigoths, and as thus full of barbaric vigor'.

It is probable that, in the Manilaist mind, the sloth, greed and tyranny of the Spanish in Manila was not only a congenital fact of their Spanish-ness or Latin-ness but a consequence of their having spent too much time in the East, among Easterners who exhibited those same deficiencies. As MacMicking tellingly writes, 'many of the natives of Spain who are even now selected to fill the highest offices, are about as despotic and as unscrupulous in their notions of government and in their exercise of power.'

In like spirit, Grosrichard shows how European men of letters from Michel Nau to Montesquieu devised 'physical determinist' formulations about climate, biology and racial typology to conclude that Oriental societies are fundamentally authoritarian in character. Tropical weather makes Asians 'excessively sensitive to the least threat of danger' and therefore 'naturally made to be slaves' under sultans who, as a result of the same 'burning-hot climate', suffer from a 'laziness of mind and a lasciviousness of body'.

Correspondingly, MacMicking notes that 'the heat of the climate probably disposes' those living in Manila against 'sterner and self-denying mental duties'; Spanish soldiers are 'effeminate defenders' and Spanish priests routinely take mistresses despite it 'openly violating' their faith. I unpack the fuller implications of Westerners 'going native' in the Philippines later, for it will become a central component of the long arc of Manilaism.

The more explicitly hellish attributes of Manila come to the fore when MacMicking and his contemporaries turn their gazes towards ambits of the city that bear the stamp of, so these Manilaists construe it, the atavistic and esoteric Roman Catholic Church: Spain's primary hegemonic apparatus in the Philippines. In the tradition of literary adumbrations of cities 'whose forms are systematically distorted to convey a particular mood or quality', these writers describe creepily mystical spaces that confuse and disturb rational, Protestant subjectivity. According to Loney's correspondences from the 1850s, lurid paintings of the inferno inside a church are designed to frighten the public into 'properly attending to their religious duties'.
Equally disconcertingly, 'shadows flit [. . .] about' the old walled Spanish quarter of Intramuros 'like unearthly things'.

Visiting after the United States had annexed the Philippines from Spain in 1898 and established a new colonial state headquartered in Manila, the travel writers George A. Miller and Walter Robb mobilized similarly foreboding imagery but for a slightly different purpose: to elucidate how far the capital has advanced from a backward, Hispanic-Catholic outpost to a modern, (would-be) Protestant-American metropolis.

Over the first four decades of the twentieth century, Miller penned a commercially successful series of lavishly descriptive and sometimes nostalgic travel narratives of Panama, China and the Philippines. His Interesting Manila (1929) is a portentous-toned recollection of his walks around Intramuros' 'old convents' and 'old monasteries' which barely conceal 'mysteries as dark as black robes' and 'deeds of lust and blood'. He is non-specific about the nature of these mysteries and deeds, alluding only to Spanish-era 'political plotting' and 'ecclesiastical intrigue'.

Maybe Miller feels no duty to elaborate given the fundamental incompatibility of this religious and cultural milieu with the mentality of the 'American [. . .] [who] usually turns up his nose because the way of doing things is different from his own'.

His final analysis is thus: 'The Anglo-Saxon lives in the concrete, the Oriental in the shadows.' Moreover, although its influence has greatly reduced since the Spanish were ousted, the Catholic Church lingers on like a spectral presence in the new, forward-looking Manila that is connecting itself to international trade and tourism: 'The globe trotter [. . .] has no idea that he treads on the bones of a vanished empire.'

Manilaist texts published during and shortly after the Second World War amplify these religious metaphors and employ them against Japan's empire rather than Spain's. On his way home from an assignment in Shanghai, the American Associated Press correspondent Clark Lee stopped off in Manila just before the Japanese invaded it mere hours after their attack on Pearl Harbor. In 1943, he published They Call It Pacific, a memoir of that event and his subsequent daring escape through the southern Philippine islands to Brisbane, Australia.

A self-proclaimed liberal supporter of the US Democratic Party, Lee is empathetic and even-handed enough to critique the racism of the American colonial state in Manila and acknowledge Japan's economic motives for attacking the Philippines ('To go on playing power politics, they had to gain free access to certain raw materials').

However, his descriptions of Japanese air raids on Manila conform to the less progressive paradigms of both faith-driven Orientalism and the city-as-hell repertoire. While the statement 'there was not a time when the night skies of Manila were not brilliant with fires' is borne from a professional journalist's aspiration to disinterestedly document the events he has witnessed, it also recalls the prototypical burning
city of Dis in Dante's Inferno as well as other textual cities-as-hell set alight by military conflict.46 Later in the same paragraph, Lee's comparing of the 'death and ruin' caused by the Japanese aggressions to 'Genghis Khan and his hordes of terror'47 glances back to an earlier generation of Orientalists whose 'view of European superiority over Muslims', holds Felix Konrad, led them to the conviction that Khan was a brutal infidel who would not have conquered large swathes of Asia had Christian 'progress' reached the region in the early Middle Ages.48 Lee's perspective earned the hegemonic seal of approval from Joseph I. Greene, a US Army colonel who praised They Call It Pacific's 'clearness', 'strength' and 'accuracy' in a glowing review for the New York Times.49 In his novel Perla of the Walled City (1946), the devoutly Christian American author John Bechtel regards war-torn Manila in even more apocalyptic terms: 'blocks – yes, miles – of twisted ruins and grotesque concrete skeletons'.50 The scene is, in Bechtel's overwrought simile, like 'Mars, the mighty god of War, had tramped down his iron heel and had ground unmercifully The Pearl of the Orient into the dust'.51 Since Manila – or, more specifically, the church-filled sanctuary of Intramuros – has been desecrated by the heretical Japanese, the beautiful 'Pearl of the Orient' that the Americans constructed between 1898 and 1941 is no more. The severity of Bechtel's approach may have been informed by his lived experience of the Japanese war machine. He was working as a priest for the right-wing, evangelical Christian and Missionary Alliance in Hong Kong when the Japanese invaded in 1941. He and around 3,000 other Westerners were interned for the rest of the conflict.52 But Bechtel's special sense of hurt and loss about Manila's fate in the war is perhaps related to the fact it had, unlike Hong Kong, Singapore or any other Asian city occupied by the Japanese, been the centre of American power in Asia. Indeed, DeLoris Stevenson in Land of the Morning (1956), a chronicle of accompanying her clergyman husband on a post-war mission to the Philippines, regrets how this 'daughter of the American republic'53 has become a wasteland of 'bombed-out buildings'54 because the Japanese had blasphemed against the Christian creed by destroying '80% of church buildings' and converting 'churches [into . . .] fortresses during the war'.55 American 'Popular notions of Japanese religious practices'56 as barbaric probably influenced Stevenson's faith-based disparagement of the Japanese. Her sentiment is mirrored in US propaganda discourses of the Pacific War, including popular song, which sets up 'a classic struggle of a good (and apparently Christian) United States against an evil enemy in the form of the "heathen" Japanese'.57 Like Bechtel, Stevenson was a religious conservative (before relocating to the Philippines she was active in Michigan's Capital City Youth Temperance movement), so it is no great surprise that she tacitly endorses this Manichaean, good-versus-evil formula by overlooking American connivance in Manila's destruction when the historical record shows that the 'liberation' of the city in 1945 killed 120,000 and ravaged its built environment, whereas the Japanese invasion of Manila in 1941–2 resulted in considerably fewer casualties and little structural damage.58 But Orientalist constructions are not necessarily more accurate when they are inspired by 'actual experience of the Orient',59 as Said contends. Rather, 'the imaginative demonology of "the mysterious Orient"'60 derives more from a long genealogy of Orientalists
cleaving to ‘unshakeable abstract maxims about the “civilization” [. . .] they had studied; rarely were Orientalists interested in anything except proving the validity of these musty “truths” by applying them, without great success, to uncomprehending, hence degenerate, natives’.61 In like fashion, Stevenson’s commitment to the redemptive capacity of her evangelical beliefs impels her to frame the US church and state in Manila as indisputably positive forces for renewal that are conjuring order from chaos, as in the case of the Union Theological Seminary on Taff Avenue, now ‘completely rehabilitated’.62 It is hard not to uncouple Bechtel’s and Stevenson’s impressions of Manila as a city doomed by its retreat from Western-Christian hegemony from the historical reality that, as Damon L. Woods argues, ‘After World War II, there was an influx of fundamentalist missionaries to the islands’ who, taking a typical stance of cultural condescension, ‘came to the conclusion that Filipinos were incapable of ecclesiastical leadership’.63 This attitude, too, would appear to be a figment of the American Orientalist imagination given that, in 1902, Filipinos had established the Iglesia Filipina Independente, a large, influential and well-administered autonomous church.64