

Editor's Notes

In October 2025, I attended the Japanese Studies Association of Australia's Conference held in the University of New England in Armidale. I was a part of a roundtable discussion by Japanese Studies scholars from and in Southeast Asia discussing geopolitical inequalities in academia. The experience was humbling as there were only three attendees, an Australian scholar based in Japan, a Korean graduate student based in New Zealand, and a representative of Japan Foundation–Headquarters. Yet, it also proved our point considering that there were no local Australian scholars interested in listening to what their counterparts in Southeast Asia were engaging with.

This was followed by attending a symposium on Southeast Asian Media and Cultural Studies hosted by Macquarie University. The sessions were painful and inspiring as it challenged the attendees with messages of decolonizing scholarship and citation justice in their works. Questions such as “who are you reading?” and “who have you cited?” made participants aware of their conscious / unconscious complicity to the issue.

These two experiences emboldened me to carry on with the purpose of Social Science Diliman, to be an avenue for research of and from the “peripheries” / Global South / Third World / Subaltern.

This issue is a reflection of that mission. We begin with Oyzon's “Rereading Casi Casi: A Linguistic Reinterpretation to Pigefetta's Account” which intervenes by proposing a different interpretation of records of the blood compact which is understood as a showcase of diplomacy. However, the asymmetrical realities existed with the entire event being linguistically mediated, hence offering a different perspective to the event granting agency to the Humabon.

Flores' “Pagpapatúloy at Pagpapatulòy: Mga Tugon ng mga Magsasaka sa Pagtatayo ng New Clark City sa Capas, Tarlac” presents the dilemma of development particularly when cosmopolitan interests seem to dominate discussions on policies. This article provides a face and name to the displaced and poses the question for whose benefit is development.

Belamide's “Reinventing Tradition: The Karakol of General Trias, Cavite” shows the dynamism of culture by presenting how variations of the practice occur through interpretations and reinterpretations by the celebrants, as well as the influence of geographic location.

Kabigting introduces an important work by Gideon Lasco entitled “Height Matters: The Making, Meanings, and Materialities of Human stature in the Philippines.” While Lasco is more known more for his works on drugs, his scholarly interventions on the Philippine body prove to be important as he introduces how height is influenced by social, political, and economic factors in Philippine society.

Finally, Ivry reviews “Paleontology in public: Popular science, lost creatures, and deep time” revealing how a discipline such as paleontology has meaning in the present, particularly in its use in popular culture.

Social Science Diliman will continue in its commitment to engage with scholarship such as what is published in this issue, and I invite readers to contribute to our journal.

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Editor-in-Chief

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