

# Introduction

Maria Cecilia T. MEDINA  
and Janus NOLASCO

*Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman*

This special issue of *Asian Studies: Journal of Critical Perspectives on Asia* republishes five articles of Dr. Josefa Saniel—former dean and Professor Emeritus of the University of the Philippines’ Asian Center—that previously appeared in the journal from 1966 to 1977. As a tribute to Dr. Saniel, it recognizes her pioneering efforts in area studies, and more specifically, in Japan Studies, including research on Philippines-Japan relations.

For this issue, we have reformatted the five articles, correcting typographical errors and converting footnotes into end notes. Apart from these formatting changes, we have kept to the original content and citation style as they appeared in the years they were published.

The articles are arranged chronologically, beginning with Dr. Saniel’s comparative studies of Japan and the Philippines and ending with the articles on East Asian international politics and on area studies. We also provided abstracts by lifting passages from each article, save for the Rizal-Tetcho essay, for which we wrote one. The institutional affiliations of Dr. Saniel at the time of publication of each article have also been indicated.

Also included in this issue is an essay by Janus Nolasco and Danae Pantano, “Area Studies in a Time of Nationalism: Dr. Josefa Saniel and Japanese Studies in the Philippines in the 1960s.” The essay offers a preliminary engagement with the scholarship of Dr. Saniel, situating it amidst and against the nationalist fervor of her time. It illustrates the close

link between area studies and nation-building, and shows how Dr. Saniel's work anticipated developments in Japanese Studies in the Philippines in the late-20th and early-21st centuries. It also compares the different contexts of Dr. Saniel's scholarship with the later generation of Filipino Japanologists. The essay ends with a short reflection on the role of area studies in an age of globalization, migration, and liberal democracy.

We have also provided a list of Dr. Saniel's publications. It was diligently compiled by Danae Pantano based on web searches and research at the Asian Center library. It must be said that the list is not exhaustive, as it does not include articles published as book chapters.

We would like to thank Dean Saniel for generously giving her permission to reprint these articles, which we hope will reach a new generation of readers, as well as scholars who are interested in the development of area studies, Japanese Studies, and Philippines-Japan relations.