

READING CARLOS BULOSAN/ DOCUMENTING THE FILIPINO DIASPORA

An Editorial Introduction to *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt: Critical Perspectives on Carlos Bulosan*

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Abstract

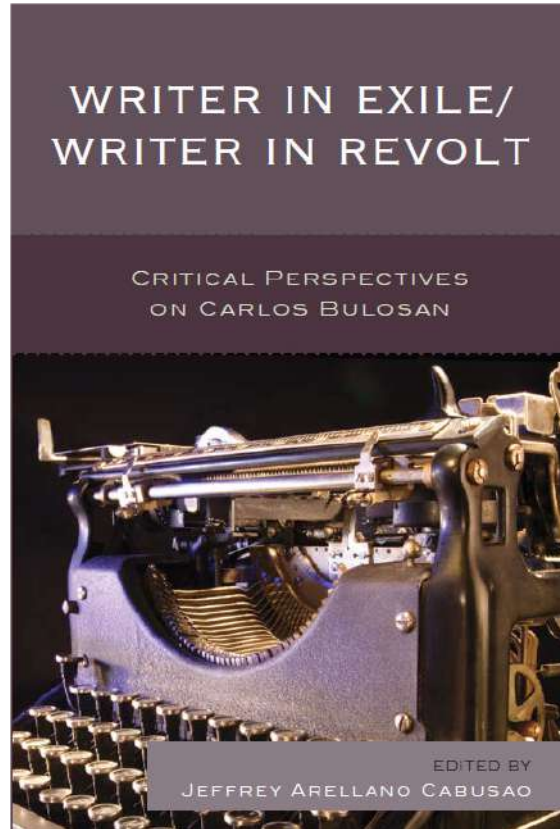
This editorial introduction to *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt: Critical Perspectives on Carlos Bulosan* (2016) sheds light on the diasporic scope of Bulosan's literary imagination and the literary scholarship on his diverse body of writing. *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt* gathers for the first time nearly sixty years of literary criticism by scholars in the United States and the Philippines on Bulosan, a pioneering twentieth-century Filipino writer in the United States. The editorial introduction highlights the ways in which *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt* documents the unfolding of Bulosan's radical literary imagination which straddles the colonial and neocolonial periods of U.S.-Philippines relations (from the pre-Pacific War period to the Cold War period). Six decades of literary criticism generate a fascinating inventory of Bulosan's invaluable contributions to modern diasporic Filipino literature that, when historicized, problematize the notion of hybridity and trouble the binary opposition between Asian and Asian American literatures. In addition to discussing the significance of *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt*, the editorial introduction features Cabusao's dialogue piece (featured in the anthology) with distinguished Asian American scholars Marilyn Alquizola and Lane Ryo Hirabayashi on their groundbreaking research on Bulosan's FBI files which reveals the transnational nature of U.S. political surveillance/repression and the diasporic framing of Filipino resistance that informed Carlos Bulosan's life and work.

Keywords

Bulosan criticism, Carlos Bulosan, Cold War political repression, Filipino activism, Filipino diaspora, Filipino literary aesthetics

About the Author

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Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt: Critical Perspectives on Carlos Bulosan,
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Carlos Bulosan is considered one of the most significant Filipino writers of the twentieth century. Bulosan's writings have transformed how we conceptualize the American literary canon in the United States as well as how we conceptualize the formation (and radical potential) of the Filipino diaspora. Bulosan, himself a member of the first wave of Filipino migrant workers (the *Manongs*) in the United States, began to theorize in his writing (poems, short stories, novels, letters, and essays) the development of a Filipino diaspora (the global dispersal of Filipino migrant workers). In addition, Bulosan's literary aesthetics and radical literary imagination anticipate (and subsequently problematize) the notion of hybridity as a mode of so-called postcolonial agency. This editorial introduction to *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt: Critical Perspectives on Carlos Bulosan* (2016), for *Kritika Kultura's* special feature on Asian diasporic literature, sheds light on the diasporic

scope of both Bulosan's literary imagination and the literary scholarship, produced over the span of nearly six decades, on Bulosan's diverse body of writing.

Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt is the first anthology of essays on Carlos Bulosan's work and life by pioneering scholars in Filipino American Studies, American Studies, and Philippine Studies. This anthology—which includes rare, out-of-print documents—provides students, instructors, and scholars an opportunity to trace the development of a body of knowledge called Bulosan criticism within the United States and the Philippines. The scholars selected for inclusion in the collection engage and build upon Bulosan's unique approach to cultural production—one that is situated within the intersection of historical materialism and a diasporic approach to understanding the Filipino condition as it has unfolded under U.S.-Philippines colonial and neocolonial relations. To illustrate the development of interdisciplinary scholarly approaches that honor and advance Bulosan's historical materialist diasporic literary imagination, this editorial introduction features chapter eighteen of *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt*—a dialogue I developed with Asian American scholars Marilyn Alquizola and Lane Ryo Hirabayashi on their groundbreaking research on Carlos Bulosan's activities as a writer/activist during the Cold War period.¹

Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt is divided into four major sections that explore Bulosan's prolific literary output. The first section introduces readers to the early stages of Bulosan criticism from major literary figures and critics (1950s-1970s). The second section provides key essays on Bulosan's most popular publications in the United States during the 1940s: *America Is in the Heart* and *The Laughter of My Father*. The third section examines multiple aspects of Bulosan's literary craft: poetry, short fiction, and his posthumously published novel *The Cry and the Dedication*. The fourth section provides suggestions for new directions in Bulosan criticism, through interviews and essays that examine the relevance of Bulosan's literary craft and vision for social change in the twenty-first century. The anthology also features rare primary materials (historical documents and photographs) and a selected bibliography of critical writings on Bulosan.

By tracing the development of Bulosan criticism over six decades, *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt* sheds light on the significance of the concept of diaspora for understanding the vision and scope (and continued relevance) of Bulosan's radical literary imagination. Bulosan's diverse body of work documents the formation of the Filipino diaspora (the global dispersal of Filipino migrant workers) prior to Pacific War period as well as the internationalization of Filipino subaltern revolt. For instance, the protagonist Allos/Carlos of Bulosan's now classic text *America Is*

in the Heart (1946) chronicles the collective experiences of Filipino migrant workers during the 1930s—from their exploitation as members of the Filipino peasantry in the Philippines under U.S. colonial occupation to their racialized exploitation as migrant farmworkers and cannery workers in the United States.

Bulosan, inspired by various radical literary traditions from Jose Rizal (Philippines) to Richard Wright (United States), blended different literary genres in *America Is in the Heart*—naturalism, proletarian literature, and Philippine folklore—in order to bring attention to hostile forces (racialized class conflicts) in the social environment that victimize the Filipino people as well as to explore the evolution of an anti-colonial Filipino revolutionary consciousness. Within this context, we could view *America Is in the Heart* as a complex, multilayered hybrid narrative with the twin goal of raising the consciousness of the reader as well as dramatizing the formation of a collective Filipino subject in revolt—the development of a collective peasant-worker subjectivity emerging from the gaps and fissures of U.S. colonial and neocolonial domination. When historicized within the context of U.S.-Philippines colonial and neocolonial relations, the hybrid nature of *America Is in the Heart*, however, signifies more than just an imaginative and playful fusion of different literary genres. It signifies more than just the insertion/assertion of racial difference (Filipino Otherness) as a destabilizing force—pushing us to reconceptualize the boundaries of twentieth-century American literature. The hybrid nature of the text reveals how hybridity by itself is unable to provide a solution to a significant conflict within Bulosan's radical literary imagination—a desire to give voice to a history of militant Filipino resistance against U.S. colonial occupation/control while simultaneously inhabiting the discourse of popular front Americanism.² While the former is alluded to and at times muted as it competes with the latter throughout the narrative, it is within the intersection between these two radical traditions of organized working class/subaltern resistance that our protagonist finds his voice. Allos/Carlos's development as a labor organizer in the United States who yearns to return to the Filipino peasantry is informed by the anti-racist and anti-fascist multiracial labor movement within the United States of the 1930s and a tradition of anti-colonial peasant revolts in the Philippines (symbolized by the character of Felix Razon). The latter tradition (anti-colonial subaltern revolt), however, is given fuller expression in Bulosan's writings in the Cold War era.

Bulosan's desire to dramatize the formation of an anti-colonial Filipino revolutionary consciousness is articulated more fully in his posthumously published *The Cry and the Dedication*, written in the early to mid-1950s. When juxtaposed to each other, *America Is in the Heart* (1946) and *The Cry and the Dedication* (1950s) reveal Bulosan's attempt to illustrate the painful experience of diasporic displacement for Filipino migrant workers and to give voice to the

political unconscious of the Filipino diaspora—a collective desire for Philippine national sovereignty as a response to the trauma of U.S. colonial and neocolonial control of the Philippines. This theme of documenting the formation of the Filipino diaspora as symptomatic of the racial-national subordination of the Philippines is evident in Bulosan's other works—including his early poetry, his collections of short stories, editorial work, and letters.

If the notion of diaspora is central to the formation of Bulosan's radical literary imagination, it is equally significant in the formation of Bulosan criticism. *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt* highlights the pioneering work of literary scholar and activist Dolores Feria, who inaugurated an assessment of Bulosan's contributions to Philippine literature in the 1950s and 1960s. Feria, considered by E. San Juan, Jr. as the "angel" of Bulosan's works, began theorizing the significance of Bulosan's literary craft as it was developed and nurtured from his location within the Filipino working class in the United States. In her essay "Filipino Writers in Exile" (1963), which is included in *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt*, Feria challenges the idea, crystalized under the conditions of U.S. colonial and neocolonial domination, that Filipinos have no existing literary tradition. Feria argues that multi-lingual Filipino writing (Spanish, Tagalog, English) is a "consequence of exile." Rather than signifying alienation ("in the Western sense of the word"), exile for Feria refers to "an impetus for flight and revolt which can only occur in a society in which the basic cultural components have been periodically altered by brute force." According to Feria, Bulosan must be situated within a rich Filipino literary tradition forged under the condition of exile: Joaquin, Villa, Balagtas, Burgos, Rizal, Recto, Arguilla, Amado Hernandez, Daroy, Demetillo, Bienvenido Santos, Hufana, Jose Lansang, Jr., Virginia Moreno, and Epifanio San Juan.

Dolores Feria's work on Bulosan anticipates the recovery of Bulosan's writings in the 1970s, a result of the overlap between the Asian American Movement in the United States and the renewal of anti-imperialist nationalist sentiment in the Philippines. *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt* traces the proliferation of Bulosan criticism by scholars in the United States and the Philippines whose insightful readings of Bulosan's novels, short stories, poetry, and letters reveal the diasporic scope of Bulosan's radical literary imagination. In addition to Feria's collapsing the binary opposition between Filipino American and Filipino writing in her examination of the Filipino "condition of exile," scholars such as Susan Evangelista, Margarita R. Orendain, E. San Juan, Jr., Oscar Campomanes, Todd S. Gernes, and Tim Libretti examine the formation of a "Third World" literary aesthetics within Bulosan's works informed by the dynamic relationship between the "internal Third World" of the United States (Filipino working class) and the Philippines. The concepts of diaspora and "Third World," within Bulosan criticism, function as powerful correctives to the concept of "transnational" which obfuscates unequal

relations of power between imperial power (United States) and neocolonial formation (the Philippines).

Bulosan's writings (1930s-1950s) and the emergence of Bulosan criticism in the Philippines (1950s) and the United States (1960s/1970s) anticipate the contemporary phenomenon of the twenty-first century Filipino diaspora—nearly twelve million Filipinos scattered across the globe. Between three to four thousand Filipinos depart the Philippines daily—undergoing the harrowing transformation into Overseas Filipino Workers as a mode of economic survival. Leading literary critic and cultural theorist E. San Juan, Jr. reminds us that the concept of diaspora has the potential to revitalize literary and cultural studies in the Philippines because of its ability to historicize the Filipino presence around the globe and to heighten our critical awareness of U.S.-Philippines neocolonial relations:

the aim of introducing this framework of the Filipino diaspora is to reorient our vision/sensibility regarding our individual responsibility in society. It is to initiate a re-thinking about ourselves as a people and as citizens of a nation-state with a specific history. It is to kindle a conscientization of our minds and *loobs/souls*. ("Gathering the Filipino Diaspora")

For this editorial introduction to *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt*, I feature my dialogue piece with senior scholars Marilyn Alquizola and Lane Hirabayashi, whose research deepens our understanding of Bulosan's ability to "kindle a conscientization of our minds and souls." Our dialogue documents the following: (1) the bridging of Bulosan's radical literary imagination (1930s to the 1950s) with the Asian American Movement of the 1960s and 1970s; (2) the diasporic scope of Bulosan's literary imagination which sustained him in the midst of political repression during the 1950s; and (3) new directions in scholarship on Bulosan's work and life.

In "The Bulosan Files: Another Layer in an Ongoing Dialogue," I ask Alquizola and Hirabayashi to discuss the ways in which their interest in Bulosan has developed since the inception of Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies in the late 1960s. Inspired by the intersection of art and politics in Bulosan's life, Alquizola and Hirabayashi have forged new directions for interdisciplinary research in Bulosan criticism. Their recent work on analyzing Bulosan's FBI files provides fresh insight into Bulosan's life, politics, and artistic commitment during the Cold War period. In our dialogue piece, they discuss how the FBI files (and other archival materials) reveal the global reach of U.S. government surveillance—how the surveillance of Bulosan's activities in the United States overlapped with the U.S.-supported counterinsurgency efforts within the Philippines during the 1950s. In spite of FBI surveillance and marginalization within the United States and the Philippines,

Bulosan remained resolute in his political commitment and artistic vision, both of which are illustrated in his editorial work for the *1952 Yearbook, ILWU Local 37*, his novel *The Cry and the Dedication* (posthumously published by E. San Juan, Jr.), and letters collected in *The Sound of Falling Light* (edited by Dolores Feria).

THE BULOSAN FILES: ANOTHER LAYER IN AN ONGOING DIALOGUE (2016)

Marilyn Alquizola, Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, and Jeffrey Arellano Cabusao

The following text represents part of a longer, on-going dialogue between Jeffrey Cabusao, Marilyn Alquizola, and Lane Hirabayashi initiated in 2006. This is not an interview per se because of the nature of its construction. Jeff suggested the piece as a dialogue between Marilyn and Lane concerning their work on the declassified FBI dossier of Bulosan. As a point of departure, Jeff provided general questions about Marilyn and Lane's interdisciplinary research process. The piece evolved as Marilyn and Lane read and edited what each other wrote. They subsequently sent their dialogue to Jeff who suggested an overall structure for the piece as well as additional questions. Lane and Marilyn modified their answers as they restructured the piece, and they invited Jeff to respond. This composition process, from another angle, makes this piece more like a conversation—an assemblage that represents our mutual albeit heterogeneous passions for the subject.

CARLOS BULOSAN THROUGH THE ARCHIVAL LENS

HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN CARLOS BULOSAN?

MARILYN: During the 1968-1969 San Francisco State strike that heralded the beginning of Ethnic Studies, many considered Carlos Bulosan a hero of sorts, who revealed hidden aspects of American history that previously had been suppressed in popular discourse. At the same time, the student strikes that supported and precipitated the creation of Ethnic Studies as a discipline coincided with the anti-Vietnam war protests. These were progressively political times, during which counter discursive information was unearthed and disseminated.

In *America Is in The Heart*, Bulosan dramatizes the experiences of his working-class bachelor community. His main character, Carlos, speaks in a very personal tone that is simultaneously and/or alternately full of emotion and political wisdom. At times, he seemed naive. At other times, he was very politically astute. Bulosan's readable narrative appealed to many people, students, instructors, the casual

reader, the political left, etc. In short, it registered at many levels. As a student seeking an alternative discourse to my own mendacious education, I found his working class perspective on life as a Filipino in the U.S. very refreshing, to say the least, especially when compared to the assimilationist views that were uncritical of U.S. colonialism.

Bulosan's work was used in two disciplinary areas of Asian American Studies at the very least: history and literature. One discipline purports to fact gathering, and the other to the study of the function and purpose of fiction as a work of art. Neither activity need exclude the other. There are historical novels, and there are fictive histories, as was much of traditional American history. *America Is in the Heart* is both historical and fictive, since to be fictive is not to be non-factual or imaginary. I always believed that *America Is in the Heart* was a work that was fictively constructed by Bulosan in order to reveal historical injustices. And the emotional power of the work was such because it was narrated from a personal point of view.

LANE: I was first exposed to Bulosan when I was a TA for Professor Ronald Takaki at the University of California at Berkeley. Ron assigned *America Is in the Heart* as part of the readings for his AAST 20 A "Introduction to Asian American History" course in 1979.

The way that Ron used Bulosan was to heighten awareness of the tremendous discrimination that the Manongs faced during the great Depression. At the same time, Ron highlighted Filipinos' propensity to organize, even though back in those days union activities could be very dangerous.

After I started to converse with Marilyn, I had the opportunity to ask her about her perspectives on the book as well as how she taught Bulosan in her literature classes at San Francisco State. Beyond that, another major influence was having the chance to meet E. San Juan, Jr., who was a visiting scholar at the University of Colorado at Boulder in the 1990s, and then reading his various books and articles. I started to realize that Bulosan had written much more than just *America*. I became fascinated and captivated by the progressive dimension of Filipino American history, which came alive for me the more I got to know about Bulosan's work in the ILWU's Local 7.

HOW DID YOU START DOING ARCHIVAL WORK ON BULOSAN?

MARILYN: Years later, as an instructor of Filipino American literature, I had the opportunity to write a couple of articles that addressed the construction of Bulosan's work, as well as suggested some political reading strategies for the work. During this time, I heard that there were Bulosan archives housed in the Suzzallo Library at the University of Washington. I had the tactile privilege of combing through every bit of that collection before it was catalogued and transformed. Seattle was wet and cold, and I myself had a terrible cold, thus producing as much in used tissue as in notes. It was worth it, however. And I was thankful that the Suzzallo did not eject me for spreading germs.

In my traditional studies of literature, I had never done archival work before. This new experience for me was somewhat akin to intellectual voyeurism, as I felt a small thrill in invading someone's private papers. Lane, who had done archival work because of his interest in the Japanese American concentration camps, remarked that he thought that not everyone was able to sustain the focus needed for archival work. I thought that if it was this interesting, why the hell not?

A little later, I perused through a much smaller holding of Bulosan's papers in the archives at the University of Chicago. This content of the collection was relatively more staid, dealing largely with Bulosan's activities as a published poet. Nonetheless, it provided pieces to the puzzle of a pretty complex individual. His letters, papers, drafts, and so forth were as interesting as his creative production. Bulosan's literary corpus, his stories and poetry, are deeply embedded with elements of his own peripatetic personal life, although *America is in the Heart* was not as autobiographical as one might have been led to believe. Nonetheless, it was clear that his political activism propelled his creative drive.

LANE: By the time Marilyn was working with Bulosan's papers in various archives, I already had archival experience in terms of assessing the massive *Japanese Evacuation and Resettlement Study* collection, held at Berkeley's Bancroft Library.

In terms of Bulosan's papers, Marilyn would hit the archives as a separate pursuit she wanted to do while we were attending conferences around the country.

Our publications to date are based on Marilyn's archival research at the University of Washington and the University of Chicago.³ What happened was that Marilyn seemed so interested in what she was looking at that I began reading over her shoulder, so to speak, mostly out of curiosity. I really only studied the documents she had copied, seriously and systematically, years after she'd done that work.

It is worth noting that, in Bulosan's case, assessing the archival record is a challenge in its own right because Bulosan was less than consistent in terms of the details of his biography. There may have been good reasons for his seeming contradictions, though.

In the end, it was only when I read the letters and materials that she selected (probably for the third or fourth time) in light of what was in the FBI files that I had an epiphany. Only then I realized how valuable, how critical, the primary sources that Marilyn had culled from the archives were going to be in terms of getting a handle on Bulosan's biography.

THE PROCESS OF RESEARCH: UNCOVERING INTIMIDATION TACTICS

HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE IDEA TO ASK FOR BULOSAN'S FBI FILES?

LANE: I had done work before with FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) requests, and had made a number of these in relation to my work on Japanese Americans and the camps. I had had the benefit of many discussions with the late Yuji Ichioka about different kinds of resources for studying Japanese American history. So Yuji was the one who first suggested, and then showed me how to initiate, this kind of research probably around the mid-1980s. (I can't remember exactly because we had the kind of relationship where we talked as often as we could, but months and years might pass before we saw each other again. We'd just pick our discussion right up on cue, though, and so that's what makes it hard to say "when.")

Later, when I was teaching at the University of Colorado in the 1990s, a number of colleagues in Ethnic Studies had done research along these lines, including Manning Marable, Ward Churchill, and Ernesto Vigil, an activist-scholar who was studying the Denver Chicano movement. Since they were around, I was able to have conversations with each of them, which included my questions about how to read and interpret redacted files, FBI jargon and code words, and so forth.

MARILYN: While we were living in Boulder, Colorado, we had seen a variety of newspaper articles indicating that the Freedom of Information Act made it possible to access FBI files of artist/activists like John Lennon, and political activists like Malcolm X.

In a conversation over dinner, Lane and I agreed that Bulosan must have had a file due to his political activities during the period of hysterical paranoia that is historically referred to as the McCarthy era.

Having already had the opportunity and audacious privilege to peer into some of the personal aspects of Carlos Bulosan's life, I thought that I could continue to look at things outside of literary criticism. The FBI held some prurient interest. Lane and I brainstormed about this for some time. We decided that I should request the files, an exciting prospect for both of us, given the previous work we had done separately. Not only would we be looking at the interface between Bulosan and his contemporaries (as presented in the archives), we would be examining the larger implications that government surveillance would have on a writer as a subject. It would eventually provide a look at government bias, invasiveness, and ineptness. Through the years, Bulosan become more interesting to me not just as an author who defied convention, but also as an individual who had an aura of mystery, thus defying any kind of categorization.

Lane and I had previously written two articles together. Because we more or less represented two disciplinary areas, literature and social science, we thought we could cover both bases in our pursuit. Because both of us are somewhat critical of Ethnic Studies as either a solely cultural nationalist endeavor, and as an area that uses traditional disciplinary methodologies as a springboard, we wanted to broaden our perspective. As all area studies are limited, it was good to merge disciplines as a way of broadening perspectives, and as a way to attempt to make Ethnic Studies work more interdisciplinary. The endeavor to create new methodologies is still a work in progress for some of us involved in the studies. Since we had collaborated like this before, we could do it again with this project. Other than those advantages, I think collaboration is hard work. It sometimes takes twice as much time with twice the frustration level simply because we are influenced by our disciplinary perspectives. And, like many of those who were involved on the ground level of Ethnic Studies, as a counter discursive activity, we both have chips on our shoulders, and we both love to fight.

WHAT DID YOU DISCOVER AS YOU SORTED THROUGH BULOSAN'S FBI FILES?

MARILYN: Identifying the mis-information generated by both agents and informants may be mis-termed by the word "discovery," since individuals who have read their own files know to what extent mis-information is commonplace in surveillance endeavors.

What I saw was how surveillance borders on harassment when certain actions diminish the subject's livelihood and reputation. It is such when the original reason for that intrusion was ultimately proven unnecessary. In Bulosan's case there was absolutely no attempt to remediate the harm done to his personal reputation. The

level of incompetence at which operations against Bulosan took place is both astounding and infuriating.

LANE: More than anything else, for me, it was finding out the extent to which the FBI pursued Bulosan, relentlessly. For a while I couldn't understand why until I realized that what they were really trying to do was get enough negative information on him so that they could deport him. This was exactly what they had tried to do to Bulosan's progressive colleagues in the ILWU's Local 7.⁴

Beyond this, I had not fully realized how ill Bulosan actually was. His initial bout with tuberculosis was devastating and I'd say that he never fully recovered. He lived his adult life in tremendous pain, and would never complain about it. Was it part of the reason why he drank—to kill his pain? I don't know, but the thought has certainly passed my mind that, since alcohol has a numbing effect, that might have been part of what was happening. In this light it was interesting to read a letter by a good friend of his, Sonora Babb. Babb wrote to another friend that Bulosan never complained; that if Bulosan was so sick that the walls of his hospital room were covered in blood, he'd be likely to say that he had "had a headache" that day.⁵ In a letter to his niece, written near the end of his life to a young woman who hardly knew him, Bulosan's catalog of his missing body parts and organs is terrifying.⁶ And yet Bulosan ended his list by saying that, as bad as things sounded, he still had his mind; he still had his heart. The man's spirit, his profound love for people, and his faith in them despite all of their limitations, is incredible and to me inspiring.

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO CHARGE THAT ANY FILES, BULOSAN'S FILES INCLUDED, ARE JUST LIES, A FABRICATION, SLANDER?

LANE: Well, sure, that's totally understandable. In fact, that's probably why it's taken us a great deal of work, over a period of years (so far), to assess all of the readable material that is in his dossier. The point here is simple. The ostensible reason that the government wanted to gather information on Bulosan was because they hoped to find enough evidence to charge and then to deport Bulosan because of his political beliefs. They were terrified of the great mind and ideas of this Filipino immigrant—a man of humble origins—who had a great passion for social justice. Before Marilyn had asked for the dossier to be declassified, however, who knew that FBI memos on Bulosan were routinely circulated to what were then the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Naval Intelligence, Army Intelligence (G-2), the State Department, and the CIA? Who knew that one of the most serious charges against Bulosan was not only that he might be a communist, but that there was serious concern that he was an agent of, or a spokesperson for, the Hukbalahap?⁷

The dossier definitively proves that, in his day, Bulosan was deemed enough of a national security threat to have a “security flash card”; in other words, if there was a national emergency, especially of a political nature, Bulosan would have been immediately picked up and detained. Moreover, in terms of the Huks, Bulosan was perceived as a possible threat, and maybe even someone who, if the government’s suspicions were to be proven, might qualify as an “international terrorist” at some level.

Now all of the above is not a fabrication: The Justice Department initiated Bulosan’s investigation precisely because they wanted to find out if the above was true or not. Beyond this, sure, FBI agents scoured the country, and tried their best to collect any and every scrap of information that would prove their case. And by 1954 Bureau agents evidently believed they had enough solid evidence such that J. Edgar Hoover wrote to the head of the Immigration & Naturalization Service suggesting that the INS should consider Bulosan as a serious candidate for deportation.⁸

The fact is that, whatever distortions and outright lies the dossier may contain—and there’s no doubt that there’s plenty of mis-information in the files—the material can be re-read and deployed for our own purposes. For us, the dossier gives us a brand new sense of how deeply the government feared Bulosan, and the steps that they were willing to take to try to kick him out of the country. Bulosan knew that all this was going on, too. So the dossier helps to demonstrate that, despite the assault against him and his livelihood, Bulosan maintained his commitments, and he was able to produce very important art such as his novel *The Cry and the Dedication*.⁹

At one point, early on, we developed the trope, “Government Bulosan,” in order to remind ourselves that the information in his FBI files is inherently a construct in the sense that it was always guided by the suspicion that Bulosan was politically suspect. Despite this limitation, our intention is to appropriate and generate an alternative set of images from the dossier that the government surely didn’t intend—namely, a set of images that entail rebellion, struggle, integrity, and creativity under conditions of surveillance as well as intimidation.

HOW DO THE FBI FILES ENABLE US TO RE-THINK BULOSAN’S LIFE AND WORK?

MARILYN: For one thing, it reaffirms that Bulosan was not an ambivalent colonial subject, even if his protagonist in *America* may seem to express confusion in a naive and innocent voice. Bulosan’s articulation of his imagined “America” in his heart is a celebration of the human spirit that refuses to be contained or colonized. It is an affirmation of the continuing struggle for social justice. It is not a celebration

of “having arrived,” particularly in light of present times and the very predictable relationships of power in today’s global economy. I saw also that his fighting spirit was sustained in his work at the same time that his body was failing. The onus of Bulosan’s impoverished material conditions coupled with failing physical health did not seem to diminish his creative production. Nor did the tone of his writing become depressive or pessimistic. In spite of everything, he believed in humanity and the individual as part of a collective force for social change. Although I personally distrust the impetus to create heroes, I must say that Bulosan was heroic in his refusal to become pessimistic. He did not love humanity *carte blanche*. He hated those who abused authority, as was clear in much of his writing.

LANE: Much of the published information on Bulosan’s later years highlights his illnesses and his decline. After assessing the FBI dossier, I had a distinctly different impression. To me, Bulosan was incredibly strong and persistent. In spite of all the difficulties he faced, including harassment and defamation by the FBI, and being targeted as a communist by Ramon Magsaysay and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, he still managed to write. Even though he knew he was being watched all the time, and that many people regarded him with bad faith, he still insisted in participating in political rallies and supported many important progressive issues of his day.

To offer only one example, even though he did so at some risk, Bulosan was an active participant in a group that promoted the publication of Luis Taruc’s autobiography, *Born of the People*, in the United States. Taruc was the chief commander of the Hukbalahap in the Philippines, a group that was originally an armed anti-Japanese guerilla force. After the war, the Huks promoted land reform and, for their efforts, they were branded by US intelligence as “pro-communist.” Bulosan joined with writers, activists—people like W.E.B. DuBois—to get Taruc’s book published, and eventually International Publishers did in 1953.

HOW DOES YOUR RESEARCH HELP US UNDERSTAND FILIPINO AMERICAN FORMS OF RESISTANCE?

MARILYN: Filipino American resistance is multi-faceted. Bulosan was known as a storyteller in more ways than one. It turns out that this was one of his strategies for resistance and survival. As heirs and survivors of a multi-leveled history of colonialism, some Filipino Americans such as Bulosan can utilize aspects of colonial culture while simultaneously critiquing it. You can look at his book of short stories, *The Laughter of My Father*, in this light. Bulosan really appreciated

the English language as a tool, and celebrated it in his poetry. At the same time, he used it as an instrument for dissecting the master narrative.

Some Filipino Americans will not as easily fit into the model minority role, and that's not a bad thing. I am not just talking about the organized resistance like participation in labor unions, but resistance at the individual level as well. But not fitting in sometimes comes at cost to the individual. Carlos Bulosan, in the heyday of his popularity may have been touted in the U.S. because of his talent as a writer, like other politically progressive writers of his time, (e.g. Steinbeck, Saroyan, etc.), but only a few years later, he was marginalized by virtue of the same reason. Nonetheless, his political beliefs were never compromised within the oppressive milieu of McCarthyism. That's the heroic element.

LANE: To me, the Manongs' commitment to labor unions and labor organizing, and to each other, is very impressive. Their solidarity in this regard really differentiates them from the bulk of early Chinese, Japanese, and Korean immigrants on the U.S. mainland, both before and even after the war. To me although the latter did occasionally go on strike or otherwise resist poor labor conditions, they were generally more entrepreneurial in terms of their occupational pursuits, and in that sense, more individualistic.

BULOSAN NOW: ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

IN WHAT WAYS IS BULOSAN'S LIFE AND WORK RELEVANT FOR A NEW GENERATION OF ACTIVISTS-SCHOLARS?

MARILYN: It's interesting to see how a work is read and interpreted within each distinct historical period: in the wake of World War II; in terms of the U.S.'s cold war with Russia; in the '60s during the student revolutions and the Vietnam war protests; and today, with American involvement in Middle East politics and the sad repetition of past mistakes. While the spirit of the sixties seems to have been systemically thwarted by the distraction of bread and circuses coupled with increased disparities in wealth, one can hope that the current generation of scholars can draw from Bulosan's works as sixties activist scholars have. In this sense, Bulosan's social criticism is as relevant today as then.

LANE: I agree with what Marilyn says, insofar as our consideration of Bulosan's life indicates how much work we need to generate on the pre-war, war, and cold war periods, in terms of first and second generation Asian Americans. FIOA requests can sometimes offer new and relatively untapped sources for such research.

DOES YOUR RESEARCH HELP OPEN A SPACE TO HELP US GRAPPLE WITH LOCAL AND GLOBAL POLITICS TODAY?

MARILYN: The growth of U.S. and world corporate capitalism, exhibited by NAFTA, the WTO, and now the secretive negotiations around the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), only reinforce the fact that the colonialist framework that Bulosan critiques in the Philippines itself, as well as the economic system that he and his alter ego Allos struggled against within U.S. borders, has not only sustained itself, but has expanded, in alliance with other world powers. New analyses that describe the configurations of power in current times are of course necessary. However, the historical conditions in which Bulosan's narratives are couched, and the celebrations of human beings against systems of domination and inequality, remain viable. Also, Carlos's articulation of hope for the future is of utmost importance today.

LANE: Absolutely. Bulosan's art/activism raised a host of questions that are still pertinent today. I'm curious, for example, about what risks we face today if we speak up, or organize, in opposition to the federal government's agendas. Will we be put on lists? Will we be investigated, and subject to surveillance? Looking at Bulosan's experiences with the FBI, how many of us would voluntarily put ourselves in a situation where we would be subject to the same scrutiny and pressures that Bulosan was?

Also, it is perfectly clear that Bulosan's politics and progressive activism excited trans-Pacific attention and concern if not conspiracies. Amidst brutal acts related to low-intensity warfare with Hukbalahap rebels, and surveillance and detention of civilians suspected of communist sympathies, agents of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) in the Philippines left no stone unturned in their quest to quash dissent. MIS agents seized Bulosan's correspondence with Filipino activists and Defense Minister Ramon Magsaysay claimed to have evidence that Bulosan, through Joaquin Po's Popular Book Store in the Philippines, was the lynchpin in terms of communications between communists in the U.S. and in the Philippines. The following 1951 news article from *The Manila Chronicle* illustrates the ways in which the communist "other" was constructed by the neocolonial Philippine government and military as a way to vilify and eradicate democratic movements for social justice in Philippine society.

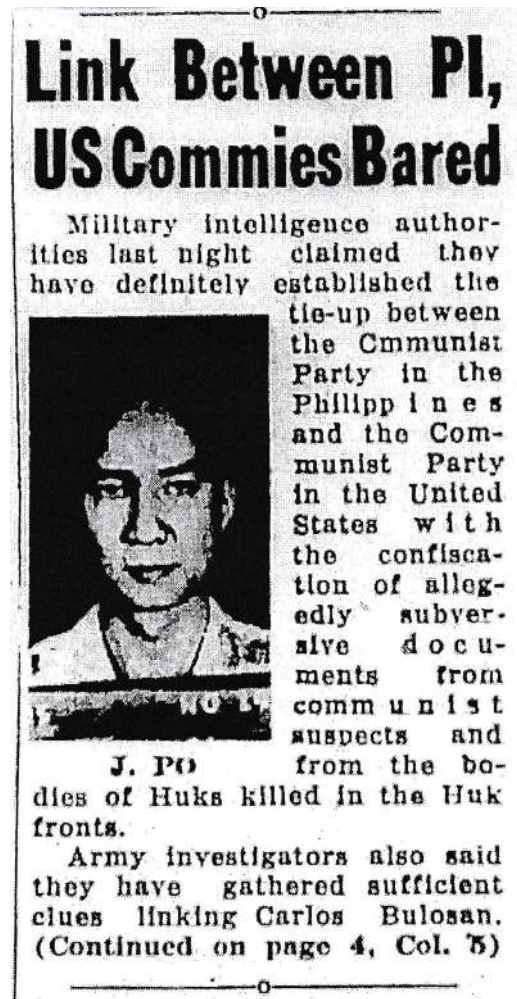


Fig. 1: "Link Between PI, US Commies Bared."

The Manila Chronicle, 30 Jan. 1951, Tuesday, page 1. Transcript in Appendix

Link Between PI, . . .

(Continued from page 1)
foremost Filipino short story writer now residing in the United States, with the Huk organization, following capture of Huk documents in an encounter between government forces and dissident elements in Mayaguez, Macalelon, Quezon, last January 14.

Aside from the discovery of the connections between the local Communist Party and that of the United States, military authorities likewise announced that with the confession of Joaquin Po, owner of the Popular Bookstore on Teodora Alonzo and the confiscation of documents in his possession, the MIS has broken the "message center" of the local communist movement and other foreign countries, particularly the United States.

The documentary evidence in the possession of the MIS, army probes also revealed, also proves that Manila councillor Amado Hernandez, who was one of 18 persons taken by army authorities for investigation last Friday, has been communicating to what investigators believe to be communist elements in the United States.

One such letter, which is now in the hands of the MIS, was written by "Victor," (supposed to be the alias of the city councillor) to one Julie (which army investigators believe to be the alias of Carlos Bulosan) in which Victor informed Julie of the political situation in the Philippines.

Page four of said letter which was released to the press last night said in part: "You will remember the commitment of our brothers in Stockton, Cabanilla and Valdez and others. Will you please remind them that if they are willing to help at all, this is the most opportune time. Some day may be too late. Don't forget the saying, 'anahin pa ang damo kung patay na ang kabayo?' (What use is there for grass if the horse is dead?)

"While we realize and appreciate that our brothers there have their own problems and difficulties, in which we fully back them morally and spiritually," the letter continued, "we also believe that they are in a better position to extend a helping hand to their brothers in distress in the home country."

This letter, army probes said, is one of the many clues they have in their possession which indicates clearly a tie-up between the Red organization in the United States and the local communist party.

Another portion of the letter which led MIS agents to conclude that the Popular Bookstore owned by Joaquin Po is the message center of the Philippine Communist Party and the one in the United States, is the part which says: "Important: From now on and until a new advice, write to me at this address: L. A. Khan c/o Popular Books Store, 298 Doroteo Jose, St., Manila, Philippines." The letter was signed by "Victor."

With respect to the suspected membership of Carlos Bulosan in the local communist party and the Huk organization, the MIS claimed to have in its files a letter purportedly sent by Bulosan to Luis Taruc. The letter, which was allegedly among documents found in the bodies of dissidents killed in an encounter in Mayaguez, Macalelon, Quezon last January 14, was believed to have been sent to the Huk supreme through Councillor Hernandez.

The letter said: "I like to extend my congratulations to you through Amado, whose presence in America cemented the progressive spirit of peoples on this continent and in that island, with the fond hope that I will be able to put all our efforts into a big book for the world." The letter was signed—"Carlos Bulosan."

Meanwhile, five more Red suspects were released by the MIS yesterday. These include the editor of a local paper and two of his staff members. This brings to 12 the total number of Red suspects who have been set free by MIS authorities since their round-up last Friday.

Fig. 2: "Link Between PI, US Commies Bared."

The Manila Chronicle, 30 Jan. 1951, Tuesday, page 4. Transcript in Appendix

This front-page article appeared January 30, 1951 in the Metro Manila newspaper, The Manila Chronicle. The anonymous piece repeats Armed Forces of the Philippines/MIS allegations that Carlos Bulosan was a communist, citing as proof letters between Bulosan and Amado Hernandez, a politician, labor leader and alleged communist, as well as Luis Taruc, a Hukbalahap commander. Two interesting points are that similar letters appear in Bulosan's unclassified FBI dossier, but by 1955 an FBI agent acknowledged in a confidential memo to J. Edgar Hoover that Bulosan's letters most probably had to do with research for a novel-in-progress. Nonetheless, the damage had been done.

What is more, U.S. intelligence agencies were clearly involved in Magsaysay's accusations against Bulosan, Po, and the Popular Book Store as the following article from *The Manila Times* demonstrates. To my knowledge, although scholars have highlighted collusion between the U.S. and Philippine government and military, no one has examined the probable connections between the FBI, the U.S. Army, and the CIA, on the one hand, and various intelligence agencies in the Philippines, on the other hand, in regard to the persecution of writer-activists such as Bulosan and Amado Hernandez. Concomitantly, both men were subject to what might be thought of as transnational or "trans-Pacific" surveillance in terms of joint operations coordinated by various agencies of both the U.S. and Philippine governments in the first decade after the end of World War II.

Defense chief orders arrest of second MIS man for third degree

By ANATOLIO LITONJUA

A new manhandling case of detainees in Camp Murphy was disclosed last night by Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay while he was interrogating persons picked up by military intelligence service operatives.

Secretary Magsaysay said he ordered the immediate placing of Lt. Cristobal Irlanda, MIS officer, under technical arrest and possible court-martial as soon as the information was brought to his attention last night.

The alleged victim in the case was Macario T. Vicencio, a Manila Times reporter, who told the secretary of the alleged manhandling. Magsaysay learned that Vicencio was hit in the abdomen during the investigation.

The defense secretary acted swiftly on the case and placed Irlanda under technical arrest.

The first case, that of Lt. Gregorio Perez, allegedly responsible for the manhandling of Joaquin Po, is also being acted upon with dispatch. Magsaysay designated Capt. Mariano A. Yenke, department investigator, to probe the case and submit the results immediately. Both Lieutenants Perez and Irlanda will be submitted to a prompt pre-trial investigation.

(Continued on page 10, column 1)

Fig. 3. "Defense chief orders arrest of second MIS man for third degree."

By Anatolio Litonjua. *The Manila Times*, 30 Jan. 1951, Tuesday, page 1. Transcript in Appendix.

Assuming that there is a potential aggressor, which at the moment possesses the initiative for an attack on western Europe (which the United States is committed to defend), does it make sense for the United States to "go slow" on policy, and at the

same time, if America is to pour its war power into Europe, the reason for this must be told—not disguised, because it cannot be disguised.

M. Pieven may be ready to wait until Europe is armed. "How about the other fellow?" Will he wait?

Defense chief orders arrest

(Continued from page 1)
tigation and possibly a court-martial.

Brig. Gen. Calista Duque, AFP chief of staff, last night declared that he would personally investigate all the detainees at Camp Murphy. Should he find the practice of manhandling by MIS operatives widespread, he would conduct a sweeping shake-up of the entire military intelligence service, Duque said.

Evidence tending to link Joaquin Pu y Yap, Filipino-Chinese owner of the Popular Book Store, at present detained in Camp Murphy, and Carlos Bulosan, Filipino writer residing in the United States, with the Communist parties in the Philippines and America, was disclosed by Defense Secretary Ramon Mag-ayay last night.

The arrest last week of Joaquin Pu y Yap, owner of the Popular Book Store, for investigation, it was revealed, broke open a "message center" for Communist activities between the Philippines and America.

Copies of two documents released by the Military Intelligence Service pointed to activities which indicated a close understanding between the Red movement in the Philippines and in the United States.

In the first document, a note captured by AFP authorities in a raid on a Huk camp at Maguindanao in Cotabato province last January 13, the following text was reproduced:

"To Luis Tarcus—

"I like to extend my congratulations to you through Amado, whose presence in America cemented the progressive spirit of peoples on this continent and in those islands, with the fond hope that I will be able to put all our efforts into a big book for the world.

"(Sgd.) CARLOS BULOSAN"

The letter was hand-written in blue ink on a sheet of paper. The handwriting was identified by Lt. Col. Carmelo E. Barbano, G-1 chief, AFP, as that of Bulosan. Col. Barbano and Bulosan roomed together for sometime in Los Angeles, California a few years back. The colonel was on vacation from advance courses in artillery at Fort Sill.

The second document shown to the press yesterday was signed by one "L. A. Kahn, c/o Popular Book Store, 284 Decoto Jones St., Manila, Philippines." Addressed to one "Julie" who was identified as the alias of a

Fig. 4. "Defense chief orders arrest of second MIS man for third degree." By Anatolio Litonjua. *The Manila Times*, 30 Jan. 1951, Tuesday, page 10. Transcript in Appendix.

Filipino registrars in the United States, the letter talked of "Julie's political activities" in the U.S. "Kahn" told "Julie": "Knowing on whose side are those whom you are supporting, I can see that you are in good company. But whatever you do and wherever you are temporarily stationed, I beg of you to keep alive and well during the coming two or three decades years. This is also En-lung's prayer. The future is within our reach and there are a thousand things to do."

The letter talked of corruption in the Philippine government and the recruiting of 10,000 men for the Armed Forces of the Philippines while there is widespread unemployment. "Kahn" talked of "commitments" of Filipinos in America and the need to organize early to extend "a helping hand to their brothers in distress in the home country."

The names of "a young progressive" in San Francisco, Ca. Gloria, and a Vietnamese "patriot" of Bangkok were mentioned, also indicating the establishment of correspondence with them. "Kahn" observed Ho Chi Minh's movement in Indochina "is closely similar to the liberation struggle in our own land."

MIS authorities believe that "Kahn" is one of the Filipinos detained at Camp Murphy at present.

Regarding Joaquin Po y Tan, being investigated by MIS authorities, he admitted to ownership of the Popular Book Store which the MIS believe has been the "message center" of the Communist Party in this country. The book store, it was disclosed, appeared to be the main source of Communist literature imported to the Philippines "not for general resale but for distribution to members of the Communist party here."

A cryptic check, according to the defense spokesman, traced that Joaquin was "definitely associated with Communist party members."

The arrest of Po and the others was made to "sever the line of communications" between the Communist parties in the Philippines and the U.S.

The apprehension of Joaquin Po, the spokesman disclosed was conducted through the joint efforts of the MIS and the intelligence service of the U.S. Army.

Five other detainees at Camp Murphy were released by the MIS authorities yesterday. They are Jose A. Lanza, editor of the Philippines Herald, Bienville-side Potenciano, Herald reporter, and three CIO members, Graciano Plegaria, Proquinto Cruz, and Teofilo Agreavante. This makes a total of 10 men released as of yesterday, leaving 16 people still being detained for investigation.

The cases of the rest of the detainees are being closely studied by MIS investigators and it is likely that many more may be cleared in the next few days, it was announced.

Salvador Barang, general manager of the Graphic House Incorporated, one of the 26 persons "invited" by the Military Intelligence Service to Camp Murphy last Friday and who was released with the first batch of cleared suspects, lauded MIS agents for their gentlemanly behavior all throughout his stay at the army "hotel."

Picked up last Friday, Barang said, he was at his office at the Graphic House when MIS agents "invited" him to Camp Murphy. Armed with search warrants, he said, the intelligence agents searched his office and extended the invitation to his two other companions, Rutiland Alibang (also released with him) and Juan Quenda, Jr. Later he said, the MIS accompanied him to his home at 1523 Legaspi, "my City" where they also searched his belongings.

Second day, after having searched his residence, the MIS agents took him to Camp Murphy "to shed light on some vague information regarding some political activities." Admitting he was a business partner in a construction company of Angel Bakong, now back in 1945, he denied any political activities.

Fig. 5. "Defense chief orders arrest of second MIS man for third degree." By Anatolio Litonjua. *The Manila Times*, 30 Jan. 1951, Tuesday, page 10. Transcript in Appendix.

This front-page article was also published on Tuesday, January 30, 1951 in The Manila Times. When read in conjunction with the article from The Manila Chronicle, two key points are clear. First, then-Secretary of Defense Ramon Magsaysay was the ultimate source of the accusations linking Carlos Bulosan to labor organizers like Amado Hernandez and Hukbalahap leaders such as Luis Taruc, both of whom were subsequently arrested and charged with sedition related to communist proclivities. Second, The Manila Times article explicitly reveals the collaborative relationship between the “Military Intelligence Service” [MIS] of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and U.S. Army Intelligence. This is a fascinating illustration of the post-war neocolonial political landscape where, as historian Alfred McCoy explains, ties between the US and the Philippines were directly played out in terms of “transnational” surveillance and political repression. As difficult as it is to research such linkages—we were even told by family members that it might be “dangerous”—it is crucial to try and do so.¹⁰

So Bulosan’s work—his writing and his activism—had very much to do with the articulation of the local and the global. His status as a Filipino national, American labor organizer, and a cultural worker, puts him at the intersection of the local and the global in ways that readers have come to appreciate more and more over the years.

HOW DID YOUR WORK ON BULOSAN CHANGE YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF HIM?

MARILYN: It reaffirms for me that Bulosan’s vision was far-reaching. When I began archival work, I really knew little about the individual except what was within the pages of his fiction and poetry, and what scholars and critics wrote about him. I still think he remains somewhat enigmatic. One thing is true, and it cannot be altered or disguised by any distortion or lie that the FBI put into the dossier: Bulosan had deep convictions, and stuck to them no matter what the cost.

LANE: I gained a great deal of respect for the man, whatever his flaws may have been. He held very progressive ideas for his day including things that many of us were brought up to believe in: democracy; immigrant rights; fair play; free speech; unions as the basis for workers’ livelihood; anti-colonial critique in terms of U.S.-Philippine relations. This got Bulosan into all kinds of hot water during the McCarthy era. One could argue, as we do, that FBI harassment was part and parcel of the suffering he endured during his final years in Seattle.

At this level, it is one thing to say that Bulosan squandered his talents, his money, and he drank himself into an early grave, as some commentators have actually

asserted.¹¹ It is another thing to draw from the FBI files to put this into context. Bulosan may indeed have had various faults or limitations. However, Bulosan was blacklisted, defamed, and could not find employment or opportunities to make a living commensurate with his abilities and achievements. Poor, and increasingly isolated, the cumulative effect of the Bureau's investigation created circumstances that materially shortened Bulosan's life by years. And yet he managed to write *The Cry and the Dedication*, which is a powerful novel interrogating the price of revolutionary transformation.

The ironic thing is that nowadays, many of the ideals that Bulosan held that got him into so much trouble would be the kinds of things that a registered Democrat would feel fairly comfortable espousing.

RELATED SHORT AND LONG RANGE GOALS OF THE BULOSAN PROJECT

LANE: Well, we hope to put out a number of publications related to Bulosan's FBI files and information (and disinformation) presented therein that are relevant to his biography and writing. When we've mined the dossier in terms of our research we also intend to make the central file available, perhaps by donating the material to the Bulosan Papers held by the special collections department at the University of Washington.

MARILYN: We'd like to start a conversation pertaining not only to Carlos Bulosan, but also to individual rights, particularly in terms of activists and artists who belong to minority and/or immigrant communities. Right now I am certain that Muslim Americans and Americans of Middle Eastern ancestry are subject to heightened attention and surveillance. Who the government chooses to look at and whose ideas they find threatening have significant implications that merit discussion. It does not stop there. The perception of who is the enemy is constantly shifting.

Also, if we look at the case of Japanese Americans during the war, the whole question of whom the government is able to turn into informers is a live issue. Even in the past tense, in Lane's own family, this is a topic that I've seen him argue about with close relatives. If we have trouble looking at such developments in the distant past, how prepared are we to look at them today? Even if there seems to be a lot of "fiction" in the FBI files in the way of misinformation, the individuals who were informers were real and not fictive. It would be interesting to speculate on the process of gathering information. It's obvious that there is a level of inaccuracy in this type information gathering. I'd like to see if this starts a ripple effect that will

involve the family members of people involved. I'm wondering if this will ignite something. It would be interesting.

LANE: I'd like to see students and colleagues build on what we've accomplished so far. It would be great if someone took the FBI to court to make them de-classify the redacted parts of Bulosan's file. This was what Jon Wiener did for John Lennon's FBI files (see his book, *Gimmie Some Truth* [University of California Press, 1999]).

Also, if you look at David Price's book on the FBI investigations of activist anthropologists, you can see that a whole history can be written from these kinds of materials if they are re-read carefully and critically.

Along these same lines, I'd like to see a whole study of the Local 7 deportation cases that mines the information that the FBI collected on the union's leadership and rank-and-file members.

FINAL THOUGHTS

MARILYN: It is interesting to see that there are so many holes and untruth in what the FBI gathered as "data." It is also interesting to reflect on the power of government in the name of national security, which brings us to today and the level of paranoia that is generated by government and popular media.

I am not condoning any violence that has already happened on all sides at all, but I think that we ourselves should not be naive to the goals of political power and domination, and to the justification of wars in order to sustain and augment that domination. Much of the public is still buying into the myths that are created by governments. While it is true that many people are speaking out against the war, we must be conscious of different forms of political repression and racial profiling that have emerged within the context of the Global War on Terror: those who are harassed because their politics seem too left-leaning; or their color, ethnicity, or way of dressing makes them suspect; or all of the above.

In fact, in a July 17, 2015 CNN Newsroom broadcast, news anchor Carol Costello cited a recent study by the Southern Poverty Law Center, stating that "there were sixty-three incidents of domestic terrorism between April 1, 2009 and February 1, 2015," and that "a clear majority" (74%) were attacks carried out by "lone wolves." Most importantly, the only commonality of these perpetrators was that they were young men in their twenties, and that "as recent arrests show, the faces of these attackers aren't represented by just one community. These lone wolves come from

every community.” She continued to cite the same study to the effect that when it came to motivation, there was “almost a split between anti-government sentiment (49%) and ideologies of hate (51%).” CNN national security analyst, Juliette Kayyem corroborated this, and asserted that “the majority of these domestic terrorism incidents are actually not Islam/Muslim related,” but are in fact generated by hatred based on white supremacy. Given these realities, it would be interesting to see if such information is ignored by some members of the American public, given the rise of Islamophobia, fueled by the rhetoric of political conservatives.

Many who look at the McCarthy era in hindsight recognize the nature of its paranoia. I would like to think we had learned our lesson from this, but I don’t think so. If you look at the parallels between Pearl Harbor and 9/11, both on American territory, one would hope that innocent people today would not be incarcerated, but that’s not true. It is just more hidden or it is exported, so as not to accrue national attention, as there are global power elites who want to protect their interests around the world. I believe that there’s a lot more sophistication behind the protection of these interests that are disguised by the rhetoric of homeland patriotism.

Freedom of speech now as then is at risk. Bulosan said (as found in his files), “*Every word is a weapon for freedom.*” That Bulosan was regarded as a threat at all attests to all of the concerns that we have tried to express here.

APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPTS OF NEWS ARTICLES FROM MANILA, PHILIPPINES

“Link Between PI, US Commies Bared”

THE MANILA CHRONICLE

Tuesday, January 30, 1951 page 1 [front page story]; continued on page 4.

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PAGE 1

Military intelligence authorities last night claimed they have definitely established the tie-up between the Communist [*sic*] Party in the Philippines and the Communist Party in the United States with the confiscation of allegedly subversive documents from communist suspects and from the bodies of Huks killed in the Huk fronts.

Army investigators also said they have gathered sufficient clues linking Carlos Bulosan,

(Continued on page 4, column 5)

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PAGE 4

BANNER, “Link Between PI,...”

(Continued from page 1)

foremost Filipino short story writer now residing in the United States, with the Huk organization, following capture of Huk documents in the encounter between government forces and dissident elements in Mayupis [*sic*], Macalelon, Quezon last January 14.

Aside from the discovery of the connections between the local Communist Party and that of the United States, military authorities likewise announced that with the confession of Joaquin Po, owner of the Popular Bookstore on Teodora Alonzo and the confiscation of documents in his possession, the MIS has broken the “message center” of the local communist movement and other foreign countries, particularly the United States.

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One such letter, which is now in the hands of the MIS, was written by "Victor," (supposed to be the alias of the city councilor) to one Julie (which army investigators believe to be the alias of Carlos Bulosan) in which Victor informed Julie of the political situation in the Philippines.

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“Defense chief orders arrest of second MIS man for third degree”

By Anatolio Litonjua

THE MANILA TIMES

Tuesday, January 30, 1951, p 1 [front page story]; continued on p 10.

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PAGE 1

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PAGE 10

BANNER, “Defense chief orders arrest”

(Continued from page 1)

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The arrest last week of Joaquin Po y Yap, owner of The Popular Book Store, for investigation, it was revealed, broke open a “message center” for communist activities between the Philippines and America.

Copies of two documents released by the Military Intelligence Service referred to activities which indicated a close understanding between the Red movement in the Philippines and in the United States.

In the first document, a note captured by AFP authorities in a raid on a Huk camp in Mayapis, Quezon province, last January 13 [number not completely clear, here]. The following text was reproduced:

“To Luis Taruc:

“I like to extend my congratulations to you through Amado, whose presence in America cemented the progressive spirit of peoples on this continent and in those islands, with the ... hope that I will be able to put all our efforts into a big book for the world.”

“(Sgd) CARLOS BULOSAN”

The letter was hand written in blue ink on a piece of paper. The handwriting was identified by Lt. Col. Carmelo Z. Barbero, G-1 chief, AFP, as that of Bulosan. Col. Barbero and Bulosan roomed together for some time in Los Angeles, California a few years back. The colonel was on vacation from advance courses in artillery from Fort Sill.

The second document shown to the press yesterday was signed by one “L.A. Kahn, c/o Popular Book Store, 298 Doroteo Jose St., Manila Philippines.” Addressed to “Julie,” who was identified as the alias of a Filipino repatriate in the United States, the letter talked of “Julie’s political activities” in the US. “Kahn” told “Julie” “...Knowing on whose side are those whom you are supporting, I can see that you are in good company. But whatever you do and wherever you are temporarily situated, I beg of you to keep alive and well during the coming two or three decisive years. This is also Enteng’s prayer. The future is within our reach and there are a thousand things to do.”

The letter talked of corruption in the Philippine government and the recruiting of 10,000 men for the Armed Forces of the Philippines while there is widespread unemployment. “Kahn” talked of “commitments of Filipinos in America and the need to organize early to extend “a helping hand to their brothers in distress in the home country.”

The name of a “young progressive” in San Francisco, California, and a Vietnamese “patriot” of Bangkok were mentioned, also indicating the establishment of correspondence with them. “Kahn” observed Ho Chi Minh’s movement in Indochina “is closely similar to the liberation struggles in our own land.”

MIS authorities believe that “Kahn” is one of the Filipinos detained at Camp Murphy at present.

Regarding Joaquin Po y Tan being investigated by MIS authorities, he admitted to ownership of the Popular Book Store which the MIS believe has been the “message center” of the Communist Party in this country. The book store, it was disclosed, appeared to be the main

source of the communist literature imported to the Philippines “not for general resale but for distribution to members of the Communist party here.”

A cryptocheck [*sic*], according to the defense spokesman, bared that Joaquin was “definitely associated with Communist party members.”

The arrest of Po and the other was made to “sever the line of communications” between the Communist parties in the Philippines and the US.

The apprehension of Joaquin Po, the spokesman disclosed was conducted through the joint efforts of the MIS and the intelligence service of the US Army.

Five more detainees at Camp Murphy were released by the MIS authorities yesterday. They were Jose A. Lansang, editor of the Philippines Herald, Bienvenido Potenciano, Herald reporter, and three CLO members, Graciano Plegaria, Pioquinto Cruz, and Teofilo Agravante. This makes a total of 10 men released as of yesterday, leaving 16 people still being detained for investigation.

The cases of the rest of the detainees are being closely studied by MIS investigators and it is likely that many more may be cleared in the next few days, it was announced.

Salvador Bareng, general manager of the Graphic House Incorporated, one of the 26 persons “invited” by the Military Intelligence Service to Camp Murphy last Friday and who was released with the first batch of cleared suspects lauded MIS agents for their gentlemanly behavior throughout his stay at the army “hotel.”

Picked up last Friday, Bareng said, he was at his office at the Graphic House when MIS agents “invited” him to Camp Murphy. Armed with search warrants, he said, the intelligence agents search his office and extended the invitation to his two other companions, Natividad Alobog [*sp? – Ed.*] (also released with him) and Juan Quesada, Jr. Later, he said, the MIS accompanied him to his house at 16-D Legaspi, [word unintelligible, but it might be “Bisay”] City, where they also searched his belongings.

Bareng said, after having searched his residence, the MIS agents took him to Camp Murphy, “to shed light on some vague information regarding some politburo indictees.” Admitting he was a business partner in a construction company of Angel Baking way back in 19XX [*unreadable numbers – Ed.*], he denied any political connection with the alleged politburo member whatsoever.¹²

Notes

1. I'd like to acknowledge Marilyn Alquizola, Lane Ryo Hirabayashi and the University Press of America (an imprint of Rowman & Littlefield) for kind permission to reprint our dialogue piece titled "The Bulosan Files: Another Layer in an Ongoing Dialogue."
2. American Studies cultural theorists Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean explain the significance of the concept of hybridity within U.S. ethnic literature: "hybridity pulls towards sameness and fusion while also allowing for the importance of difference as a creative, new energy brought to the mix." They also explain its limitations: "What hybridity cannot do is to resolve the differences and tensions between groups or ideologies, but instead establishes a problematic in which 'other denied knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority' (77). See Campbell and Kean's *American Cultural Studies: An Introduction to American Culture* (Routledge, 2015).
3. See the "Works Cited and for Further Reading" section that follows, under our last names ["Alquizola," and "Hirabayashi"] for a number of our publications over the past twenty-four years that are related to our work on Bulosan.
4. An excellent study of how Local 7 leadership were subject to McCarthy-era persecution is detailed in De Vera ("Without Parallel").
5. See Feria (*Sound of Falling Light*).
6. Marilyn Alquizola found this letter in the Carlos Bulosan Papers, Special Collections, University of Washington; see Alquizola and Hirabayashi ("Carlos Bulosan's Final Defiant Acts").
7. A standard account of the rise and travails of the Hukbalahap is available in Kerkvliet (*The Huk Rebellion*). It is notable that Kerkvliet, a political scientist based for many years at the University of Hawai'i, concluded that Huk leader Luis Taruc's concerns were more squarely situated vis-à-vis a peasant rebellion, as opposed to an ideologically-motivated communist movement.
For a fascinating account of the history of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and the Constabulary Police, with special attention to the ties between the Philippines and the U.S.A. in terms of the repression of dissidents, see McCoy (*Policing America's Empire*).
8. This letter appears in Carlos Bulosan's declassified "central file" (i.e., created and held at the Bureau's headquarters in Washington, D.C.).
9. The historical and substantive context for Bulosan's posthumously-published novel, *The Cry and the Dedication* (1995), is loosely based on the Huk rebellion of the late 1940s and early 1950s.
10. Etsuko Taketani, University of Tsukuba, Japan, recently published a fascinating article documenting the travails of African American writer Langston Hughes who was subject to what she calls "transpacific intelligence dragnets," during the 1930s. Intelligence gathered about Hughes from different agents colluding in the U.S., Japan, and Singapore came back to haunt Hughes during the 1950s McCarthy era

(Taketani, “Spies and Spiders”). In this sense, transpacific surveillance of writers-dissidents-activists in the U.S. has pre-war roots that remain largely unexamined.

11. Perhaps the most significant biographer and critic who espoused this point of view is Susan Evangelista (*Carlos Bulosan and His Poetry*).
12. In comparing the text of these two articles it is apparent there are certain contradictions that will take more research to resolve. In most instances, for example, the surname of Joaquin is listed as “Po y Yap” but on at least one occasion it is rendered as “Po y Tan.” Another example is that the quotes from what was alleged to be Bulosan’s letter to Luis Taruc are slightly different. One article cites the letter as saying “in that island,” while the other article for some reason has it as “in those islands.” It is also appropriate to note here that both articles have various typos, as well as text that couldn’t be deciphered because of the quality of the microfilmed copy—the only medium that the two newspapers were available in.

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