

Import of the Archive: U.S. Colonial Rule of the Philippines and the Making of American Archival History. CHERYL BEREDO. Sacramento, CA: Litwin Books, 2013. 157 pp. ISBN 978-1-936117-72-7.

Since the early 2000s, a growing body of literature has been interrogating colonial archives and the continuing effects of colonial modes of archiving and research on knowledge production, memory, and identity. By examining the colonial archives built by American forces during the US rule of the Philippines, between 1898 and 1916, Cheryl Beredo's *Import of the Archive* contributes to this literature by both tracing out the archival logic of American colonial rule and situating American archives and archiving within what historian Tony Ballantyne has called the imperial web through which archival materials, peoples, and ideas circulated.¹

While its examination of the US's imperial archival logic makes *Import* worth reading, Beredo's book is important for also challenging the Eurocentrism that continues to marginalize colonies as sites where the modern world and its archiving were developed. Focused on the years between the outset of the Spanish-American War and the *Philippine Autonomy Act*, Beredo's exploration of the changing role of archives in America's imperial exploits is nonetheless expansive. Comprising five chapters, *Import* is primarily organized around three ways that archives were involved in US imperial politics: supporting the colonization of the Philippine islands and their inhabitants; instigating an anti-imperial archives; and transforming the islands and their people through land registration. On the first of these points, Beredo argues that American officials saw Spain's colonial archives as a key spoil of the Spanish-American War because these records were an essential means of coming to know the islands and their inhabitants so as to rule it and them. However, as Beredo points out, the colonial archives also came to support the US's moral argument that its imperialism was benevolent. As part of America's self-appointed "white man's burden" of modernizing the Philippines, archiving efforts were placed alongside other civil engineering and education projects as proof of benevolent efforts to create a modern, efficient colonial bureaucracy, efforts that concealed the violence of martial order.

Discourses of US benevolence in the Philippines were used less to convince Filipinos of America's good intentions than to continue to garner support within the States for imperial expansion in the face of a growing anti-imperialist movement. Beredo shows how the colonial archives, as the source

1 Tony Ballantyne, "Archives, Empires and Histories of Colonialism," *Archifacts* (April 2004): 21–36, accessed 24 January 2015, http://www.aranz.org.nz/Site/publications/archifacts/Archifacts_Archive_Contents_4.aspx.

for pro-imperial publications and reports, were key in the battle to win the hearts and minds of Americans. However, by tracing how anti-imperialists built their own archives to document imperial violence and failure, Beredo is clear that the colonial archives were not the only archives winning hearts and minds. Furthermore, Beredo shows that the anti-imperial archives broke down the hard and fast distinctions between “overseas” and “at home,” as failures in the United States – racial inequality, labour disputes, and the devastation of American Indian peoples – were used by anti-imperialists to raise serious doubts about America’s capacity to “civilize” anyone.

Lastly, Beredo argues that, in their role as land registry after 1903, the archives were instrumental in physically and psychically transforming the Philippines. As the site for sorting out Spanish cadastral records as well as registering new titles, the archives were key in determining who owned what and how. On the one hand, determining ownership was important to an imperial administration interested in selling land to foreign investors in order to generate revenue for the indebted colonial administration. On the other hand, registering land was also seen by colonial administrators as “lessons in political education” (p. 68) that would modernize both the island’s agricultural production and Filipino sensibilities to create hard-working, entrepreneurial colonial subjects capable of one day ruling their own nation.

Import is a revised version of Beredo’s doctoral dissertation, defended in the Department of American Studies at the University of Hawai’i in 2011. In the process of producing *Import* for the Litwin Books series Archives, Archivist, and Society, edited by Richard J. Cox, some of the dissertation literature that was more specific to American and Filipino studies was removed, as was a chapter on the colonial archives’ role in transforming and regulating Filipino labour. While *Import* is no less convincing without this material, the missing chapter does speak more directly to Beredo’s interest in labour politics and, thus, her current role as the director of the Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

Import is perhaps best described as a product of the “archival turn” in American studies. As such, the archivist reader may have hoped that Beredo, having a master’s degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh, where she specialized in archival administration, would have explored in greater detail the methodologies and procedures of acquiring, describing, and conserving records developed and deployed by colonial archivists, as well as asking if and how these methods influenced archivists in the United States. Indeed, aside from a long quote from T.R. Schellenberg’s *Modern Archives* near the end of the book, the writings and voices of archivists are largely absent from her analysis. With Beredo’s desire to return archivists “to the claim that the work of archives can never be conducted outside of ideology” (p. 102), it is lamentable that she did not

put her work in conversation with archivists who are, as Eric Ketelaar puts it, marking and displacing the “tacit narratives” that govern archival thinking.²

Despite these absences, *Import* should prompt many archivists to rethink what constitutes American archiving as Beredo not only muddies any clear distinction between American archives and archiving “at home” and “over there,” but also broaches the possibility that Eurocentric biases have contributed to the marginalization of this imperial archival experiment in the study of American archiving. While Beredo notes how two factors contributed to this marginalization – both the resistance of archivists to interrogate the politics of archiving and the way imperialists after 1916 quickly wrote off a self-governing Philippines and its archives as failed experiments not worthy of study – she also raises the problem that the “truism in American archival history that archival principles in the United States were adapted from those established in Europe” makes the US’s rule in Asia appear “to have little to do with the establishment of archives at home” (p. 1). By showing how this one colonial site was integrated into the development of America’s archives and archiving, *Import* pushes archivists to account for imperialism when understanding modern archiving, and it challenges the dominance of Eurocentric narratives that conjure up 19th- and early-20th-century Euro-American countries as the lone authors of the modern world and its archives, which were then exported globally.³

With its title referring to both the action of importing the US’s colonial archives into American archival history and also arguing for the importance of these colonial sites and American imperialism to the American archival tradition, *Import* imagines a new global geography in which the modern

2 Eric Ketelaar, “Tacit Narratives: The Meanings of Archives,” *Archival Science* 1, no. 2 (2001): 132.

3 Eurocentric narratives re-inscribe the centrality of the Euro-American West as the lone author of the modern world by obfuscating the international circulations of people, ideas, and goods in which the “West” was formed and, thus, marginalize non-Western peoples and places by relegating them to the peripheries of the modern world. On Eurocentrism, see J. M. Blaut, *The Colonizer’s Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (New York: Guilford Press, 1993); Enrique D. Dussel, “Beyond Eurocentrism: The World System and the Limits of Modernity,” trans. Eduardo Mendieta, in *The Cultures of Globalization*, eds. Fredrick Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (London: Duke University Press, 1998), 4–31; and Enrique D. Dussel, with Javier Krauel and Virginia C. Tuma, trans., “Europe, Modernity, and Eurocentrism: The Semantic Slippage of the Concept of ‘Europe,’” *Nepantla: Views from South* 1, no. 3 (2000): 465–78. See also Ernst Posner, “Some Aspects of Archival Development since the French Revolution,” *American Archivist* 3, no. 3 (July 1940): 159–72; while Posner’s article has been influential in securing the European origins of America’s modern records management tradition, American archivists continue to repeat these exclusive European origin narratives. See also Randall C. Jimerson, *Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009), 24–75; and Maynard Brichford, “The Origins of Modern European Archival Theory,” *Midwestern Archivist* 7, no. 2 (1982): 87–101.

archives developed. Thinking through this new geography has great potential for upsetting long-held beliefs about where modern archiving came from and the assumption that what happens “over there” has little effect on archives and archiving “here.” Indeed, in contrast to the *American Archivist* reviewer who questions the book’s relevance for present-day American archivists because it deals with events that took place “over one hundred years ago and more than seven thousand miles away,” it could be argued that examining American archiving according to its imperial circulations, where home and overseas are never too far apart, is particularly relevant for today’s American archivist who becomes invested in foreign archives through present-day US military operations.⁴

Focused as it is on American efforts in the Philippines, this book will particularly intrigue and perhaps vex those who study American archiving. In the archival literature, *Import* complements and extends the work of Ricardo L. Punzalan regarding the influence of American archives on the Philippines’ archival tradition and identity. *Import* can also be read alongside Jeannette A. Bastian’s interrogations of the legacy of colonial archives and the problems that custody and non-textual memory texts pose to the post-colonial archival community.⁵ *Import* is also an important contribution to the archival turn, and closely resembles Ann Laura Stoler’s ethnographic approach to archives, even though *Import* focuses more on colonial archivists than Stoler’s writing ever did.⁶ Indeed, while Beredo, like Stoler, shows the incomplete, contested, and contradictory nature of colonial projects and their archives, she also focuses almost exclusively on the colonizer’s discourses. As a result, Filipinos largely appear as objects of discussions as opposed to complex actors in the US’s colonial project.

While some Canadian archivists might find this chapter in American archiving interesting in and of itself, Beredo’s book also has the potential to

- 4 Jarrett M. Drake, review of *Import of the Archive: U.S. Colonial Rule of the Philippines and the Making of American Archival History*, *American Archivist* 77, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2014): 571.
- 5 Ricardo L. Punzalan, “Archives of the New Possession: Spanish Colonial Records and the American Creation of a ‘National’ Archives for the Philippines,” *Archival Science* 6, no. 3–4 (December 2006): 381–92; Jeannette A. Bastian, “A Question of Custody: The Colonial Archives of the United States Virgin Islands,” *American Archivist* 64, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2001): 96–114; Jeannette A. Bastian, *Owning Memory: How a Caribbean Community Lost Its Archives and Found Its History* (Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2003); and Jeannette A. Bastian, “Reading Colonial Records through an Archival Lens: The Provenance of Place, Space and Creation,” *Archival Science* 6, no. 3–4 (December 2006): 267–84.
- 6 Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance,” *Archival Science* 2, no. 1–2 (January 2002): 87–109; and Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

inspire Canadian archivists to attend to the changing imperial and colonial circulations of materials, ideas, and peoples that link Canada's archives to various sites around the globe, while also challenging the Eurocentric truism that underwrites the dominant view of Canada's archival lineage. Indeed, *Import* should encourage Canadian archivists to further interrogate the role of Canada's archives in the material and psychic aspects of Canada's imperial efforts abroad and in the ongoing subordination of sovereign Indigenous nations "at home."⁷

Import of the Archive is a short book well worth reading. Aside from a few terms that need defining (for instance, "disciplinary violence" on p. 28), Beredo has produced a clearly written and impressively researched book. While familiarity with US imperial history may help readers embrace Beredo's text more quickly, they do not need to be experts in American and Filipino history to comprehend the import of this publication.

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Demystifying Copyright: A Researcher's Guide to Copyright in Canadian Libraries and Archives, 2nd ed. JEAN DRYDEN. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 2014. 84 pp. ISBN 978-0-88802-340-7.

Thirteen years have passed since the publication of the first edition of Jean Dryden's *Demystifying Copyright: A Researcher's Guide to Copyright in Canadian Libraries and Archives*. In the world of copyright, particularly in the Canadian context, that seems like a lifetime. Not only have the years between editions seen significant amendments to the *Copyright Act* and an unprecedented number of Supreme Court decisions affecting copyright, they have also been a time of rapid technological change that has stretched and

7 Todd Gordon, *Imperialist Canada* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishers, 2010); Adam J. Barker, "The Contemporary Reality of Canadian Imperialism: Settler Colonialism and the Hybrid Colonial State," *American Indian Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 325–51. On the place of Aboriginal modes of "archiving" in the Canadian context, see in particular Laura Millar, "Subject or Object? Shaping and Reshaping the Intersections between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Records," *Archival Science* 6, no. 3–4 (December 2006): 329–50; Shauna McRanor, "Maintaining the Reliability of Aboriginal Oral Records and Their Material Manifestations: Implications for Archival Practice," *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 64–88; and James Morrison, "Archives and Native Claims," *Archivaria* 9 (Winter 1979–80): 15–32. For a discussion of colonial archiving in Canada, see William Russell, "The White Man's Paper Burden: Aspects of Records Keeping in the Department of Indian Affairs, 1860–1914," *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984–85): 50–72.