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Karen Buenavista Hanna, Mark John Sanchez

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# Cultures of Empire and International Solidarity

*Karen Buenavista Hanna and Mark John Sanchez*

*Seams of Empire: Race and Radicalism in Puerto Rico and the United States.* By Carlos Alamo-Pastrana. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2016. 232 pages. \$79.95 (cloth).

*A Shadow over Palestine: The Imperial Life of Race in America.* By Keith P. Feldman. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017. 328 pages. \$24.95 (cloth). \$20.00 (paper).

*Tibak Rising: Activism in the Days of Martial Law.* Edited by Ferdinand C. Llanes. Manila: Anvil Publishing, 2012. 252 pages. ₱495 (paper).

*A Time to Rise: Collective Memoirs of the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP).* Edited by Rene Ciria Cruz, Bruce Occena, and Cindy Domingo. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2017. 368 pages. \$90.00 (cloth). \$30.00 (paper).

*Women against Marcos: Stories of Filipino and Filipino American Women Who Fought a Dictator.* Edited by Mila De Guzman. San Francisco: Carayan Press, 2016. 199 pages. \$15.00 (paper).

Shadows enable us to orient an object in the world, evidence its edges and contours, its mass and weave.

—Keith Feldman, *A Shadow over Palestine: The Imperial Life of Race in America*

If you want to understand us, listen to what we are not allowed to say.

—Political prisoners in the Philippines under the Marcos regime, *Tibak Rising: Activism in the Days of Martial Law*

Five recently released books in social movement and empire studies push us to better understand US Empire and anti-imperial mobilizations via the shadows and unspoken histories of international movement building. Through the analysis of novels, poetry, essays, public statements, newspapers, letters,

newsletters, scholarly writing, and compilations of activist biographies and memoirs, the authors and editors reveal the imbricated and relational dimensions of anti-imperial expressions. In her essay “Insufficient Difference,” Lisa Lowe uses the term *imbrication* as an analytic alternative to “excavate what has been suppressed under the rubric of [comparative difference].”<sup>1</sup> While sociologist Carlos Alamo-Pastrana explicitly builds on Lowe’s conceptualization of the term in his study of race and radicalism in Puerto Rico and the United States in *Seams of Empire*, critical ethnic studies scholar Keith Feldman similarly deploys a method resistant to comparison in *A Shadow over Palestine*. Feldman explores the ways that questions of Israel and Palestine constitute racial meaning in the United States and how shifting ideas about race in the US informed material and symbolic relationships to Israel and Palestine. Processes of imbrication and relationality are similarly evident in the activist biographies and memoirs that compile Ferdinand Llanes’s *Tibak Rising*, Mila De Guzman’s *Women against Marcos*, and Rene Ciria Cruz, Bruce Occena, and Cindy Domingo’s *A Time to Rise*. In these works we see how different political causes, undertaken from different political spaces, overlapped in the pursuit of opposition against the Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Movements for labor rights in the Philippines, immigrant rights in the United States, transnational women’s rights, and many more efforts all coalesced around an anti-Marcos position while retaining their own specificities. Their anti-Marcos stances were rooted in a fierce critique of the United States’ ongoing military, political, and economic relationships with the Philippines. In fact, opposition movements in the Philippines drew attention to this dynamic by referring to martial law rule as a “U.S.-Marcos dictatorship.” Yet these movements operated imperfectly and sometimes contradictorily to their goals, pursuing liberatory futures while also troubled by fractured internal dynamics. The five books overall deliver multiple models of anticolonial movement history-writing that neither overly romanticize nor simplify activist efforts. Overall, the authors and editors capture what Feldman calls “thick cultural work” to demonstrate the dynamics of connection across distinct mobilizations.

The connections forged between activists in different spaces is the focus of *Seams of Empire*, where Alamo-Pastrana documents previously under-recognized exchanges between cultural and political figures in the United States and Puerto Rico. These exchanges illuminate how ideas about race and empire mutually informed cultural workers’ attempts to reshape social and institutional arrangements in both places between 1940 and 1972. By describing how these social and political actors “worked against . . . simplistic comparative tropes

about race and colonialism” (10), Alamo-Pastrana reveals the diverse and sometimes contradictory efforts in which different actors engaged to better understand local conditions within existing and changing paradigms about racial difference, power, and nationalism.

At the heart of Alamo-Pastrana’s study of race within Puerto Rico’s relationship with the United States is a theoretical and methodological intervention, which he calls “racial imbrication.” Building on Lowe’s use of “imbrication,” Alamo-Pastrana’s application of the term is an alternative to rubrics of comparative difference that otherwise would “conceal and reduce” complexities and contradictions inherent in relational exchanges (12). Racial imbrication thus “reveals the contradictory meanings and social formations produced at the political edges of racial regimes while also exposing what the overlapping connections concealed from view” (12). Racial imbrication provides readers with a tool to enhance their understanding of how political and cultural work promoted the creation of “new [oppositional] class, racial, national, and gendered arrangements” while also unintentionally enacting racial power (13).

Each chapter in *Seams of Empire* examines various points of imbrication. Chapters 1 and 2 consider the rise of Black radicalism among US Black laborers and intellectuals and the Black press, respectively. Chapter 2 specifically investigates how Black journalists like Deton Brooks and Dr. George Little contemplated US racial capitalism and how they felt they could learn from Puerto Rico’s land and economic reforms and the possibilities for their implementation in the US South for African American empowerment. Chapter 3 similarly analyzes Black labor and poverty in the United States and Puerto Rico through the lens of liberal white writers who tended to idealize Puerto Rico for what they perceived as a racial democratic model for the US South. Likewise, chapter 4 investigates the novel of Edwin Rosskam, which explored the potential for class-based coalitions while also reinforcing color-blind racial politics and neglect for race-based connections between Puerto Ricans in the diaspora and on the island. Finally in chapter 5, Alamo-Pastrana documents the connections and politics forged between the *independista* Puerto Rican Left and Pan-Africanist internationalism. Here, Alamo-Pastrana highlights the interactions between *independista* Ana Livia Cordero and prominent Black radical leaders in Ghana and in the United States as formative for Cordero’s anticolonial project, which centered Puerto Rican Blackness and was subsequently modeled after the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). He argues that police repression, the Puerto Rican nationalist movement’s patriarchy, and the movement’s inattention to Puerto Rican racism all curtailed Cordero’s efforts.

Like Alamo-Pastrana, Feldman rejects comparative approaches in attempts to discuss political entanglements. Instead he calls for a method of relationality, which makes space for the “imperfectly realized analogies” that do so much to structure how race and empire are understood (xi). In *A Shadow over Palestine: The Imperial Life of Race in America*, Feldman demonstrates that through post-civil rights discourses on race, US-based cultural actors framed Israel and Palestine through US imperial culture in a manner that bound settler colonialism in Palestine to Jewish emancipation. Feldman argues, channeling Chandan Reddy’s *Freedom with Violence*, that freedom for Israel, in American popular and political imaginaries, meant violence against Palestine (57).

Feldman engages a wide range of actors conducting “thick cultural work” on a transnational scale (1). In chapter 1, he examines Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s efforts to condemn as anti-Semitic the UN Resolution 3379, which had articulated connections between Zionism and racism. Feldman understands Moynihan’s condemnation as rooted in the Cold War construction of the US and Israel as markers of the democratic free world (44). The next chapter moves toward Black Power’s conceptions of Palestine. Here, Feldman discusses SNCC’s “Third World Round-up,” its critiques of Zionism, and the links it created between Palestinian and Black liberation. It is in this section that Feldman’s invocations of relationality crystallize. For Feldman, the linking of Black Power and Palestinian liberation disrupted the “racial liberal consensus” and pointed toward contradictions within civil rights struggles in the United States (98). In making such connections, activists upended efforts of those like Moynihan to identify the US and Israel as epitomes of democracy and racial liberalism.

In chapter 3, Feldman turns to the ways that a folding in of Jewish difference in the US national body served as a sign of US exceptionalism (105). Chapter 4 focuses on the AAUG (Association of Arab American University Graduates) and draws out an alternative genealogy of ethnic and Arab American studies. In this section, Feldman points to ethnic studies as a shadow of area studies (168). He invokes AAUG member Edward Said’s notion of contrapuntal reading to point again to the intertwined and overlapping histories that Feldman’s use of imbrication appears to work toward (155). Across the political spectrum, actors such as Moynihan, Black Power activists, the AAUG, and feminist activists made sense of Israel and Palestine through their own localities and political orientations. These often-conflicting constructions overlapped in ways that also bound understandings of race and empire in the United States, Israel, and Palestine.

Finally, in chapter 5, Feldman attends to the conjunctures and disjunctures regarding Palestine among feminist mobilizations in the 1980s. Feldman dis-

cusses feminist debates in radical publications as well as the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) about anti-Semitism, anti-Arab racism, and Zionism to situate the importance of June Jordan's poem "Moving Towards Home." In the poem, Jordan refuses to tread carefully around Israel and Palestine. She rejects the taboo of direct attention to Holocaust history, choosing instead to confront Holocaust memory in a way that allowed, rather than deflected, critique of the contemporary Israeli state (210). In so doing, Jordan marked an imperfect analogy between Black womanhood and Palestinian personhood, not as a mode of comparison but as an identification of relationality and perhaps as a starting point of solidarity. For Feldman, Palestine has been constructed as shadow or taboo in the post-civil rights era (229). However, he argues that these very shadows can reveal defining dimensions of empire (222).

Alamo-Pastrana and Feldman both add to understandings of the circulations of US Empire. Alamo-Pastrana articulates the tensions and exclusions that occur within anti-imperial mobilizations, both in aspirational solidarities and in local movement building. Feldman, too, directs attention to the work of cultural actors who challenge as well as reinforce imperial constructions of race and nation.

For scholars of the Marcos martial law period in the Philippines, the contributions of Alamo-Pastrana and Feldman are significant. They help inform our approaches to understanding the violence of the Marcos dictatorship, the entanglements between the Marcos regime and the United States in foreign policy and solidarity activism, and finally methodological approaches to the transnational history of anti-Marcos dissidence. While Alamo-Pastrana's work on Puerto Rico enlightens readers on the vexed imperial transition from Spain to the United States, Feldman shines light on US empire's Cold War incarnations. In the case of the Philippines, a former Spanish and American colony with ongoing yet distinct entanglements with the United States, these works speak to different angles of US empire in the Philippines. While *Seams of Empire* allows us to draw imperfect analogies among early twentieth-century imperial transitions, Feldman's effort speaks to cultural work during the Cold War, which encompasses the period of Marcos's rule in the Philippines. Together, Alamo-Pastrana and Feldman present an important avenue toward understanding both the power of US empire as well as the ways political and cultural actors disrupt and uplift imperial ambitions.

The three works on the Philippines, *Tibak Rising*, *Women against Marcos*, and *A Time to Rise*, take a decidedly different approach to studies of empire, choosing to focus on the collective retelling of anti-Marcos and anti-imperial

activists. Elected to the presidency in 1965, Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law from 1972 until 1981, and maintained power until the EDSA revolution of 1986. Marcos faced opposition to his restriction of civil liberties, his close relationship with successive US administrations, and his administration's reputation for kleptocratic rule. This opposition took place on an international scale, with activists in the Philippines, North America, and Western Europe working in conjunction to oppose Marcos's leadership, halt US government funding of the regime, and support human rights activism and armed struggle in the Philippines. Decades after martial law, and with the analogs of the current Rodrigo Duterte government to the Marcos dictatorship, the question for contemporary scholars and activists has been how to best mobilize the histories of the Marcos period for the present. For the editors and authors of *Tibak Rising*, *Women against Marcos*, and *A Time to Rise*, the methodological answer has been to approach history telling through memoir and autobiography as a counterpoint to grand narrative history.<sup>2</sup> They refuse to offer a singular emplotment of history, choosing rather to embrace the tense and conflicting struggles against the Marcoses in their work.<sup>3</sup> The result is a rich archive of experiences that provides lessons for activists and scholars of social movements while underscoring the complex histories of social movement building.

Themes of solidarity and relationality underpin *Tibak Rising*, which contains almost fifty vignettes gathered from anti-Marcos *tibaks*. *Tibak* is a play on the Tagalog word for activist (*aktibista*). The collection, edited by Ferdinand C. Llanes, professor of history at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, brings together *tibak* stories in an effort to "intervene in the retrieval of the past and the recreation of collective public memory" (2). The project is an effort to retrieve the vibrant history of anti-Marcos activism, the connections committed *tibaks* cultivated, and the tragic flaws of their attempts to depose a dictator. In terms of anti-Marcos movement scholarship, the collection disrupts a traditional narrative focus on successes and failures by offering a multitude of experiences that challenge a historiographical focus on singular individuals.

*Tibak Rising* arose from an organization formed in 2001 that brought former activists involved in the anti-Marcos Democratic Movement (DM) into community (230). The book project, first conceived in 2005, took over five years to complete, a testament to both the difficulty of collecting these memories and the ways that historical memory remains a contested terrain. Contributors were asked for a short first-person account of a memory from the period (x). The project sought to collect fragments of moments and memories and present them, not as a complete account of the martial law period, but as a patchwork

of representations that focused on unheard voices. Llanes organized the stories into eight subsections, covering different aspects of the period, from detention to the making of friendships and community, to the objects and icons of the movement, and to the movement's martyrs. Stories were retold in English and Tagalog. While many stories focused on an individual's experiences, some authors chose to speak more broadly about the movement or offer a recollection of an individual whose voice and sacrifice had been previously unrecognized.

Instead of focusing on the importance of particular political actions, groups, and individuals, the collection emphasizes how involvement in the Democratic Movement created moments of connection, intimacy, and reflection that fundamentally changed the lives of its participants. The artist Behn Cervantes, for example, writes of how imprisonment brought him much closer to the filmmaker Lino Brocka (71). Others, like Emere Distor, offer insight into how their politicization cannot be fully understood without an examination of how it reshaped their relationship with their families (34). Other contributors, like Joey Flora, discuss how the movement forced him, and eventually the movement more broadly, to confront his own machismo and homophobia (91–93). Each retelling focuses on the ways that intimate encounters reshaped individuals, their families, and the movement as a whole.

Indeed, *Tibak Rising* offers participants in anti-Marcos activism the ability to relate the particularities of their experiences. Detention, interrogation, hiding, and torture are threads that connect most of the stories. Former political prisoners like Joel Rocamora and Edicio de la Torre demystify the experience of detention. Rocamora relates how life in prison reproduced the social and class hierarchies outside the prison, and how the regularity of his prison schedule allowed him to revise his dissertation and even get to know the guards who watched over the inmates (52–54). De la Torre, on the other hand, describes how prisoners began an informal economy of producing and selling prison pendants. The detainees carefully divided the labor and experimented with models of distributive income, which they divided into capital replenishment, work points, and a common fund with an escape fund for which aspiring escapees could apply for assistance (126).

The anthology's emphasis on brief moments allows participants to offer different portraits of individuals involved in anti-Marcos work. Many of the stories recount comrades who lost their lives during or as a result of their activism. The anthology, for example, presents an opportunity for Mari and Jean Enriquez to convey their anguish at losing partner and father "Kristo" (81–85). Some, like Nathan Quimpo, use their essays to recall the tragic loss

of *kasamas* (companions, comrades) through assassinations, ferry accidents, and/or disappearances (216). Others chose to honor movement leaders such as the organizer Lean Alejandro or the union leader Bert Olalia. In directing attention to these plural individual narratives, the project seeks to recall and circulate a “vernacular memory” (3). That is, the compilation seeks to offer memories of the wide breadth of activism, the countless and nameless individuals involved, and their willingness to sacrifice themselves for the hope of a different Philippine future. Ultimately, the breadth of individuals discussed does not canonize new heroes over old heroes, but instead reorients the history toward the passionate and committed work undertaken by so many.

Unmentioned in *Tibak Rising* are the vibrant transnational exchanges that also occurred between activists in the Philippines and those in the United States to oppose Marcos. *Women against Marcos* reveals these connections and highlights the efforts of women leaders on both sides of the Pacific. Written by Mila De Guzman, a journalist and activist for the KDP (*Katipunan ng mga Demokratikong Pilipino*, or Union of Democratic Filipinos), *Women against Marcos* features first-person accounts of six women involved in the anti-Marcos movement in the Philippines and in the United States: Aurora “Oyie” Javate De Dios, Aida Santos, Mila Aguilar, Mary John Mananzan, Geline Avila, and Cindy Domingo. While De Guzman wrote the first and final drafts, the featured activists collaborated with De Guzman by editing and writing whole parts of their narratives. All but one of the activist authors in *Women against Marcos* were born in the Philippines. Thus, Domingo’s chapters reveal the important role of American-born Filipinas in this international movement. Meanwhile, Geline Avila’s chapters emphasize the transnational dimension of the movement, as her chapters draw on her experiences organizing as a member of SDK (*Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan*, or Association of Democratic Youth) at the University of the Philippines and in the United States with the KDP.

De Guzman divides the book into several sections: First Quarter Storm, Declaration of Martial Law, Filipino Women Organizing in the U.S., Filipino American Women Organizing in the U.S., and the epilogue. The sections represent what De Guzman identifies as “major chronological benchmark[s]” during Marcos’s dictatorship described through the lenses of the activist woman who is narrating each chapter (xiv). Before each section, De Guzman briefly introduces her personal experience related that period. The book begins with De Guzman as a recent immigrant in the United States in the early 1970s, concerned about her family in the Philippines under the Marcos dictatorship, but without “strong opinions about his government” (2). Over time, De Guz-

man received letters from her sister, Violeta, a member of the Philippine Left “underground,” who urged her to “continue the struggle . . . not as sisters, but as comrades” (90). These letters, combined with Violeta’s participation in the KDP, raised the political consciousness of De Guzman, who eventually shares the political perspective and commitment of the women she features. The book continues along a chronological format, which allows readers to observe De Guzman’s growing politicization over time.

*Women against Marcos* describes the factors and events leading to each activist’s political “awakening,” contextualizing them within the trajectory of the opposition movement. For example, Aurora “Oyie” Javate De Dios describes her “sheltered childhood,” Catholic upbringing, and politicalization as a student at the University of the Philippines (3). Thrust into a leadership position while her comrades were being jailed or were out of the country, De Dios quickly rose to public leadership before Marcos’s declaration of martial law. De Dios shares her experiences in KM’s (*Kabataan Makabayan*) propaganda team and reflections about MAKIBAKA’s (*Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan*, or Free Movement of New Women) formation. She also describes meeting Lito De Dios in their Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP) collective, falling in love, and their eventual engagement (7–9). Other activists similarly weave their personal lives into political events in later chapters. The result is a window into the intimacy and relationality of international anti-imperial movement building.

*Women against Marcos* sensitively describes the traumatic impacts of fascism while illustrating everyday people’s articulations of resistance and strength. For example, Cindy Domingo’s leadership in achieving justice for the 1981 murders of KDP members Silme Domingo, her brother, and her friend and comrade Gene Viernes offers readers an opportunity to understand how fascism in the Philippines affected Filipina/o Americans involved in the opposition and the risks they undertook. The activists in *Women against Marcos* challenge traditional images of women, highlighting the central roles of women activists in student and religious sectors, as political prisoners in detention, in the international anti-dictatorship movement, as journalists and poets, and as organizational spokespeople. Furthermore, it reveals the development of both women’s consciousness and feminist analysis within the movement.

Extending the collection of transnational first person accounts in *Women against Marcos* is the long-awaited *A Time to Rise*, a collection of memoirs about the KDP. Rather than offer a singular historical narrative of KDP organizing, the ex-KDP contributors and editors decided to provide a collection of stories,

almost fifty in all, in which former members could share memories from the KDP years. The choice of individual memoir reflects the collective decision of ex-member participants that a grand, unified narrative of KDP's history would be unable to reflect the diversity of perspectives from former members. An assemblage of diverse narratives furthermore allowed KDP members to reconcile the dilemma of what Augusto Espiritu calls in the foreword "interminable debates about the past" (xvi). The result is a glimpse into a movement, with personal stories that reveal a range of emotions experienced by young and sometimes inexperienced but "grim and determined" activists. Framing the stories is KDP's regional and national leader Rene Ciria Cruz, who offers a political summation of the movement in the introduction, written in the direct style of organizational memoranda. Cruz's style differs from the personal tone of many of the stories, but lends insight into the challenges of writing an official organizational history.

The book is organized in four parts. In "Beginnings," KDP activists describe how they got involved in the movement and how their lives changed. "In the Thick of the Struggle" offers multiple entry points for learning about KDP's various political campaigns, actions, and members' transfers to new cities. "The Test of Fire" centers the murders of Viernes and Domingo and the Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes (CJDV). Activists including David Della, Silme's widow Terri Mast, and Cindy Domingo share sobering testimonies about the period following the murders. "Looking Back" offers reflections from two KDP members' children about their parents and childhoods, as well as several members' reflections on their KDP experiences.

Within these memoirs, the reader gains insight into the transnational character of KDP. Though located in the United States, the organization was closely connected to the National Democratic movement in the Philippines. However, while parts of stories from KDP members like Ka Linda, Odette Polintan, and Amado David take place in the Philippines and Canada like the chapter by Fely Villasin, the majority of the stories are set in the United States. These stories highlight KDP's work that addressed discrimination against Filipina/os in the United States, reflected in moving accounts about the International Hotel campaign from KDP activists, including Jeanette Gandionco Lazam and Estella Habal, and the campaign for nurses led by the late Esther Hipol Simpson. Fascinating are overlaps in KDP members' reflections and stories included in *Tibak Rising*. These include Amado David's recollection of the KDP selling soup bone necklaces that political prisoners in the Philippines created from soup bones (Cruz, Occena, and Domingo 170), the same pendants that

Edicio de la Torre remembers producing in mass with other detainees while imprisoned in Bicutan in *Tibak Rising* (125). Appreciated too are the intersections of gender illustrated in stories expressing the strain on activists who balanced motherhood, like Estella Habal, Lourdes Marzan, and Odette Polintan.

Members shared stories of youth activism in the Philippines as well as exposure tours to the archipelago.<sup>4</sup> As writers and editors acknowledge, KDP could ask a lot from its members, sometimes demanding activists move to different cities in support of the struggle. Indeed, throughout its existence, many members decided to leave KDP out of frustration with organizational demands. It is important to remember that those stories are also important in addition to the memories shared in this significant work.

*Tibak Rising*, *Women against Marcos*, and *A Time to Rise* together participate in the shaping of martial law public memory through their respective articulations of collective memory. In light of the recent upsurge of responses to the presidency of Duterte in the Philippines and abroad, their publications hold special importance. First, they disrupt present-day historical amnesia about the traumas of Marcos's martial law. Further, they offer windows for understanding what diasporic activism looks like "on the ground," humanizing the social actors involved. For example, Mast recollects, "I think we were pretty ordinary people faced with an extraordinary challenge; and we managed to do some courageous things. But we were scared most of the time and uncertain lots of the time. And too often, the fear gets dropped out of the story. But when we tell it, we can't leave that out" (Cruz, Occena, and Domingo 223). The relatability of contributors' testimonies like Mast's may help readers better understand the day-to-day challenges of anti-authoritarian work and perhaps even inspire them to undergo social change work.

As a whole, these five works testify to the wide-ranging theoretical approaches to cultures of empire that have developed since Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease's edited volume in 1994. The works call on us to understand the local and the global as connected and co-constitutive rather than mutually exclusive. The authors' and editors' theoretical approaches are quite pertinent in the contemporary moment. As Puerto Ricans face economic crisis and post-Hurricane Maria recovery efforts stall, as the occupation of Palestinian lands continues to be tacitly supported by successive US administrations, and as the renewal of authoritarian populism in the Philippines continues, scholars and activists must continue to look to studies of empire and of social movements. To group different spaces under the study of empire and its cultural forces is not to detract from the specificity of place and politics. Rather, it is to point

to the historical as well as the contemporary effects of US foreign policy and cultural activity on the rest of the world. It is to be attentive to the ways that the United States has been and is understood by activists and cultural actors as a crucial triangular point in both local and global politics.

Alamo-Pastrana reminds us to recall the limitations of translating struggles for solidarity purposes. As journalists in the *Chicago Defender* sought to make sense of and connect with Puerto Rico, Alamo-Pastrana points out that they sometimes slid into romantic understandings of Puerto Rican nationalism while neglecting the patriarchal and sometimes exclusionary structure of anti-imperial mobilizations. Feldman, on the other hand, shows us that though these connections are risky, the imperfect relationality allows for the development of powerful mobilizations. For Feldman, these forms of relationality actually reveal the fragments that, in Alamo-Pastrana's telling, would limit political possibility should they remain in the shadows. The three collections on the Philippines, alternatively, take an approach to social movement history organized around biography and short memoir. Understanding the pitfalls and possibilities that scholars such as Alamo-Pastrana and Feldman point toward, they seek not to tell the whole story but to offer many stories in hopes of avoiding exclusion and bringing the unspoken out of the shadows. In sharing the dissonant sounds of multiple historical memories, they create what Said has called, and Feldman has subsequently invoked, a contrapuntal movement, one that moves between the registers of empire and dissent (155).

As scholars studying Marcos's martial law period, we find this is an exciting time, as the number of researchers writing about the Marcos period has increased steadily since we first began our respective research projects almost one decade ago. However, it is also a deeply concerning moment, as the Marcos family and martial law history have a renewed prominence in Philippine politics. We consider this review one way to learn from and highlight what scholars and activists have gleaned from their activist careers and/or archival study. By writing this piece together, we also offer it as a scholarly engagement that privileges collaboration over individuality in a fashion that draws from the approaches of Llanes, De Guzman, Cruz, Domingo, Occena, and the contributors to their edited volumes. To harness the strength of collaboration and multivocal representation, we also aim to place these works into conversation with the deeply important works on US Empire by scholars such as Alamo-Pastrana and Feldman, understanding that both are necessary for the fields of empire studies and social movement studies to move forward. Together, these writers teach us that through a layering of history and mindful engagement of

relationality across struggles, we might better understand histories of empire and the connected and ongoing struggles to oppose it.

### Notes

The authors dedicate this piece to the memory of KDP members Esther Hipol Simpson and Ermena Vinluan. We thank them for their work in support of their communities and for sharing their stories and lessons with us.

1. Lisa Lowe, "Insufficient Difference," *Ethnicities* 4.3 (2005): 412.
2. Other important examples of this type of martial law historiography include Nathan Gilbert Quimpo and Susan F. Quimpo, *Subversive Lives: A Family Memoir of the Marcos Years* (Manila: Anvil Publishing, 2012); Manuel Lahoz, *Of Tyrants and Martyrs: A Political Memoir* (Diliman: University of the Philippines Press, 2017).
3. Reynaldo C. Ileto helpfully outlines nonlinear emplotment in "Outlines of a Non-Linear Emplotment of Philippine History," in *Reflections on Development in Southeast Asia*, ed. Tech Ghee Lim (Singapore: ASEAN, 1988).
4. Augusto Fauni Espiritu and Michael Joseph Viola have written about exposure tours in Espiritu, "Journeys of Discovery and Difference," in *The Transnational Politics of Asian Americans*, ed. Christian Collet and Pei-Te Lien (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 38–55; and Viola, "Toward a Filipino/a Critical (FilCrit) Pedagogy: A Study of United States Educational Exposure Programs to the Philippines" (PhD diss., UCLA, 2012); Judy Tzu-Chun Wu's important work has helped structure the way that we think about transnational exchanges of activist knowledge; see Wu, *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism during the Vietnam Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).