

Curran Fellowship for Research to be undertaken in 2020

Laura Díaz-Esteve's Narrative Report

Alfarràs (Lleida, Spain), December 2, 2022

Dear Professor Dillane and the Curran Fellowship Committee;

I write to thank the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals (RSVP) for supporting my investigation of the media coverage of the Philippine Revolution. To evidence how the Curran Fellowship allowed me to achieve my research goals, I will briefly outline my original work plans, how that project evolved, and what it led me to discover. Next, I will specify how I used the Curran funds to advance my inquiries. Finally, I will outline how I am sharing this research's outcomes.

The RSVP granted me a Curran Fellowship on February 2020 to conduct research for one chapter of my Ph.D. dissertation, which I was preparing at Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. My project examined the US media coverage of the Philippine-American War, between 1899 and 1902. In particular, it analyzed the sources that provided information about the fight the US was conducting in that distant Pacific archipelago, including the US military, political elites, and war correspondents. Moreover, it studied how the US press also relied on British newspapers published in Hong Kong and Singapore, with experience covering the region's affairs and a deep knowledge of its politics and inhabitants. In addition to that, these ports had noticeable proximity to the main scenarios of the war and granted privileged access to essential sources of information regarding the conflict, like their own local communities of Filipinos. I aimed to use the Curran Fellowship to analyze the content of those Hong Kong and Singapore English-language newspapers regarding the Philippine-American War.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic substantially altered my research program, during 2020 and 2021, I could progress on my project while adapting my plans to the new circumstances—such as limited traveling and access to archives—and the discoveries I obtained. Finally, during the present year, 2022, I could finish responding to all the research questions regarding the Hong Kong and Singapore press' reaction to the Philippine Revolution that I wanted to address.

Succinctly, my research demonstrates that, during the Philippine-American War and the previous 1896 Philippine Revolution and the Spanish-American War of 1898, the belligerent

nations—the Philippines, Spain, and the US—and British citizens discussed which would be the most suitable government for the Philippine Islands in the Hong Kong and Singapore's English-language press. They intended to influence Great Britain and the US metropolitan public spheres, where some of the content from those colonial newspapers could be reprinted. During that productive dialogue, some Britons from the mentioned city ports and Filipino revolutionaries collaborated in defending that Filipinos deserved an advanced degree of self-government after expelling Spain from the archipelago in 1898. My research proves that those British journalists did so to guarantee that the US and Filipino authorities designed a protectorate after British governance models, a pacific solution beneficial for British regional interests. Therefore, my project contributes to ongoing scholarship regarding the complex trans-imperial dialogues that shaped the American Empire in the Philippines, particularly through journalism. Doing so also sheds some light on Hong Kong and Singapore's British colonial press and its involvement in colonial politics.

The Curran Fellowship allowed me to work with fundamental sources to comprehend the dynamics of that particular dialogue fully:

1. I could use the vast archives at the British Library to read some of the editions of newspapers from Hong Kong and Singapore that I examined that were not digitized.
2. I bought a three-year subscription to the British Newspaper Archive. I used that resource to determine that part of the content that appeared in Hong Kong and Singapore regarding events in the Philippines was reprinted by the press in Great Britain.
3. I visited the British National Archives at Kew (Richmond) and researched the archives of different British authorities, such as the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office. I tried to find out how they reacted to that inter-imperial dialogue in the Hong Kong and Singapore media. Among other questions, I tried to discover if the British Empire's interest in an Anglo-American Rapprochement led to efforts to influence the editorial line of that region's press.

I presented the answers I obtained from part of that work in my Ph.D. dissertation, which I defended successfully at the beginning of 2022. However, due to the mentioned alterations caused by the pandemic, I could only travel to London using a significant part of the funds I received from the Curran Fellowship after passing the examination of that work. Instead

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of realizing a research trip to the UK in the Summer of 2020, I traveled there in the Summer of 2022. Despite that, the research I conducted this past July is allowing me to expand my Ph.D. dissertation and enrich its conclusions significantly. I am including those research outcomes in the two academic articles I am about to submit to the *Journal of Global History* and *Diplomatic History*, and I am also presenting them at different academic conferences. For example, I will participate in the virtual section of the 2023 Annual Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, scheduled for February 17-18. Also, I look forward to attending the annual RSVP conference in Caen, France, to share some of my results with the RSVP community in more detail.

To conclude, I want to thank the RSVP again for its support of this work and the flexibility it showed when adapting the grant's calendar to the unexpected disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laura' followed by a stylized monogram or initials.

Laura Díaz-Esteve