



Back from the Crocodile's Belly: Philippine Babaylan Studies and the Struggle for Indigenous Memory

S. Lily Mendoza, Leny Mendoza Strobel

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(Interior pages with greyscale images) Back from the Crocodile's Belly is a celebration of the beauty, richness, and diversity of indigenous ways of being as revealed in the critical studies and creative performances of living native traditions in the Philippines and in the United States diaspora. Through the use of primary and secondary research, the re-reading of historical and cultural archives, and the articulation of silenced stories, the book seeks to open up space for an alternative discourse on indigenous knowledge that does not merely reproduce progressivist and social evolutionary paradigms that invariably position the Indigenous Subject as "primitive," "barbaric," and nothing more than a "quaint relic of the past." In revealing the beauty and vibrancy of native Filipino cultures, the book lays claim to the relevance and power of indigenous epistemologies in healing colonial and civilizational trauma brought on by the violent conscription of native peoples into the project of Modernity. In the face of growing economic, spiritual, and ecological crises portending global collapse, the book affirms that the abjected "Primitive," who now stands as Modernity's only remaining Other, has much to teach us not only about survival but about living generously and fiercely "with all our relations."

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