

PRESS RELEASE

Last few days of Conscriptcion: Imagining and Inscribing the Ilocano World at the MET

Catch the last few days of the exhibit "*Conscriptcion: Imagining and Inscribing the Ilocano World*" before it closes at the end of this month. The show is an extensive exhibition of documents and maps from the collection of the National Archives of the Philippines and other sources which show the official workings of the Spanish colonial government in the Ilocos Region in the 19th century.

Records are by products, the remains of activities. They are reminders of what had taken place. As reminders, records can honor or they can haunt. For script can conscript, text can be context. In the colonial setting, records and documents help rulers envision distant possessions. Subjects only take shape as constructed on paper: in reports, plans and maps.

Authority is transcribed on a page and conveyed across oceans. What may describe, may also prescribe. Records carry great power.

Explorers do not set out to discover land. They are seeking ideas, a place in clouds. For territory to be colonized it must be read as empty. Each fair and fertile shore is a fresh page, an invitation to reconstruct a shattered life. Reports must paint an emptiness and willingness to be dominated. When territorial aspirations are committed to paper, maps are born. A record is called into existence which is part hope and part despair. Maps define what is intimate but also what is intimidating and must therefore be unmanned.

The documents presented in the show "*Conscriptcion: Imagining and Inscribing the Ilocano World*" arose from the time when the Ilocos region was still part of the Spanish Empire. They facilitated the governance of a faraway land. Before the colonial can be administered, it must first be conceived. Above all else then, are documents not agencies of imagination? Worlds which produce records are by the records themselves produced.

"*Conscriptcion: Imagining and Inscribing the Ilocano World*" is featured at the Upper Level Galleries of the Metropolitan Museum of Manila until January 30, 2012. The exhibit is a partnership between the Provincial Government of Ilocos Sur, The Ilocos Sur Historical and Cultural Foundation and the National Archives of the Philippines with The Metropolitan Museum of Manila and the conservation assistance of the National Museum.

The Met is located at the Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. Museum hours are from 9am – 6pm, Monday to Saturday; closed on Sundays, first Mondays of the month and on holidays. For more details please call 708-7829 or at email at info@metmuseum.ph. Visit us at www.metmuseum.ph and www.facebook.com/metmuseum.manila

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