

Colonial control and spatial configuration: public health of manila in early american era

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Abstrak

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This paper considers the spatial configuration of Manila, focusing on American public health policy during the period 1905-14, when Victor Heiser held great power as the Director of Health. During this period after the Filipino American War, public health policy was concerned with the improvement of Filipinos' sanitary customs and promoted the configuration of urban spaces.

For the United States, medicine and public health were measures to justify colonialism in the Philippines. Simultaneously, sanitary customs were regarded as a sign of moral civics, which was a precondition of Philippine independence. American sanitary officers intervened in Filipinos' lives and social order, and did not give Filipinos favorable evaluations on sanitary customs.

As a result, the urban spatial configuration was shaped by laws and surveillance up to the early part of the second decade of the twentieth century. Interventions in Filipinos' lives through home inspections were a particularly important matter. The purification of public spaces such as markets, slums, etc, and the relocation of slum residents into suburbs were also enforced. Many lawsuits were filed for violations of sanitary laws, which meant that American sanitary laws brought social friction into Filipino societies. Up to the second decade of the twentieth century, when many American sanitary officers returned, sanitary education in public schools was refined and intensified to insert moral civics into Filipino societies.