Filipina abjection is a method for reading colonial and contemporary media about the Philippines. We begin with the notion of abjection as filth, defilement, garbage or “refuse” in its varied meanings: images that are “ugly,” “disgusting,” and “repellent.” But abjection too is “the maternal, the female, or the savage.” Using Victorian postcards from a site for colonial pornography, colonial-era photographs from a museum in Sweden, photographs of the current drug war taken by Manila-based photographers known as The Nightcrawlers, and Alyx Arumpac’s award-winning documentary on the drug war entitled Aswang (Monster), Filipina abjection offers a reading of the continuing horrors of Philippine life after colonialism and at a time of fascism.

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The Transnational Asia Speaker Series is made possible through the generosity of the Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Foundation.