

**IMAGINING IGOROTS:
PERFORMING ETHNIC AND GENDER IDENTITIES
ON THE PHILIPPINE CORDILLERA CENTRAL**

by

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Abstract

Gender, ethnicity, landscape, nation -- none exist as real places or categories but as the effect of various practices that bring bodies and spaces into being. This dissertation attempts to rethink concepts of gender and ethnicity away from traditional ideas of places and cultures. To do so, it embeds them within social practice as performatives emerging from the colonial encounter. The text reports on ethnographic field research among Igorot communities originating on the Philippine Cordillera Central. By applying Burawoy's extended case method to local narratives of identity, history and migration, the argument extends theorizations of locality and gendered subaltern agency. The analysis locates the imaginative work that produces local places, subject positions and subjectivities within a palimpsest of transnational discourses, outmigration and local innovations. Locality and subjectivity are shown to be embedded in and produced by both local experiences and global identifications of difference originating within colonial histories. In narrating and dis-placing colonial stories of places and people, the power of these discourses on gender and ethnicity to constitute subjects with coherent names is challenged. By tracing the-persistence of the colonial past in the apparently de-colonized present, this text suggests that the concepts of performance and naming can help to make greater theoretical and empirical sense of the (post)colonial world.

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Chapter 1- Introduction

This dissertation explores ethnic and gendered identities of peoples known as Igorots who inhabit the Philippine Cordillera Central. In this text, I argue that genders and ethnicities are ongoing performances, addressed as much to the contexts of local and individual experiences on the periphery as to globalized discourses of difference and progress. I stage this argument through ethnographic approaches to the lives and experiences of indigenous peoples and their production of communities, both local and translocal. To introduce the argument and methodology I employ here, I provide an example of these local identities in performance at a municipal fair one of the provinces of the Philippine Cordillera Central.

1.1 Fiesta at Hungduan

In April of 1996, I attended a municipal fiesta in Hungduan, Ifugao Province, a remote village on the island of Luzon, in the northern Philippines (see Map 3-1. 69).¹ This fiesta had been advertised extensively in the regional press and I had seen posters in stores, along the highway on my bus trips to and from Ifugao. The published program (see Figure 1-1) included some very interesting events that were, according to the press releases, geared to promote the municipality as a destination for tourism.² Tourists, according to the assumptions underlying the advertising, wanted to see authentic Ifugao people performing their traditional dances, games and crafts. What fascinated me, in particular, was the ethnic parade, apparently staged for the twenty or so tourists on hand.

In this event, a long line of performers marched two by two from the main road, up the hill to the Municipal Hall. Each segment of the line told its own version of historical development, creating a narrative of “progress” or “improvements,” in the terms explained to me by my hosts. First came topless

¹ The map of the region is only presented to the reader after the contemporary (post)colonial context in which indigenous communities are described and visited has been established. It is only within this context that one can 'get' to them, either as a visitor on the ground, or through a representation such as a map.

² This program is reproduced from the original in the original English.

older women, wearing bark-cloth skirts and carrying baskets of *camote* (sweet potatoes) on their heads.³ They were carrying placards reading “The Stone Age.” Following them came a group of men in loincloths, carrying spears and shields, bodies covered with oil. Dressed as for war, they were labeled “The Spanish Era.” Then came “Modern Times,” represented by a variety of community groups and professions -- teachers, health workers, mothers’ group, church groups, youth, seniors – all with placards and uniforms. Last, but not least, came a group of four men carrying briefcases naming them as “OCWs” – Overseas Contract Workers. The parade was composed of people from five of the *barangays* (component villages) of the municipality. This short narrative of progress was thus repeated five times in the body of the line, with minor variations in dress. Each section moved from the primitivism of ‘Stone Age’ dress and farming tools to contemporary transnational migrants, dressed for ‘professional’ labor. This narrative of development demonstrated the transformation of this locality from the home of the ‘primitive’ and isolated tribal people, embodied by the old women, to the ‘global Filipinos’ portrayed by the men with briefcases.

³ Locally-used Filipino-language terms are italicized and defined, either in brackets in the text, or in longer notes, as appropriate. These terms may be drawn from the national language, Tagalog, or one of several dialects spoken locally, as explained in Chapter 2.

Figure 1-1 Program from the *Tungoh* at Hungduan

April 17, 1996	
ENTHINC PARADE	8:00 a.m. Start at Ti-iwan
INVOCATION.....	Pastor Edgar Navales (SDA)
PAMBANSANG AWIT.....	Juanita Pugong-SB Secretary
WELCOME TALK.....	Mayor Andres B. Dunuan, Sr.
ENTHNIC ENSEMBLE.....	Bryg. Maggok group
TALK.....	Director Carmelita Mondiguig (DOT-CAR)
NUMBER.....	NATIVE SONG: c/o Poblacion's Women
INTRODUCTION OF THE GUEST SPEAKER.....	Councilor Manuel Bitog
MESSAGE	Cong. Benjamin Cappleman
NATIVE DANCE.....	Bryg. Hapao
HULIN (Driving away bad spirits)	ZONE II Barangays
<u>OPENING OF EXHIBITS/BOOTH/DEMONSTRATIONS IN:</u>	
❖ WINE MAKING ❖ BASKET WEAVING ❖ WEAVING ❖	
❖ BLACKSMITH ❖ BINAKLE ❖ ANEC ❖	
<u>CONTESTED ACTIVITIES:</u>	
❖ ETHNIC GAMES ❖ NATIVE DANCE ❖	
❖ NATIVE SONG ❖ WOODCARVING ❖	
<u>ETHNIC GAMES TO BE CONTESTED:</u>	
❖ DOPAP ❖ GUYAD ❖ HANGGOL ❖ AKKAD ❖	
❖ BANGUNAN ❖ HUKTING ❖ ABBA-AN ❖	

The source of my fascination was not merely the story, but the competitive aspect of the parade. Each *barangay* was judged and the winners received P5000 in prize money, donated to their *barangay* council.⁴

This exercise, disciplined bodies marching in ranks and performing the narrative of modernization from Stone Age to present-day outmigration, was judged by the district's Congressman. The criteria for prizes included the order of the ranks, the extent to which the bodies moved in unison, the seriousness of purpose expressed by the performers, the 'completeness' of the narrative and the 'authenticity' of their

⁴ During the period of my field research one Canadian dollar was equivalent to approximately twenty Philippine pesos. (\$C 1.00 = P 20)

dress and deportment.⁵ The audience was much smaller than the parade, perhaps two hundred or so outsiders, composed of tourists, local press people and dignitaries travelling with the Congressman. Thus, most of the spectators were themselves the spectacle. It seemed to me that these people were parading largely for themselves, or, perhaps, for some invisible or absent observer.

After all the marchers filed in to the parade ground, the speeches began. The municipal Mayor petitioned the Congressman to build a road, on a route first proposed by American colonial administrators in the early 1900s. This road would ostensibly entice tourists to visit and promote tourism development in the Province. To his electorate, the Mayor promised to re-enact ritual feasts for the tourists. In this feast, the tourists would pay for the animals which local people will slaughter and eat in ritual style. He promised tourism would bring *kalabaw* meat (water buffalo or *carabao*) to the assembled masses. The Mayor also announced the prohibition of galvanized iron roofing on local houses, mandating instead the use of 'authentic' material, the local cogon grass. This edict was issued in order to attract tourists and benefit from Department of Tourism funds to support "authenticity" in the region.⁶ The Congressman brought greetings from Manila, the national capital, and Malacañang Palace, the residence of the President. He reiterated his commitment to local "development" as shown in the progress from the Stone Age to OCWs, and congratulated the people on their industry in pursuing tourism as a new development strategy. The community-as-parade arrayed before him as he stood at the podium appeared to demonstrate that local understandings of 'authenticity' and 'modernity' fit into the familiar historical narrative laid out on the ground. This narrative was the story of local transformations he called "development."

⁵ This list of criteria was supplied to me by the workers from the Municipal Hall. It was largely the same as the standards for 'ethnic parade' judging at a subsequent Fiesta I attended elsewhere in Ifugao Province.

⁶ See also Dulnuan, M., "DOT awards for houses" *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 8 August 1996, C5.

Meanwhile, the actual tourists themselves were largely ignored; they appeared to be quite literally shunted to the sidelines.⁷ The Mayor acknowledged their points of origin or ethnicities briefly over the loudspeaker: "Israel, Germany, Australia, the United States, Ireland." These names were listed as potential sources of visitors, part litany of the forms of wealth that authenticity and a road could attract. "Irish" - this last was I; as he puzzled over my first name on my business card, I had explained it was an Irish name for a Canadian woman. Most of the tourists appeared to be backpacker-travelers attracted by the opportunity to hike Mt. Napulawan, site of the last stand of the Japanese forces under General Yamashita in 1945. Housed in an unfinished building with no running water or bath, nobody was surveying or interviewing these visitors. As tourists, they were clearly part of the spectacle, rather than the focus of interest.

I had arrived early and, having identified myself as a 'visiting researcher' to the Mayor, was introduced to his staff. Though he acknowledged me as a tourist over the microphone, he had left me ensconced with the female staff of the Municipal Office. I watched the parade from within a group of Municipal Office workers, mostly professional women in their thirties. They kept up a running commentary on the parade, the speeches, the community and the tourists arrayed around them and I strained to catch the meanings in their mixture of English, Tawali Ifugao and Ilocano. Apparently, many of the tourists who had hiked the mountain desperately needed a bath before they would make presentable houseguests. Adopted by the municipal workers, I only exchanged smiles with the other tourists from a distance.

Through luck and by design, I was not so undesirable a companion: one of the Municipal Office staff invited me to stay at her house. She was curious as to how I had learned some Ilocano and thought I would be uncomfortable in the tourist hostel. As I stood in this group, negotiating a home-stay, I was caught on video camera by another woman walking the parade grounds. I immediately lifted my camera

⁷ Statistics collected for the Department of Tourism for the Philippines as a whole reported 934,020 tourist arrivals in 1996, up from 842, 272 in 1995. Of tourists with a recorded country of origin, approximately one half (471,544) came from "neighboring Asian countries," one quarter (213,411) from North America and one tenth (59,126) from Western Europe. The majority of 'foreign' tourists arrive between December and April each year. These statistics were reported in "Tourist arrivals rise" *Today*, 13 November, 1996.

and snapped a shot of her (see Plate 1-1). My companions told me she was a *balikbayan* (returned) OCW (overseas contract worker) from Canada. She was, it appeared, the only actual OCW present. She was not, as represented in the parade, a briefcase carrying male, but female and was identified by my companions as a domestic worker.

As I followed her progress, she recorded both the tourists and the community's self-consciously exotic, "pagan" celebration. Her attention was drawn to the topless grandmothers who had led the parade, rather than the 'office workers' and 'OCWs' who brought up the rear. I was curious about the woman who had filmed me and watched her move through the crowd and back to her car. My hostesses told me she was a 'permanent' now in Canada. She's "*balikabayan*," she said. The gossip was that she had come back for a visit "only." According to their information, the woman with the camera had arrived in Canada as a domestic worker and had then married a Canadian, achieving permanent residency. I never did manage to catch up with her but remembered my amusement at being videotaped. In turning her camera on me, she was literally 'returning the gaze' of the ethnographer. Having been videotaped at a town fiesta, I can only assume I now appear on someone's VCR 'abroad', somewhere in Canada, enacting the role of tourist who makes 'home' famous.

Plate 1-1*Balikkayan* OCW videographer at Hungduan



Here, at the Fiesta in Hungduan, local people appropriate and rework metropolitan discourses in an autoethnographic performance that creates self-affirming representations of the local intended for reception in the metropolis.⁸ Thus, the parade produced the accepted narrative of development, the long lines of people marching out of history, for the metropolitan congressional representative. The material goal of this narrative performance was the reward of a road. To gain this reward, people self-consciously staged their cultural transformation, not just as progress, but in terms of retaining a certain authenticity appropriate for tourist development. The parade performed an authentic version of the primitive and development for both local and metropolitan consumption.

This primitive is gendered in particular ways, residing in the partially unclothed, bark-cloth bedecked bodies of older women. It is contrasted against a modern world embodied in the parade by men representing the absent OCWs, but actually performed by a woman so named as a returned migrant worker, a *balikbayan-OCW*, on the ground. It was this slippage that fascinated me: why did women embody the backward and primitive in local representational practice, when, as I will demonstrate in the following chapters, they were clearly among the modern migrants in lived experience? What did this inversion of gendering say about local understandings and performances of gender and progress?

I will argue in this text that this slippage between representations and realities matters in important ways for performances of genders and ethnicities. I approach the performances of the parade and the fiesta as a occurring within a liminal space. They are a condensed and aestheticized production of people's interpretations of the ideals of ethnicity and gender, performed on a stage created by the local interpretations of narratives of development and transformation. While my story begins within this liminal social space of the fiesta, I will extend the analysis of the performances of gender and ethnicity

⁸ Autoethnography, as defined by Mary-Louise Pratt, is one of the characteristic indigenous responses of the contact zone: texts in which people attempt to describe themselves in ways that engage with their representations by others. These representations are performed in response to and in dialogue with metropolitan images of the local, selectively appropriating and deferring the discourses of the metropolis or imperial power. See M.-L. Pratt, "Transculturation and autoethnography: Peru 1615/1980" in Barker, F., Hulme, P. and M. Iverson, eds. *Colonial discourse/postcolonial theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994, pp. 24-46.)

seen here into people's daily experiences. These representations intersect with the lives of the performers in complex ways and, as I will show, such parades are not the only sites where discourses familiar to metropolitan audiences have slipped their moorings and are deployed by local actors to surprising ends. Locals also theorize the global, placing themselves, their experiences and their metropolitan stereotypes in dialogue with the representations of the metropolis, tourist desires and colonial archives.

Discourses on 'the primitive' and progress are never limited to the archives or touristic practice but permeate much farther into social life. The local, too, desires to perform and represent difference. Local people, like metropolitan inhabitants, desire to control difference itself as both a source of self-identity and a commodity. As sources for these representations, local imaginaries rely on, reinscribe and subvert the familiar forms of gender and ethnicity that were produced in the process of colonization. As cultural critique, this dissertation exposes the tension between the strategic use of these familiar representations and their long-term limitations within local struggles. Like the parade, this text thus describes a geography of a colonial present. Rather than recapitulating the narrative of progress, my intent is to work against it in order to contest contemporary forms of colonialism that are not recognized as such.

The parade at Hungduan and the migrant videographer are actively returning the metropolitan or colonizing gaze, responding to a desire to represent difference that relies on familiar reworkings of colonial categories for gender and ethnicity. Clearly, the ideas of gender and ethnicity that circulate within this locality have hidden within them particular and contradictory assumptions about place-based identities and notions of progress. The context in which these performances take place is difficult to define. What politics determine the cultural reception of such performances of genders and ethnicities? This question requires mapping of the dynamics of power in which familiar images, bodies, objects, social categories and discourses operate as they travel back and forth between metropolis and periphery, local and global, primitive and modern.

1.2 A *primitive uncanny*

Before the specific local representations and experiences I present here will make sense to the reader as the local touchpoints and generators of globalized discourses, a brief exploration of the contemporary theoretical work of 'the primitive' is needed. In the metropolitan centers, ethnographically fuzzy but positive valuations of people living in purely subsistence economies, outside the State, permeate critical theory.⁹ 'Indigenes,' 'nomads,' 'tribes' of all sorts inhabit contemporary theory and mediascapes where they represent desirable ways of being and knowing that 'moderns' have forgotten. These generalizations about 'primitives' appear to express a desire to get back to a 'somewhere' an imagined 'we' have never been, in an escape from the alienation and confusion of contemporary metropolitan lives — a primitive uncanny. Marianna Torgovnick describes this constitutively modern desire to escape modernity for the primitive: "for a hundred years, the West has used the non-Western world to contemplate the prehistories of its future, and the contradictory results have shaped a multitude of social discourses world-wide. There seems to be no end to that dynamic, and no reason to suppose that the present has been freed from working out its complicity in it."¹⁰

In contemporary social theories, many of the distinctions drawn between modernity and post-modernity rest on uninterrogated and stereotypical images of such non-modern realms. These distinctions require recourse to a 'primitive' and 'traditional' space that supposedly persists, somewhere beyond the margins of telecommunication, the market and consumer cultures, on the geographical periphery of globalizing capitalism. In this peripheral 'somewhere,' the local is still recognizably local, pure and unsullied by modern, global influences. The primitive is thus a socially constructed category that constitutes metropolitan conceptions of self. While not all the 'others' that the project of 'the West' encounters or appropriates are 'primitives,' ideas of the primitive follow a familiar script:

⁹ For a critique of the primitive in contemporary critical theory see Torgovnick, M. *Gone primitive: savage intellects, modern lives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.) See also Kaplan C., *Questions of travel: postmodern discourses of displacement* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996.)

¹⁰ Torgovnick, M. *op. cit.*, 19.

(S)omething...occurs whenever marginal peoples come into a historical or ethnographic space that has been defined by the Western imagination. Entering into the modern world, their distinct histories quickly vanish. Swept up in a destiny dominated by the capitalist West and by various technically advanced socialisms, these suddenly "backward" peoples no longer invent local futures...[they are seen to] either resist or yield to the new but cannot produce it.¹¹

Of course, in accepting a global/local or metropolitan/peripheral binary in the terms of 'modern' and 'primitive' creates an elision of histories and geographies. Within this space is lost "precisely the fact that the parameters of the local and the global are often indefinable.... , they are permeable constructs..., each thoroughly infiltrates the other."¹² The perpetuation of these somewhat spurious distinctions is possible because of the desirability of imagining someone, somewhere else, as the locus of 'the primitive.' As more of the terrain is brought within the space of modernity, the difference marked by 'the primitive' is deferred farther from the metropolitan centre and/or the locally based outposts of its influence.

This dissertation highlights how this fractal pattern of centre/periphery repeats itself across shifting maps of meaning and power. This reading is a complicated process because, reading these discourses on the ground, one confronts constant shifts in the scales and frames of definition. Nevertheless, this binary distinction reflects dominant and socially necessary metropolitan fantasies about indigenes. These imaginings become the fantasies of indigenous communities about their neighbors, rather than their interpretations of their life experiences in the contemporary colonial world. The latter, the context of contemporary colonialisms that go unmarked as such, is what I will attempt to describe and contextualize in the succeeding chapters.

¹¹ Clifford, J. *The predicament of culture: twentieth century ethnography, literature and art.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988, 5.)

¹² Grewal, I. and C. Kaplan, "Introduction." in Grewal, I. and C. Kaplan, eds., *Scattered hegemonies: postmodernity and transnational feminist practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994, pp. 1-33), p. 11.

1.3 A (post)colonial critique

Contemporary demarcations of spaces into metropolis and periphery reinscribe the spatial formations of Western colonialisms. This produces not a complete rupture with colonial pasts, but the persistence of historical patterns of nodes and networks of economic and cultural power in the present. The idea of returning to a primitive uncanny - getting back to somewhere 'we' have never been - is shared across former colonial and now decolonized metropolitan centers as a constitutive feature of their modernity with its roots in colonial geographical imaginations and colonial relations. This desire creates a periphery that meets the need for primitive others, whether distant or internal. These colonial relations of power are not just forms of political and economic subordination justified by ideologies of race or progress but also cultural projects, constituted through the imaginaries of symbols, signs, stories and nation or community. Colonial culture thus includes "not only official reports and texts related directly to the process of governing colonies and extracting wealth, but also a variety of traveler's accounts, representations produced by ...missionaries and collectors of ethnographic specimens, and fictional, artistic, photographic, cinematic and decorative appropriations."¹³ I argue here that contemporary cultures remain colonial. As a critique of (post)colonial culture, this text deals with a wider range of events and representations than the colonial archives, including many in which author and reader are implicated. Thus, the dissertation is structured as a mixture of historical and contemporary analysis, treating the production of ethnicity and gender identities on the periphery through the "contact zone" of colonial encounters.¹⁴

To call these present cultural formations and discourses neo-colonial would be a misnomer - there is nothing inherently new about them. Likewise, the name post-colonial suggests some rupture with the power formations of the colonial era, the hyphen implying a forgetting of the past, and thus its

¹³ Thomas, N., *Colonialism's culture: anthropology, travel and government* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994) p. 16.

¹⁴ The term "contact zone" is borrowed from Mary-Louise Pratt, *Imperial eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 6-7.

repetition.¹⁵ The unbroken name of “postcolonial” perhaps acknowledges the long histories of colonialisms with more sensitivity to the complex resonations of colonial projects within the contemporary experiences of both the former colonized and former colonizers.¹⁶ However, my argument requires that I subvert even this slight suggestion that there is a distinct periodization marked by formal decolonization. I reject the possible implication created by the ‘post’- as-“former,” modifying “colonial occupation,” that would preclude or conceal “ongoing” colonial relations. Thus, I prefer to place the ‘post’ in dispute where it refers to theorizations, regimes of power/knowledge and cultural formations. In this dissertation, I opt to place the ‘post’ in brackets when referring to cultural projects while I use the terms pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial to refer to the specific historical periods of Spanish and then American colonial occupation in the Philippines. The pre-colonial era ended with Spanish occupation in 1452, the Spanish regime extended from 1452 to 1898, Americans ruled the archipelago from 1898 - 1946, and the (post)colonial Philippines achieved independence in 1946.

By choosing the term (post)colonial to name the relation between contemporary spatial distributions of power/knowledge in proximity to those of ‘true’ colonialisms, I mark their similarities and mutual constitution. Just as colonial relations do not come to closure with the end of formal colonial rule, anti-colonial resistances do not begin with nationalist struggle, but with the onset of colonization. Similarly, anti-colonial resistance continues against the cultural forms of colonialism long after formal decolonization. I choose this neologism because my goal is to make sense of the colonial past not just in the colonial archives, but in its present interpretations in anti-colonial resistances – through analysis of autoethnographic gestures such as the parade at Hungduan, above. The impacts of colonialisms were never such that the colonized have lost the ability to represent themselves. Local peoples have their own stories of their positionings that I trace and contextualize in this text.

¹⁵ Gandhi, L., *Postcolonial theory: a critical introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), p. 7.

¹⁶ As James Clifford theorizes this point: “There are no postcolonial cultures or places: only moments, tactics, discourses.” in his *Routes: travel and translation in the late twentieth century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 277.

Truly, the periphery has long been conversant with the centre. For the peoples of the colonial peripheries labor migration, ethnic diaspora and integration into global systems of production and networks of exchange and meaning are hardly recent phenomena.¹⁷ Their contemporary experiences can be figured as more of the same, rather than radical discontinuities that marks the entry of the periphery into anything that could be named as 'postmodernity.'¹⁸ The challenge, then, is to figure local experiences in ways that show how the periphery is produced and then itself is caught up in the incitement to produce, delimit and commodify its own differences. Though both historically removed actors (the colonizers) and geographically removed peoples (my respondents and hosts) are apt to be stereotyped for the purposes of metropolitan self-definition and self-affirmation, I want to problematize my own positioning here. My goal in retrieving their stories here is not to construct my respondents and hosts as recipients of my intellectual charity who I save from misrepresentation, nor to rewrite colonialism and 'other' the colonizers on their behalf. That would recreate my hosts, yet again, as yet another set of imaginary characters peripheral to the contemporary world. Instead, I wish to highlight the problematic ways in which contemporary metropolitan cultures construct indigenous peripheries and suggest the ways that these discourses on primitive peoples, peripheral places and progress create the context in which local ethnic and gender identities are performed.¹⁹

¹⁷ See Donald Nonini, "On the outs on the Rim: an ethnographic grounding of the Asia-Pacific imaginary" in Dirlik, A., ed. *What's in a rim?: critical perspectives on the Pacific Region idea* (Boulder: Westview, 1993; pp. 161-182.)

¹⁸ Doreen Massey, "A place called home" in her *Space, place and gender* (Cambridge: Polity, 1994; pp. 157-173.)

¹⁹ Specific examples of the construction of Igorots within Philippine, Manila-based metropolitan modernities will be discussed in Chapter 3. The 'boundaries' of cultures, so impossible to draw, make it difficult to delimit discourses of one from others, thus images of Igorots also circulate in the U.S., Britain, and, globally, through their cinematic representation in *Apocalypse Now*.

I begin here with representations of 'the primitive' and the material situations of peoples who are inappropriate/d as Other within these representations.²⁰ I present a localized and historicized analysis of discourses on ethnicity and gender, exploring both localities and subjects, in their glorious complexities, and engaging with the narratives they produce. My text explores the past through present understandings in the performances of gendered and ethnic identities, exploring the origins of the names of 'Igorots' and 'woman' within contemporary colonial histories.

Thinking about the politics underlying the naming of places, people or ideas as local and global, primitive and modern, centre and periphery, development and progress, gendered and ethnic, I suggest that these concepts refract on to each other, forming a large web or constellation of intersecting and mutually constitutive meanings. One of the best ways to illustrate this problematic constellation is to tell a story which exceeds the limits of these terms – where the gaze is returned and identities are performed in engagement with an imagined global context, thus creating the global and the metropolitan for local self-representation. This story-as-dissertation is one that I (as ethnographic observer) have both retrieved and participated in producing and one that puts me, as metropolitan ethnographer, firmly into the frame as part of the production. By reporting on a performance of indigenous identity for tourist consumption and State patronage at the Hungduan Fiesta, I introduce the production of indigenous femininities as part of a 'living museum.' Trying to explore individual histories and specific relations of power, I began with this experience where native culture is made into a spectacle for public consumption. An atypical experience in daily lives, perhaps, but one that reveals the foundational narrative of development and progress in which local performances of gender and ethnicity are embedded.

²⁰ The inappropriate/d other is described by Donna Haraway as "that personal and collective being to whom history has forbidden the strategic illusion of self-identity" in Haraway, D., "The promises of monsters: a regenerative politics for inappropriate/d Others" in Grossberg, L., Nelson, C. and P. Treichler, eds., *Cultural studies*. (New York: Routledge, 1992; pp. 295 - 337), p. 329. This is Harway's gloss on the concept as developed by Trinh Minh-ha -- see her *Woman, native, other: writing postcoloniality and feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.)

1.4 A geography of a colonial present

The ethnic parade that opens this dissertation is an allegory of development that anxiously rehearses its own unrealizability. The suggestion is that if the community performs the linear narrative of development correctly, the Congress(man) will give the money needed to build a road. This will enable the tourists to come and see the primitive people and complain about how they have been ruined by the road. In this narrative, the major impact of development is not seen at the level of the material presence of projects, roads, communication networks and institutions but at the level of discourse. The road does not pre-exist the performance. Instead, it is by performing the story of development properly that the road will be brought into being and the community will secure the assistance of the Department of Tourism.

The discourse of development thus provides an imaginary of progress and a series of tropes and representational techniques for people who wish to change their local lives. Local discourses on development are located firmly in the Euro-American history of primitivism, positing a linear version of progress from 'un(der)-developed' to an asymptotic state of 'modernity' where all potentials are fully actualized. Hence, the ethnic parade passes from the houses of the farmers in the valley, up the hill and to the Municipal Hall and the Congressman, the locations of a state power installed by colonialism. The people comprising the parade become progressively less 'ethnic' and more 'modern,' with women representing the backward, 'primitive' times and men, the progressive, 'modern' and global era. Local ideas of progress are thus determined by colonial discourses on the primitive and the colonial vision of progress is the imaginary by which the local reality is tested. In this context, the notion of development works, fundamentally, as a technology of ordering and organization. The suggestion is that these things are lacking in 'underdeveloped' communities. Hence, the bodies on parade march in ranks and it is anticipated by the performers that they are being evaluated, I would suggest, for the ways in which their display corresponds with colonial expectations for gender.

My analysis situates gender identities in the contexts in which they are constituted and deployed -- set

against each other and manipulated by individual actors, local groups, and global discourses. The gendering of progress in the Fiesta suggests that the bounded experiences of daily lives typically root women, more so than men, in gendered identities linked to particular local places. Whether through the routines of work, shop and home or of field, farm and market, women belong in the local while it is men who fight the colonial power and travel the globe. Based on this kind of representation, indigenous femininities in the Philippines, my central concern in this text, are usually approached as place-based and highly differentiated identities. Yet, I met many female migrant workers who moved from these local spaces through the non-places of transnational capital and labor markets to work as domestics 'abroad.' This dissertation explores the constructions of a tradition of gender at 'home' and challenges the local/global norms constructed around the experiences of indigenous women. As travelling women, female migrants are displacing themselves and disordering colonial discourses on gender and the local. Their actions, perhaps unthinkable within colonial stereotypes, reveal the discourses of gendered containment for the partial and colonial fictions they are. In the interstices of these globally operating discourses on 'primitives' and 'moderns,' gendered identities are being renegotiated. Deploying discourses on ethnicity and accumulating cultural capital – language, skills, education - through performances of femininity, women's life histories show how individuals are reworking opportunities in these interstitial discursive spaces.

The central problematic here is the manner in which the politics and histories of ethnic origins articulate with the performances of gendered identity as femininity. My intention is to use narratives of the past, such as the ethnic parade, to subvert the present, to question notions of femininity that accompany concepts of progress contingent on the production of the primitive and the periphery. I show that these contemporary conceptions have their antecedents in colonial relations. In retelling local stories and histories, and thus reinscribing these people into ethnographic space through this dissertation, my goal is to demonstrate how global discourses on gender are, and always have been, firmly embedded in and produced by local experiences.

1.4.1 Structure of the dissertation

This text itself is structured as a geography of this colonial present. Each chapter corresponds to a stage of the story of the ethnic parade, applying this narrative strategy to the text as a whole. This introduction brings this narrative of local representations together with theorizing on the primitive as a global theme. While I continue this style of argumentation by vignette elsewhere, I support my claims, where possible, by bringing together the qualitative within quantitative descriptors of local conditions. The tone of text varies, moving from liminal spaces of exchange, representation and performance where I stage emerging problematics to more factual, 'objective' reporting on the distilled observations of two years of research and several hundred surveys. These variations in tone mark my own multiple subject positions, suggesting the movements between them that constitute my particular identity as participant observer and author.

The parade presented an active, present and under-revision narrative of the past for observers positioned in particular places. So does this text. The structure of the text at once recapitulates a narrative of progress, as presented in the ethnic parade – a progression from a local history to a global modernity – but works against that very idea of linear progress by destabilizing the categories of woman, local and ethnic deployed in that narrative. Each chapter takes apart these categories in a different way, revealing gender, place and ethnicity as the constitutive fictions that conceal ongoing colonial relations and local resistances.

Chapter 2 sets forward my methodological approach and outlines my theoretical frame. This chapter positions the reader and author within the research and writing of the text, corresponding to my self-positioning as researcher and participant at the Fiesta in Hungduan.

Chapters 3 and 4 explore the past as it is understood in the present. In Chapter 3, the parade begins in earnest with local understandings of history, as portrayed in the Fiesta by the men with spears who resisted the Spanish. This third chapter examines local histories and the gendering of representations of Igorots as primitives in the photographic archive and contemporary postcards. By setting local histories

in this colonial frame, I suggest the contexts in which people in rural Ifugao come to understand themselves as ethnic communities and historical actors. By retrieving local history from both the colonial archive and oral narratives, I refine and extend Edward Said's idea of the local as a site of post-colonial and nationalist resistance. The analysis explores how local history is produced and understood in present experiences and why it is gendered in such a particular fashion. I establish the absence of women in history and the gendering of anti-colonial resistance as a persistent problematic.

Thus, in Chapter 4, I turn to the absence of women and attempt to locate the women who were missing from the anti-colonial resistance and the overseas migration in the parade. This chapter places these missing women in the present understandings of history and transnational migration, contrasting different understandings of feminine subjectivity across (post)colonial contexts. I explore two representations of murderesses in order to reveal the possibilities of female agency constructed by speculations on femininity in historical and contemporary (post)colonial contexts. This works as an extended and sympathetic critique of Gayatri Spivak's gendered subaltern, exploring the politics of representation in the case of absent or silenced women.

In Chapter 5, the dissertation-as-parade finally arrives in the contemporary present, describing some of the community groups who embodied local knowledge and progress, above. Having established the history of ethnicity and how women may be understood locally, this fifth chapter then outlines the agricultural practices, household relations and local knowledges in which conceptions of gender are articulated. This chapter examines the gendered division of labor in contemporary agricultural economies and deconstructs the category of "woman" itself at the local level. Read together, Chapter 3 has already problematized the ground on which respondents in this fifth chapter make their claims for a tradition of gender – the idea that there is a single, definitive and shared "local" history or "tradition."

Chapter 6 describes the migration of women from indigenous communities in the northern Philippines, retrieving from individual narratives the function of femininities as historically constituted performatives

at work in a transnational problematic. This chapter moves from the local femininities associated with agriculture to those performed by the female OCW who was not represented in the parade at Hungduan, but roamed the parade grounds as a visitor. Experiences of migrant women similarly “roam” in this text, where I have presented them interleaved between the chapters as free-floating narratives. These women’s stories are intended to form more colloquial counterpoint to my academic description and provide the reader with tangential insights and lines of analysis that exceed the purview of my argument.

Chapter 7 draws conclusions from this journey through the geographies of gender and ethnicity as performatives. Having established the ethnic and gendered (post)colonial contexts for the performances reported in the personal narratives of female OCWs, I suggest how the experiences of circular migrants restructure local understandings of ethnicity and gender, moving ‘the local’ into a transnational present. From this discussion, I draw conclusion on the ways in which gender and ethnicity remain so potent, yet illimitable, as performative categories in transnational space.

Rosa

Dear Deirdre:

I am sorry for it took me so long to write you because I was not certain whether to stay or leave the country.... I am enjoying my last months here because I am meeting more and more Filipinos. I met three Ifugao girls married with Dutch. Two of them were from Nueva Viscaya and the third from Ifugao, proper. One of the three Ifugao girls just had her divorce recently, but she got another husband. I have noticed that most of the Dutch men who are married to Filipinas have something wrong with them. They are either divorced guys or physically disabled. There are very normal men married with Filipinas but very few. Most of the Dutch men occupy the manual jobs like gardener, carpenter or cook but when their wives go home to the Philippines, they say to the people that their husband's an engineer or manager. They boast..... It's funny.

I am doing more travel in the country with my Ifugao friends. We plan to go to Belgium in March. I want to see France too, but my friend has no time to accompany me. I might ask my Dutch suitor to drive me to France but the problem is I have no feeling for him....

The place I stay is... to the southwest of Amsterdam. It's a very well known community of rich people in Holland because only the moneyed people could afford to buy a space in this village within the forest.

At first, I was hard up with this domestic work. I was bored and irritated with the children. It said on the papers for "au pair" that I could take college courses but my employer does not like me to do that. It seemed it's not for Filipinas to study, only the other girls. They are coming here for economic reasons. They never dare to ask their privilege for study. I met about twenty au pairs and only two are doing courses. I heard stories about au pairs sent for study by their host families but who never finished the courses so it's just a waste of money. They have no interest. Since then, these host families never dare to send their succeeding au pairs. I know a lot of au pairs who work long hours but it's their fault for they do not talk, just keep on working. I tried to convince my neighbors' au pairs to come together and ask help from the Filipino organizations about au pairs' rights and privileges but they are just very passive.

I can manage my situation now and I am finally on the last bit. My leave of absence from the school in ends May. I will have the same salary teaching again as here. 'til next letter, when you're back home in Canada! You can write me care of my mother....

Rosa

Chapter 2 - On research and writing

This chapter explores the applicability of theories of gender and ethnicity as performatives as a practical grounding for ethnographic fieldwork.¹ I attempt to apply these ideas to this case study because I believe that such theorizations are not only applicable to the urban, mass media, consumption and technological problematics of cultural studies. To deny that the same themes are found in indigenous and rural communities too reinscribes the old dichotomies of center/periphery, modern/primitive, global/local in a new form. People outside metropolitan centers lead lives that are equally rich and complex, ambivalent and alienating as those of 'post-modern' metropolitan inhabitants and, as I will demonstrate, these locals certainly theorize the global.

My methodological goal is to make explicit spaces that are usually hidden, unavailable to the reader, in ethnographic accounts of field research. What I develop here is a spatial perspective on ethnographic field practices, focusing on the politics of origins and the performance of identities as gendered. I foreground the experience of the field as a space both real and imagined, that precedes and inflects the production of text. This space is where the ongoing negotiation of consent and authorization to speak about her experience is played out between the ethnographer and her hosts. This space is where the politics of ethnic origins and the performances of gendered identities first move through the production of knowledge that becomes known as "the research." Elements of self-reflexivity and sensitivity to context are essential features of this intersubjective space. They cannot simply be tacked on at a later point in the trajectory from experience to text, nor can they be produced in an exclusive and one-sided reflection on the part of the ethnographer. I demonstrate here that this intersubjective space is real and complex, not assumed as the transparent underpinning of my arguments.

Having located my ethnographer-self on the blurred boundaries between research and tourism, ethnicity and nationality in the preceding chapter, here I position myself as author of this project. I mark the extent to which my own subjectivity, fluid and mobile as it moves through roles of researcher, student,

¹ See Butler, J., *Excitable speech: a politics of the performative* (New York: Routledge, 1998) for explanation.

Canadian, woman, and on and on...I, is embedded in the process of writing. Mapping the trajectory of my research process, moving from interviews to theories and back again, and, finally, to writing the text, this chapter describes the ways in which the intersubjective nature of the research intersected with field techniques and theory.

In ethnography, the facts we deal with are fictive – in the sense of something made – and made for an unequal social exchange.² Productions of facts/fictions are never closed; facts are not already made, but in process. The making and unmaking of social worlds relies on concepts of history which are themselves contingent on particular interpretations of events and the frames which support them. These ideas, in turn, can be destabilized. Thus archival material, readings of popular culture and local voices sit uneasily together here, in an indication of the embeddedness of ethnographic work as both practice and product of global relations of power. As the parade at Hungduan shows, narratives are, and always have been, political tactics and become even more so in a transnational era.

2.1 Intersubjective space and research practice

My hostess at Hungduan, Tess, made the story of the Fiesta possible. As part of my experience, our interactions shaped my understanding of the parade. We spent two days together, and our exchange of biographical information over that time created the frame of reference for my understanding of my experiences there, and beyond. Here is the entry from my journal, giving some of the details of our interactions.

Tess, the municipal finance officer is my hostess – she has a university degree in economics and a brand new, galvanized iron roof on her house. Trusting in a renewed “tradition” of community-sanctioned marriage, Tess later lost her husband to America. He moved to the States with another woman, a former Peace Corps volunteer, leaving Tess a single parent. “An American woman like you,” she observes. I protest, telling her that I am Canadian, have a boyfriend in Canada, and am doing research, not development work. “But you are also kana to us here” she replies, referring to the local ethnic taxonomy.

² Geertz, C., *The interpretation of culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 15.

She tells me this story as we root through bales of used American clothing, looking for something she can wear to perform as emcee at the fiesta. The Mayor, in passing, vetoes this plan, instructing her to wear her "native uniform." She informs me that, if she wears hers, I'll wear one too! She describes it for me, knowing that I already know what it looks like: a white blouse, a 'native skirt' or tapis, and a belt with cotton pom-poms to show off my slim waist and full hips. How to express my mounting horror at the idea—appearing as part of the display, rather than as foreign guest and observer – without being rude? But perhaps this is the message she intends to convey: it's all performance.

In the end, we are rained out. Tess does not have to be the emcee and I am left my 'civilian' jeans and T-shirt. Back at her house, Tess shows me her photo album, asking in unintentionally ironic consternation what "piscor" means as we look at a snap of her ex, standing in an Ohio snow-bank. She asks me a series of questions about my absent boyfriend. I give calculated answers. Without electricity, I spend the evening silent and feverish in the candlelit pool around her kitchen table, shelling peas. Her second husband arrives but she does not introduce us. The trip back to town leaves at 3:30 a.m. and I sleep early, at 8 p.m. She sees me off, extending a firm invitation to return and go hiking – with my husband, of course, when I'm married.

In this interaction at the Fiesta, my outsider status give me access to privileged, confessional information on Tess's life but simultaneously constitutes me as a threat. I embody a privileged, attractive and possibly uncontrollable form of a locally recognized discourse on global femininity. I am at once constructed as a friend, another educated and well-traveled woman and as a potential thief of husbands, who I may entice into realms where local women cannot follow – into 'abroad.' As such, I do not have a neutral vantage point, but occupy a personal and exacting location within the broader historical connections and political struggles between 'here' and 'there' or local and global as understood by my respondents. Tess glosses my position as "*kana*," meaning an American woman. As a concise summary of local knowledge describing the global economic system and (post)colonial conditions that mark the Philippine place in this system, this is terribly accurate. Yet, it is simultaneously not my nationality. The distinction between Canadian and American figures in a whole different series of relations far removed from Tess's purview. When I objected that I was Canadian, Tess outlined an Ifugao taxonomy of ethnicities for me. One can be *pinoy* (Filipino, covering a variety of ethnic groups), *intsik* (Chinese), *bumbay* (East Indian), *hapon* (Japanese), *kastila* (Spanish), or *kana* (American.) Since a fair-skinned, pointy-nosed foreigner who is not *kastila* is *kana*, Canadians are a sub-group of Americans.

Tess, the other women at the Hungduan fiesta, and many others in my host community were clearly

engaged in 'doing research,' as it were, on me. There is a continuum between the researcher and the researched within the field experience:

We do not conduct fieldwork on the unmediated world of the researched, but on the world between ourselves and the researched. At the same time this "betweenness" is shaped by the researcher's biography, which filters the "data" and our perceptions and interpretations of the fieldwork experience.³

For me, this betweenness is a distinctly colonial space. As a foreigner, my presence is part of an iterative set of local experiences of European and American outsiders which follows on and extends the colonial encounter. As a category, outsiders have co-created local histories and dispositions towards the global in which my presence is inserted. These local knowledges of the global include both things intrusive and annoying that I cannot escape, like an ongoing interest in my marital status, but also preferential treatment and access to information. My marking by colonialism changes the places I pass through and the people I encounter in ways I do not intend and can only partially control. Though my goal was to be an observer, I acknowledge that I may have performed the role of missionary or mercenary beyond even my best intentions.

After this exchange with Tess, I began to collect the stories of the local experience of foreign-ness offered me: American soldiers hiding from the Japanese, Canadian Pentecostal missionaries, a Dutch development worker who started a basket-making workshop, a British irrigation engineer, a pretty anthropologist who fell on the terraces and died, a Peace Corps volunteer who jogged down the main road and made a mess of the rice paddies, another Peace Corps who married a man from a neighboring settlement and took him to America. When people came to find me, I was asked after as "*kana ti Kanada*" – the American woman from Canada. This classification appeared to be widely shared although those who had relatives in Canada understood national boundaries more clearly: a Canadian visa could not get you to 'the States.' One of the local jeepneys (public transport trucks) was proudly emblazoned

³ England, K., "Getting personal: reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research." *Professional Geographer* 46(1), 1994: 80-89, 87.

with "Vancouver-Canada," the source of the remitted capital that had been used to purchase it. So some people did know where Canada was, but I was still American.

Spivak reminds us "the politics of identity in the name of being the Other" is not the only possible stance within struggles to dismantle the traditional categories of primitive/modern or centre/periphery.⁴ Clearly being 'American' – identified as national from the former colonial power – in the field underpinned much of my research experience. While, sometimes I accepted this as a provisional identity just as I accepted the many other opportunities offered and expectations imposed on a guest, in other situations, I struggled against it.

This naming forced me to ask myself: "How do I stand differently to you? Do I not also represent colonial power? Is my presence here not merely another link in a long chain of imperial encounters and my note-taking, another form of representation for the colonial archive?" Acknowledging the ascriptive positioning of *kana* as my feminine and ethnic identity here marks my privilege and points to the historical relations of a colonialism that structure both that privilege and my confusion. This experience of being named as *kana*, and answering to that name, changed my understanding of my self and my own performance of identity. Clearly, gender is never the exclusive property of an individual's performance but becomes symbolic, reinterpreted and transformed, in these contests to define a common politics of origins – a shared system of naming localities, ethnicities and nationalities. I will argue that this kind of redefinition of femininity occurs to Filipina women as well, as they experience other forms of displacement, specifically through overseas employment.

2.2 Framing a research question

This project began as an exploration of women's participation in community development where the rural economy was undergoing a rapid transition from subsistence to cash cropping. My interest was in women's specifically gendered forms of local agricultural knowledge and their apparent marginalization

⁴ Spivak, G., "Acting bits/identity talk." *Critical Inquiry* Summer, 1992: 770-803, 782.

from community development initiatives. This interest emerged from observations I had made during my master's research in Ifugao in 1991 – 1992. In the apparently more gender egalitarian societies of upland Southeast Asia women control land in their own names and farm with some independence.⁵ Working in this region, I was curious as to why women's gendered interests seemed to be marginal to local development efforts.

My fieldsite, the community of Haliap/Panubtuban, Asipulo Municipality, in the province of Ifugao (see map 2-1) had hosted me while I worked as a research fellow on a Canadian International Development Agency initiative during my masters.⁶ That visit provided me with contacts in Ifugao Province with whom I could negotiate another research stay. The inherent limitation in this situation was that I would return to the same community but in a different role. No longer a 'development worker' with an international project, I was working on my own.

My entry into the 'field' was negotiated with my hosts. For the first seven months of my research, I was based in the Barangay Health Clinic in Haliap. This clinic served both *barangays*, Haliap and Panubtuban.⁷ Instead of rent, I arranged with the community's elected leaders, the Barangay Council, to repair the bathroom, fix the roof and bring in electricity. This spread the benefits from my stay to the broader community because the renovations improved the conditions under which the local Barangay Health Workers and visiting nurses or doctors cared for patients. The second part of my agreement with the Barangay Council stipulated that I would hire my research assistants from the local community.

⁵ On gender egalitarian societies see Sherry Ortner, "So, is female to male as nature is to culture," in her *Making gender: the politics and erotics of culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996; pp. 173-80). For descriptions of gender egalitarianism in the social formations of upland island Southeast Asia see Atkinson, J. and Errington, S. eds. *Power and difference: gender in island Southeast Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

⁶ This is the "real" name of the actual community, used here because of the arguments around naming, colonialism and place that I make in the following chapter. Having chosen to name my fieldsite, I am restricted in the amount of detail I can provide on my research assistants and respondents, lest I supply identifying information.

⁷ A *barangay* (derived from a Malay term for boat) is the Philippine political unit corresponding to a village. Several barangays make up a municipality; several municipalities, a province. In Ifugao, the settlement pattern is non-nucleated. This means that, in an area designated as a barangay, houses are not centralized in a single cluster but spread across a series of hamlets called *sitios*. The public health clinic was located in the *sitio* of Haliap Proper.

There were many English-speaking college graduates, male and female, unable to find work in locally or nationally with their degrees that were '*stanby*' – working as casual laborers or farming, part-time. At various times, up to two assistants kept me company at the clinic and six more worked from their own houses.⁸ During my research, I exchanged "improvements" and employment for dissertation data.

The two *barangays* I name as my fieldsite here are produced as a contact space by local, national and transnational forces of which my research travel is part. The reciprocity between myself and my hosts not conceal that I am travelling on 'white privilege.' The terms of our exchanges often reinscribed colonial power relations through both parties. I wanted to answer my research questions. Local people wanted to work the contact zone for their own purposes. Some of these attempts were unsuccessful, like the suggestion that I marry locally – "get married here" - and bring a husband back to Canada with me. They asked me about the possibility of sponsoring them for jobs in Canada. Did I need a nanny? Could I find them contract work? Attempts that were successful were requests to ferry messages and gifts to Canada and the States and to return with *balikbayan* boxes.⁹

Though I spent seven months in a particular village, my fieldsite was multi-locale, a contradiction in terms that suggests a scattered research practice. This primary setting was very close to the notions of a traditional ethnographic "field" as a bounded locality. These boundaries were blurred, however, by a series of visits exchanged with outmigrants from that village residing in nearby provinces and interviews with people either on their way to or returning from work abroad. During my stay, I traveled regularly from Haliap/Panubtuban through Banaue, Ifugao to Sagada, Mountain Province. On these trips, I met many more international circular migrants than I found in Asipulo. In Sagada and Banaue, I also came in contact with tourists. These included both Philippine nationals, resident and migrant, from mainstream

⁸ The Barangay Council put out the word that I was looking for research assistants – English speaking and with at least a High School diploma - and applicants approached me personally. Because many of these people had family responsibilities or were looking for permanent employment in their professions, research tasks were allocated by daily and monthly contracts. I was able to find some work, varying from a few months of "full time" to longer periods of "contract" for almost all of the applicants.

(non-indigenous) groups, and international tourists, ranging from backpackers to people on package tours. The entire year was punctuated by regular trips to the primate city of the Cordillera, Baguio, where I spent time with local academics and activists. In North America, I met with members of all these communities in Vancouver and attended a conference of overseas Cordillerans in Washington D.C. I continue to monitor the activities of a regional computer newsgroup over the Internet.¹⁰ I also and correspond with members of this group and friends in Baguio City, Sagada, Asipulo and the U.S. These sites are all linked by the notion of a single, albeit mobile and contested, ethnic identity – that of Igorot – and the shared histories of anti-colonial resistance, economic marginality, and exoticism in which this ethnic identity is embedded.

2.2.1 Field techniques

I collected information for this dissertation using a variety of field techniques selected from a ‘shopping list’ of sketch maps, surveys, semi-structured interviews, and group discussions. I began my field research by walking through the community and sketching the locations of the various landforms and fields. This walk-through introduced me, my research assistants and project, mapped households to particular *sitios* and tried out possible questions for a household survey. Community leaders, development workers and key respondents supplied comments on the draft survey. The maps and observations made were compared with community census data obtained from the Asipulo Municipal Office and Haliap and Panubtuban Barangay Councils in order to estimate the sample size required for adequate survey coverage.¹¹

⁹ *Balikbayan* is the Tagalog name given to a Filipino who has resided or is residing abroad on their return to the Philippines. A *balikbayan* box is a huge cardboard box of gifts brought back for family and friends.

¹⁰ igorots@onelist.com

¹¹ The target for coverage was at least thirty-five percent of the households in the community, selected at random.

Based on this initial assessment, respondent availability and the contingencies of rural living, the field research was structured around a household survey administered to households selected at random.¹²

This survey ranked the relative importance of income sources for each household and collected information on the allocation of labor by age and gender. I followed up on these data with another, more specific, survey on women's household management that identified crops grown, sold, eaten and traded with neighbors as well as ranked household food preferences.¹³ These surveys were administered in translation by research assistants, initially in my company, and then independently. Research assistants also completed semi-structured interviews in the local dialect with female farmers to explore their farming practices, household labor allocation and attitudes to farming. These interviews were supplemented with spot maps of the women's fields.¹⁴

I initiated an additional set of interviews with eighteen outmigrant households because the initial household surveys did not reveal migration relations or remittance payments adequately. I visited households farming in neighboring provinces, contacting these families through a "snowball" approach using kinship ties. Semi-structured interviews and field visits in these areas allowed me to assess differences between women's swidden practices at 'home' and household agricultural economies in outmigrant sites. During these visits, I was accompanied by a research assistant who provided translation when needed.

In both Haliap/Panubtuban and outmigrant areas, community history interviews were conducted with older community members. These elders were identified through research assistant inquiries as being either particularly knowledgeable custodians of oral history or actors in important historical events.¹⁵ Often respondents and their audiences made these performances of histories into group discussions. In

¹² One hundred sixty-seven household surveys were completed, giving sixty-two percent coverage in the study site of two hundred sixty-seven households.

¹³ One hundred thirty-five swidden surveys were completed, giving fifty percent coverage by household.

¹⁴ Ninety-eight interviews were completed, giving thirty-six percent coverage by household.

these interviews, some taped, others in note form, people told stories of historical displacement and occupation of the Antipolo valley.¹⁶ These respondents also provided narratives that treated gender relations and colonial encounters.

Lastly, I interviewed twenty-five returned female OCWs. My sample was drawn from Asipulo Municipality and other areas across Ifugao, Mountain Province and Baguio City. These interviews were conducted in English, and, where feasible, in a one-on-one situation. Many of these women were eager to talk with me about their experiences of life abroad and being a *balikbayan* (returned from abroad) at home. They preferred to keep our exchanges private and restricted to my research notes because they feared gossip about their humiliating experiences abroad or criticism of their “stinginess” with their savings from community members.

In interviews, respondents were not paid for their time or information.¹⁷ Instead, they were offered snacks and refreshments, often of their choice, as a gesture of reciprocity that was familiar in the local vernacular. Most respondents welcomed the idea that their personal experiences of everyday events were profound and important sites within conflicts between ‘here’ and ‘there’ and warmed to a chance to “share.” Others were understandably suspicious of just why I wanted the information, and chose not to participate or to defer their interviews until they had more information about me and my intentions.

2.2.2 Language and translation

Language and translation presented an ongoing series of challenges. Seven different languages are spoken in the Asipulo Valley where Haliap and Panubtuban are located: Ayangan Ifugao, Tuwali Ifugao, Kele-e, Kallahan, Ilocano, Tagalog (Pilipino) and English. According to linguists, the first six are all putatively versions of proto-Malay dialect that entered the Philippines with the earliest settlers.

¹⁵ Thirty-one interviews were completed.

¹⁶ The valley was named Antipolo by the Spanish. Until 1993, it was part of the Municipality of Kiangnan. At that point, became a separate unit of governance and was renamed Asipulo to commemorate a successful Kallahan headtaking raid. *Asip* = sheath and *ulog* = head, so the name signifies “heads on our sheathes.”

Local people frequently glossed all these languages except Tagalog/Pilipino as “dialect” to indicate their close relationship to the national language. I speak only English fluently and have an intermediate ability in Ilocano – sufficient to conduct a household survey interview, but not much more. My understanding of both Ifugao dialects improved greatly over my stay, but my oral expression remains poor. I relied on research assistants to translate conversations in languages other than Ilocano and English or spoke my own version of _____-lish, as an intermediate step. Because of the American colonial presence and the compulsory study of English in the school system, the vast majority of respondents spoke some English. By mixing Ilocano, the market language of Northern Luzon, with bits of English I almost always found communication was possible, if limited in its nuances of meaning. Sometimes, facial expressions and interpretive gestures had to suffice.

The vast majority of the inhabitants of Haliap and Panubtuban are members of the Ayangan ethnolinguistic group. Where possible, I have used Ayangan Ifugao terms and orthography to name places, objects and practices in this text. However, people often chose to express ‘external’ experiences and concepts in languages other than their first. Choice of language expresses a local politic of distancing, displacement, cultural capital and prestige. Because my ethnicity marks me as an English speaker, people often wanted to speak to me in English, using the everyday terms of their Filipino English, or to practice their skills. Since the American colonial era, English has been the medium of scholastic instruction, joined only in 1972 by Pilipino in the national curriculum. The Philippines, as my respondents were quick to point out, is the third largest English-speaking nation. In certain parts of this text, local categories are expressed in English. While it might seem more convincing to the reader had I retrieved these expressions in Ifugao or Ilocano and then translated them, such requests seemed absurdly primitivizing in the field.

Among other things, many contemporary Ifugao people think of certain places, concepts and relations – usually those having to do with metropolitan culture, development, government and travel - in English.

¹⁷ For the notable exception, see Gloria’s story in Chapter 6.

People are proud of the struggles and adaptations, travels and trials that this mastery of an imperial language reflects. Should my respondents choose to decolonize their vocabularies, I would support that, but it was not a goal of my research process to insist on this, regardless of their preferences. Because Ifugao is not learned as a written language, research assistants requested survey forms in English and translated back and forth while asking the questions when respondents preferred to answer in “dialect.” In semi-structured interviews, they took along English question lists. They made brief notes during the interview and then wrote out longer responses from memory based on these notes.

Operating in English set my research assistants apart from respondents as “literate” and “educated” when it came to interacting with farming community members whose formal education was limited. This dynamic situated my research within local understandings of knowledge and progress. I found it interesting that my assistants, for instance, edited my survey cover sheet to include a category of “occupation,” one which I had intentionally omitted. I did not want to draw attention to the classification of respondents as ‘farmers,’ ‘professionals,’ ‘government employees’ that structured the local hierarchy. During one of my first absences from the field, two of my assistants noticed this omission and retyped this cover sheet on the Barangay typewriter in order to include what appeared to them to be this salient category of occupation.

Due to these dynamics, the field situation decidedly limited the feasibility of the various methods available to collect and record data, and occasionally brought the veracity of the information retrieved into question.

2.2.3 Techniques and spatial control

Field techniques brought the forms of spatial control that underlie particular research methods into clear focus, there being clear differences in the cultural norms for the demarcation and use of space between rural Ifugao and the North American academy. For instance, my plan to tape most of the interviews I performed was foiled repeatedly by uncontrollable local hazards – namely chickens, children, traffic and

drunks with guitars. Private space, in the sense I know it from North America, rarely obtained in my field experience. Throughout most of the rural Philippine Cordillera, houses are used for sleeping only. All other activities take place outside or in 'public' settings. Adapting to the norms of local life required giving up the struggle to tape at all times. Chickens and traffic are facts of life; drunks are dangerous to approach. While children could be shooed away, it would be at my initiative, rather than my respondents' choice. I imagined that I would appear ungrateful, old for my single status, and with attitudes that explained why I had yet to marry if I asked that children leave my interviews.

Different cultural norms for the control of space produced other spatial problematics. My presence as a foreigner attracted other visitors, turning interviews into public performances of histories, opinions and life stories. This was, in some cases, a desirable consequence, creating curiosity about previously obscure stories and events. In other cases, the atmosphere of public performance limited the possibilities of truthful exchange between respondent and researcher. This was usually frustrating for both myself and my hostesses, who often felt obliged to feed the gathering. In such situations, which occurred most frequently with returned OCWs, I discarded particular lines of questioning that I felt would be uncomfortably personal and tried to bring things to a close politely.

2.3 Identifying a problematic

Life in the field has a way of reformulating research questions simply in the process of daily living. After attending the Fiesta at Hungduan, it was clear that my experiences were causing me to rethink my initial interest in gendered indigenous knowledge and the ideas of indigenous communities and gendered identities that underpinned these questions. Before I could learn about women's indigenous knowledges, I needed to understand what 'indigenous' and 'woman' meant in the local (and obviously not so local) context.

Something about the Ethnic Parade unsettled me. Women appeared at the primitive beginning of the story, but were not represented in the modern ranks of the overseas workers that came at the end. This

representation contradicted the evidence of local women's involvement in overseas work. Moreover, women who were present in the community continued to farm those same crops identified with the primitive. *Camote* (sweet potato), though a crop with low social status as the starch staple of the poor and landless, was an important swidden crop. Moreover, it was introduced to the region by the Spanish, who brought it to the Philippines from Central America and, hence, a colonial rather than a 'Stone Age' crop. It seemed its relegation to the 'primitive' and feminine realm was the result of its low status as a food of the poor and landless. This low status concealed its history while feminizing it within the development narrative.

Our interviews indicated that women's farming of *camote* had clearly sustained the community during the famine following the Second World War. However, when I did my first household surveys, both male and female respondents both informed me that women's farming was neither "progressive" nor "important." They did not want to answer my queries on women's swiddens because such farming practices were not appropriate places, in their opinion, for foreigners to give development money. Yet, families continued to eat the crops produced by women and rely on their sales for petty cash. Women's agricultural work was thus clearly constructed as being part of the 'backward' local economy. That was why, for instance, my female assistants were happy to draw attention to the fact that, nowadays, not every woman (including, most specifically, their college graduate selves) was a farmer.

The disparities between my observations and local representations of local gendered realities continued to accumulate as I assessed my questionnaires, notes and collection of secondary materials. The discrepancies intrigued me. I did not want my research on women's knowledge to construct 'women' as an object that needed to be better managed to meet the goals of development. Instead, I saw women as a disparate group of individuals, similarly located by discourses on gender, ethnicity and modernization that underlie local conceptions of modernity, trajectories of development, and systems of prestige. To explicate what I saw, I needed to contextualize the gendering of the local narrative of development

within both a broader historical geography and a global economic frame.

My strategy was to use the ethnographic technique of triangulating between several sources of information. These sources included information drawn from interviews with local people, my research assistants' comments on these interviews, the historical record and secondary interpretations, representations of the area and its people in the media, and my own observations. Information I had collected, and other observations that I had not recognized as important at the time, began to fit into these categories once I identified my research question as the performance gender and ethnicity. In what follows, I outline how this question emerged.

Beginning with local narratives and locally produced texts, I read my interview guides. One of the initial local history interviews was completed by a senior male community leader who wrote his answers to the question list, added some commentary, and dropped the completed form off at the clinic. In response to the question: "what are the improvements (in local conditions) since before (before the Spanish colonization)?" he had written a single entry: "bras and panties for women." I read this bemused. Was he serious, or just teasing me, resisting the very idea of "research"? How did dressing the female body in clothes intended to be invisible contribute to local development? To progress? Who was watching to see that local women were appropriately underclothed and thus progress was occurring? Whom would my respondent identify as the subject thinking this? Obviously, something about covering the female body as a performance of femininity was an essential part of his local understanding of the definition of progress – whether or not he subscribed to this definition himself. Curiosity about this singular observation led me in three directions to try to place it in a wider discursive context. I considered my own personal and embodied experiences of performing gender in 'the field.' I turned to the historical record of colonization in the area. Lastly, I began an exploration of representations of gender and indigenous identities in the visual economy. This visual economy is a comprehensive and ordered catalogue of people, objects and landscapes that circulates, as a set of visual images, often commodified, within relations of unequal

power across national and cultural boundaries.¹⁸ Not only did I find the visual economy for the Cordillera in academic journals and historical books, I found the very same images and subject matter in films and contemporary postcards available locally.

The emphasis on female modesty and clothing echoed that of a story I found reported in a secondary source chronicling American colonial history in Ifugao.¹⁹ It summarized a note from a missionary expressing despair over the actions of a young woman, newly converted to Christianity. As a Christian, she was provided with a blouse to cover her properly and to mark her as a convert, as against the topless heathens. Though grateful for the gift and proud of her new status, she nonetheless caused the missionary dismay by cutting holes into the blouse to expose her breasts. This she did to allow her to breastfeed and perform her newly converted status simultaneously. Here you see the performance of femininity and the body caught up in a whole colonizer/colonized divide that is reinscribed into discourses on gender. Ifugao indigenous femininity did not meet with the requirements of a Euro-American femininity constructed around very different assumptions about bodies, gazes, sexuality, decency and a dichotomy between public versus private space.

Female toplessness thus became, and remains, one of the most scandalous and exotic features of the Philippine Cordilleran peoples. In the American colonial era, postcards of topless indigenous women were popular souvenirs in Manila. In 1996, a Manila-based film company shot a quasi-historical drama in Sagada, Mountain Province, a setting reported in the media as an excuse to display the leading lady's chest. At the same time, I found a picture postcard of a topless woman prominently displayed in several stores in Baguio, Banaue and Sagada. This image, though produced in an historical looking black and white format, is clearly sold to the consumer as a photo taken by Baguio-based photographer Tommy Hafalla in 1988.

¹⁸ This definition of visual economy is adapted from Deborah Poole's *Vision, race and modernity: a visual economy of the Andean image world* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p 8.

¹⁹ Fry, R. *History of the Mountain Province* (Manila: Anvil Press, 1982.)

While representations of women without shirts help to define the region and its people in a nostalgic and touristic imaginary, the reality does not match the image. Local women do not go topless. In fact, they are usually hugely careful about modesty in response to these stereotypical representations. It was I, the American, bathing pre-dawn at the public tap who needed a warning to wash underneath my shirt, rather than remove it. Knowing, now, how they are seen by the 'rest of the world,' local people project that vision back on to outsiders and speak against it in acts of autoethnography. I found it ironic that "foreign" stereotypes of local women which arose through early ethnographic writing on the region were now being re-deployed to control the behavior of foreign ethnographers. Actual toplessness, was something I saw once in two and a half years spent on the Cordillera: a woman, face obscured by a large farmer's hat, walking along a hot asphalt road who removed her shirt as our truck passed.²⁰ Yet, clearly, the stereotypes of toplessness circulated in seemingly persistent ways which had a deep impact on local subjects. This brought me back to evaluate the possible impacts of the visual images of the area and its peoples that could be found in the media and along the tourist routes.

My participant observations led me to map my own symbolic role into local responses in this conflict between discourses on gender. For instance, in an earlier stint of fieldwork, I had written the following passage in my journal:

Balancing my bucket of water precariously on my head, I picked my way across the muddy path from the community tap to the house. One of the male teachers emerged from the school compound and greeted me: "you should let your girl do that." My response was a smile and a puzzled expression. I had been taught this skill by a female friend in another upland community and received much encouragement and approval for my first feeble attempts. Elsewhere in the mountains, people interpreted my fetching water as a sign that I was not afraid to work as they did, while here they seemed to disapprove.

²⁰ This was, of course, barring my own participation in groups of women bathing in screened areas along irrigation systems and rivers.

Putting the water in the kitchen, I joined my research assistants and a group of our friends in front of the house and began inquiring about appropriate work for women. Because of my short hair and large size compared to my assistants, I was already known as "the American with the two wives" and on several occasions mistaken for a man or perhaps a "tomboy."²¹ Thus, I wanted to learn what would be expected from me as a young woman.

The ensuing discussion dealt with appropriately feminine activities and behaviors for women. I was advised that women should stay fresh and clean, not overexert themselves, be compassionate, and perhaps a little shy or aloof. During the conversation, a group of women walked up the path. They were talking noisily and carrying baskets of sweet potatoes, sacks of rice, and containers of water on their heads and digging knives in their hands. They were barefoot and muddy from a day in their swiddens. As they passed out of sight, I asked how these ideals applied to them and heard "oh, they are just farmer's wives."

I was clearly caught up in local figurings of the metropolitan in this exchange. Ideas expressed about "what women do" rested, in part, on how the speaker defined "woman." This depended on the context of the conversation. Using my white, Western, educated self as the instrument of research, I was creating a context that produced responses considered appropriate for a metropolitan outsider, responses that put a "modernizing" face on the activities and attitudes of community members. I was told about an ideal, a role appropriate to women of certain status, age or class, but the realities of daily life for most of the women I met did not seem to approach this description. Even though there was a local tradition of equity and complementarity in gender roles, it was not available to me as an outsider lacking the skills and experience of these female farmers. So who was I and what did I symbolize, I wondered?

More practically, my assistants made it clear that they definitely did not relish their roles in this salacious interpretation of our working relationship. To maintain an ambiguously gendered performance seemed to demand too much, both from myself and those around me. So when it was suggested by the wealthier, English speaking members of the community - the school teachers and several regular visitors to my house - that I behave in ways which corresponded to the expectations for the "housewives" of the elite, I began to try to do so. With their generous but conflicting advice, I attempted to behave in a way that was a bit more lady-like. I bought cotton blouses, wore lipstick, stayed clean, and tried to remember what my

²¹ *Tomboy* is the term in local use for lesbian. I met several women who were described as such, but none who self-identified as *tomboy*. Once, I was harassed by a group of high-school age girls in the market who pinched my buttocks. When my research assistant responded with, "can't you see she's a woman, look at her breast?" one girl responded, "she's *tomboy*, *lang*, and beautiful, too."

mother told me about crossing my legs while straining to pick up on the real and imagined cues around me. Would I ever get it right?

One night, in the middle of this gender disorientation, my house was surrounded by what seemed to be a large group of men. They were singing a tuneful, if accented, version of Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman" and trying their drunken best to climb in through the windows. The construction of what local people supposed was a more acceptable "American" femininity on my part was a new thing. These men had seen me only in my 'tomboy' days of men's shirts and loose jeans. It certainly made me question my acceptance of the idea I had spent several weeks performing gender ambiguously. My assistants and I closed and bolted everything in sight and sat down to wait out the crowd. After things died down a bit, someone came to the back door and offered us an apology, explaining that it was just intended as a joke. I concluded from this experience that I could not perform my femininity as I wanted to in this context. My performance of gender was overdetermined by the people and histories surrounding me.

How did the intersections of representations, colonial encounter, and this same process of social policing produce local femininities and shape the experiences and identities of local women and their communities?

2.4 Incorporating theory

My analysis is grounded in a particular set of theoretical principles that delineate the approach to the subject, to culture and to place. Using this theory, I attempt to access and contextualize the experiences of local women across the divide of language, ethnicity and social positioning. This dissertation thus retraces some of the same ground covered by previous ethnographers – colonial administrators, lay missionaries, Peace Corps volunteers, and development workers. There are, as I have outlined in the introduction and explore in the following chapter, certain familiar tropes of representation that inhere in this terrain. My contribution here is not to "get the facts right" and "correct" other ethnographers on that basis, rather it is to produce ethnographic evidence and analysis that denaturalizes the categories that

have been used to represent such places and their inhabitants. These are the same categories on which metropolitan audiences have come to rely when they attempt to navigate representations of primitive places and peoples in advertising, tourism, or hiring migrant workers.

These familiar categories are compelling for metropolitan subjects because of the very familiarity of notions of the subject, subjectivity, gender and place that are embedded within them.²² Their work can only be resisted and undone by paying careful attention to different strategies of thinking and representing the world. Thus I can only tell the reader something new if the reader is prepared to think about these things in a new frame and, to a certain extent, learn a new vocabulary to hold on to those thoughts. The vocabulary I have chosen here relies on the capillary model of power described by Michael Foucault. The theorizations of subject, subjectivity and place in this text build on Foucauldian concepts of power and individuals developed by a disparate group of academics that might (loosely) be named post-structuralists, feminists, and critical geographers or anthropologists. What follows, below, are my adaptations of their theorizing to the task at hand.

2.4.1 Power/knowledge

Since I wanted to learn the limits and constructions of local forms of knowledge and gender and ethnic identities, it seemed only fair that my first lessons would be about my own. Conflict in knowledges between my hosts and myself introduces an essential set of methodological issues. These issues are the dangers of claiming knowledge, the problematics of the position from which one claims it, and the difficulties of translation. These problems occur from both sides of the ethnographic encounter and I wish to introduce a story that illustrates them.

²² To talk of the periphery in a different way provokes this response from my imagined interlocutor: "Yes, tell me something new, but make it accessible to me. Tell me something different about the world, yet use the information I already know to be true. Tell me about remote places, underdeveloped peoples, their oppression and their pain. Do not speak to me as if my thinking were the problem, do not problematize my resistance to your language, just keep it familiar."

My immediate neighbor in my fieldsite was a schoolteacher and she passed by our washing-up area as she walked to and from the school. One morning she passed me as I washed a particularly muddy and wretched pair of jeans. I was squatting by the basin, scrubbing mightily with a plastic brush and Tide powder, while perspiration beaded on my brow. She stopped, smiled, and said, in English: "What I know is, Americans do not wash." This was not a particularly welcome comment, because I was struggling with these jeans precisely to avoid living up to the stereotype of the rich but slovenly tourist who insults her local hosts with 'ragged' clothing. And here she was, implying I was lazy and dirty by virtue of my ethnicity. I responded with a sharp retort in Ilocano: "Awan ti adalmo." I thought it conveyed a sense of 'you do not know very much' but, literally translated, it means 'your knowledge is nothing.' It also, as I learned, has a strong moral overtone and is one of the worst possible insults you can offer. We stared at each other in silence, and she walked off. It took several weeks and many apologies to build good relations. I learned that the Ilocano expression papanunotak, which means, roughly, 'my thinking is' or 'my impression is,' was translated into English as "I know." So, I constantly heard people make claims of knowledge about the world in English, expressing in much stronger terms in my language what would have been a mild suggestion or half-formulated opinion in their own. I always found that, much as they undoubtedly experienced with my half-baked attempts at Ilocano, it was very hard not to put such strong claims into immediate dispute or withdraw, scornfully.

I introduce this vignette because I want to emphasize how much this dissertation is about the productive and mutual constitution of knowledge and power. This story is about more than translation; it is about the power to name people as ethnic and national subjects and about the power to name observation, opinion and hearsay as knowledge. Both my field research and the process of writing took place in contexts located within the fluxes of power relations. As Michel Foucault theorizes: "power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth."²³ The exercise I undertake here, writing ethnographically about my experience, is about the power to narrate, to represent, exercised unevenly but responsively by both colonizers and colonized and by ethnographer and respondents. The power I experienced was never the 'power-over' of fantasies of colonialism, but negotiated relations overdetermined by particular contexts, yet, at least partially, under the control of the individuals with whom I interacted.

2.4.2 Subjects and subjectivities

The ideas of the subject and self-understanding I mobilize in this text must be applicable to both 'the researched' and myself, as metropolitan researcher. This is necessary because my goal is to mark the ways in which these people are constituted by experiences vastly different from my own, but are not

²³ Foucault, M. *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (New York: Viking, 1979), p. 194.

Other to me nor to the reader. I am working here from within a non-essentialist model of subjectivity that is responsible to difference between subject positions but does preclude the motion of self-awareness between one position and the next. Here, gender is not a given set of categories, but an ongoing production, as identities are explored and performed by or ascribed to acting subjects. Part of the appeal of this approach is fits with the theorizations of gendered subjects - as 'becoming' or in process - offered by my hosts.

From my experiences of performing my own gender in the field, I would argue that, from the point of view of this indigenous Philippine community within their experience of a 'globalizing' world, there are no longer discrete communities of difference. In responding to and correcting my performances of femininity, my hosts and respondents maintained that there are now some things which are supposed to be more broadly understood, like the ways in which I, as *kana* ought to behave as "woman." Their responses to me anticipate a kind of globalized discourse on gender similar to that applied, as I discuss in Chapter 6, to female overseas migrants.²⁴ This discourse is accessible to them because they have been abroad, seen the pictures and films in the media and heard stories about or met other foreign women. By mapping me into this imaginary terrain, people imagined how it would be to be "woman," were they subjects named as me. It is not a discourse that always applies to other women, locally, but a strategic naming that does not preclude local pluralities and individual differences.

Like other identities – the terms in which people characterize themselves and are characterized by others – femininity must be geographically and historically contextualized. What it means to say "woman" varies across time and space, even within a shared language. People often live in more than once space and speak several languages over a lifetime, amidst a series of dynamic relationships and political alliances. As individuals, people come to understand themselves and to act through a series of multiple

²⁴ Donna Haraway puts it, in rather poetic terms: "Gender is a field of structured and structuring difference where the forces of extreme localization, of the intimately personal and individualized body, vibrate in the same field with global high tension emissions." in her *Simians, cyborgs and women: the reinvention of nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991) p. 195.

(and often conflicting) relationships that change and shift over time and space. Their self-understandings are similarly mobile. As feminist critical geographers Gerry Pratt and Susan Hanson describe it, “identities...are fluid and constituted in place – and therefore in different ways in different places.”²⁵ Feminine identities grounded in the name “woman” are no exception to this process, but contingent, context based and unstable in meaning. So are ethnicities constructed around the place-based category of “Igorot” and, thus, this dissertation locates gendered subjectivities in particular local places and their histories.

This theorization of gendered subjects also reflects the reformulation of the essential questions of feminist research. Moving from the early 1970s to the late 1990s, there has been a post-structuralist turn in feminist thought. This paradigm shift has replaced an essentialist conception of ‘woman’ as a singular subject position and object of patriarchal oppression with investigations of the categories of gender as regulatory fictions, produced and deployed through specific and ongoing historical processes. As a reformulation, this change has produced a clear tension between the strategic need for feminists to make arguments for and about those identified as ‘woman’ and attempts to recognize and trace the processes through which such gendered self-understandings are constructed. Theorist Judith Butler observes “Contemporary feminist debates over the meanings of gender lead time and time again to a sense of trouble, as if the indeterminacy of gender might lead to the failure of feminism.”²⁶ Butler’s work takes apart the categories of identity as the required common ground for feminist politics, suggesting instead a radical critique of the histories and politics of gendering. Following Butler’s arguments, accepting ‘woman’ as an appropriate category for research is problematic; it locks individuals into a particular, singular subject position. This particular, single position is fictional. As my field vignettes show, above, my naming as ‘woman’ in no way precluded other people from performing disparate and contradictory

²⁵ Pratt, G. and S. Hanson, “Geography and the construction of difference” *Gender, Place and Culture* 1(1) 1994: 5-29, 6.

²⁶ Butler, J., *Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. vii.

femininities nor me from trying to perform in ways that destabilized its limits. The contingent, unstable and decentered ideas of gendering I will explore here rely on this idea of identity as performative.

2.4.2.1 body /subject/mobile subjectivity

Gender begins with the material and social body, male or female, as the primary site of gendering.

Gendering happens as a form of performance through the body: "the body is not outside of textuality,...the body itself is a field of signification, a site for the production of cultural meanings...you play the game this way or that, you choose to pass or not within this scene or the next, but you can't choose to stop playing with signs, with your own material production as a cultural (*i.e.*, visibly signifying) body."²⁷ As a material object, a female or male body does not carry or define any form of identity. Femininity is fictional and performative, not determined by biology. What must be accounted for, then, is the formation of masculine and feminine subject positions, not the existence of men and women as social actors.

Individuals, however, are more than just the labels of their currently occupied subject positions. They are, at least partially, self-conscious actors who occupy a variety of social roles. So I have chosen to work with the idea of a mobile subjectivity here, developing through an understanding of the subject's multiple locations.²⁸ The subject itself is not a unitary whole, but a fragmented trajectory.²⁹ Thus, whether positioned as researcher, respondent or reader, one is never completely placed in relation to structuring categories of subject positions, nor ever completely certain of one's own identity and own story in one's own mind. Where one is "one," it is an awareness of a subjectivity in constant motion in

²⁷ Griggers, C., *Becoming-woman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 54.

²⁸ "There is no way to 'be' simultaneously in all, or wholly in any, of the privileged positions structured by gender, race, nation and class." Donna Haraway, *op. cit.*, 193.

²⁹ "I is not unitary, culture has never been monolithic, and is always more or less in relation to a judging subject. Differences do not exist between outsider and insider - two entities. They are also at work within the outsider, herself, or the insider herself, a single entity.... Such subjectivity can hardly be submitted to the old subjectivity/objectivity paradigm." Trinh T. Minh-ha, "Not you/like you: postcolonial women and the interlocking questions of identity and difference" *Inscriptions* 3/4, 1988: 71-78, 72-77.

relation to the context and relationships through which one is named as a subject.³⁰ This mobile subjectivity attends to local histories without forsaking their embeddedness in global processes, and insists on their constitution through individual experiences. This mobile subjectivity can negotiate with the contentious claims of structuring subject positions -- like gender as masculine or feminine, and ethnic identity as indigenous or metropolitan subject -- that attempt to fix the subject into essential categories of difference, without becoming completely overdetermined by these labels. In this theoretical frame of mobile subjectivities, theorizing "woman" and "man" can only be approached as a question of becoming: "Am I that name? How and where did I become such?"

Judith Butler theorizes gender as a performative - that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be.³¹ In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed. There is no gender identity behind the performance of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' which are said to be its results. Gender here is thus simultaneously a verb -- gendering, approached as a process to be understood - and an object -- gender, approached as a text to be read out of the performances of these self-gendering actors. Through intentional performance, an actor can subvert those naturalized and reified ideas of gender that support particular relations of power.³² By varying the stylized acts of repetition which comprise gender - gestures, movements and styles - one can disrupt the normalizing fiction of gender as "natural" and reveal it for the social

³⁰ Subjectivities are "temporal, moving across and along axes of power (which are themselves in motion) without ever fully residing in them..., relational, produced through shifting yet enduring encounters and connections, never fully captured by them..." Kathy Ferguson, in her *The man question: visions of subjectivity in feminist theory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 154.

³¹ Butler, 1990:145.

³² Ibid.,33.

performance it is.³³ Following Butler, it can be argued that heterosexual femininity and masculinity are hyperbolic, melancholic drag performances.³⁴

As an actor I, too, can make gender trouble by acting as a political agent to destabilize gender and ethnic identities. Nonetheless, as I outlined above, such destabilizing performances are enacted in the micro-dynamics of capillary power and meet with resistance. Using Butler's idea of performative gender - possibly plural, mobile and individual - it seems that such a description of willful staging is limited by the context of performance. I will argue that location and subjectivity should not be conceived as one-dimensional or static, but as multiple and limited by varying degrees of boundedness and mobility. Butler attempts to increase the space within which a knowing subject can select the kind of identity performed by stressing that agency lies within the possibility of variation in repeated performances of gender.³⁵ Yet, the meanings of performances can escape the control of their performers to be overdetermined by the politics of reception. Thus historical context, in terms of ethnic origins and cultural histories, can overdetermine performances of femininities. This is how my concerns with gendering and local femininity intersect, at a theoretical level, with the histories of local ethnicities.

Making women's experiences visible and reporting their voices as 'authentic' is clearly not a sufficient strategy for this task. Feminist historical geographer Mona Domosh cautions that the identities and experiences of individuals cannot be accepted as self-evident in describing broader social phenomena.³⁶ To accept the gendering of things at face value simply naturalizes the existing gender differences on the Cordillera and ignores their complex colonial histories. Instead, this dissertation focuses on the historical circumstances under which these identities are produced and the particular discourses through which local ideas of femininity and masculinity are constructed. Accepting that "woman" is a provisional

³³ Ibid., 115.

³⁴ Butler, J. "Critically queer." *GLQ* 1, 1993: 17 - 32, 27.

³⁵ Butler, 1990, 145.

identity is quite different from rejecting the idea that it functions as a category of oppression. Through particular local histories, the identity of woman has oppressed individuals in various aspects of economic and social life. This dissertation will link a specific history of femininity with contemporary local conditions for women. Along with the identities they constitute, these conditions are at once both social and spatial in nature.

2.4.3 Culture and place

The story I introduced first, that of the Fiesta at Hungduan, highlights a politics of location, naming me as *kana* and my hostess as *pinay*.³⁷ Mapping these two terms on to our national identities of Canadian and Filipina would suggest that the two are in opposition and can never be reconciled -- that hybridity is impossible. Filipinos do become Filipino-Canadians and, decidedly less often, vice-versa. Other people may exist in points between the two. In the naming of such positions, one is forced to speak in terms of boundaries and origins as if they were always and fundamentally material realities, never to be transcended, as opposed to enabling fictions that may be deconstructed. I want to deny closure on nationalisms and ethnicities, in order to show their fictive nature. I will demonstrate that the actual places invested with the symbolism of origins are always both representations and material localities. I also argue that geographies of containment and separation between here and there or centre and periphery are largely fictional, constructed by the same forces and by the same means as these mistakes of origin.

I approach ethnicity and homeplaces here as exercises in what Gayatri Spivak has called "the politics of origins:"

(T)o feel one is from an origin is not a pathology. It belongs to that group of grounding mistakes that enable us to make sense of our lives. But the only way to argue for origins is to look for institutions, inscriptions and then to surmise the mechanics by which such institutions and inscriptions can stage such a particular style of performance.³⁸

³⁶ Domosh, M. "With stout boots and a stout heart" in J.P. Jones, H. Nast and S. Roberts, eds. *Thresholds in feminist geography* (New York: Rowan and Littlefield, 1997; 225 – 237), p. 226.

³⁷ Filipina, or *pinay*, in Tagalog is the feminine version of *pinoy*, or Filipino.

³⁸ Spivak, G. "Acting bits/identity talk." *Critical Inquiry* Summer, 1992: 770-803, 781.

This comment foregrounds the mutually constitutive role of the concepts of self and Other in the face of the familiar tropes of nation, ethnicity and religion mobilized within an "identity politics." Identity emerges through a series of individual performances in the creation of seemingly static and internally undifferentiated self/Other distinctions. These distinctions themselves are embedded in genealogies lying offstage, beyond the performing individual, genealogies deeply rooted in imperial histories. Ethnic identities, then, following Spivak, are linked through a series of grounding mistakes tied to the politics of origins.

Approaching cultures differently, yet in articulation with one's own enculturation, is a tricky task. The oppressive hierarchy of central selves/peripheral Others has a long and complex history which has relied on particular representations of spaces, both imagined and real. Pierre Bourdieu has suggested that culture is best understood as a map, and that this mapping of culture creates a regular territoriality with powerful authentic centers and marginal peripheries.³⁹ Accepting this idea of a cultural map has created the Other's culture as a terrain across which one can navigate, as outsider/observer, to authenticity and "truth." This is only possible, of course, for an observer positioned outside and above cultures and histories. For the outsider/navigator, this travel creates an authentic local culture, central and historic with an identifiable set of legitimated traditions. Although he is sensitive to the misunderstandings which outsider views undoubtedly create, Bourdieu's outsiders do not stand in particular political relation to the Others they study.⁴⁰ I cannot position myself in this role.

Instead, I situate my interventions here within a particular conceptual and methodological position adopted by feminist "outsider" ethnographies of gender. This position seeks to disturb both the boundedness of the academy and the distinctions of self and Other on which institutions of oppression depend. Lila Abu-Lughod calls this position "writing against culture," citing culture as the concept

³⁹ Bourdieu, P., *Outline of a theory of practice*. Trans. R. Nice. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 2.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 1-2.

through which the ethnographic hierarchy of self and Other is naturalized.⁴¹ For Abu-Lughod, culture is the conceptual foundation of the ethnographic subject/object distinction that makes the process of Othering possible. Culture is also a property of the investigator because outside is never a neutral vantagepoint, but always an exacting location within broader historical connections and political struggles. The ethnographic images of cultural holism and authenticity built from such ostensibly neutral outsider perspectives are dissolving through a shift of focus to the networks of meaning and practice which connect individuals and places. James Ferguson and Anil Gupta observe that: "if one begins with the premise that spaces have always been hierarchically interconnected, instead of naturally disconnected, then cultural and social change become not a matter of cultural contact and articulation but one of rethinking difference through connection."⁴² Thus, the idea of mapping culture that sets boundaries of internal-external, centre-periphery and traditional-modern obscures the connections between differences and denies agency to the Others it creates. Thinking about maps and culture under colonialisms, the ethnographic production of culture functioned as a mapping in which colonial regimes obscured and reworked such connective networks even as it pushed them into its service. Thus, for those within the project that is the West, Spivak asserts that "what we call culture... may be shorthand for an unacknowledged system of representation that allows you a self-representation that you believe is true."⁴³

I would not deny that there are social boundaries mapped to the spatio-temporal layout of the world. Instead of attempting to delineate them through theorizing maps as Bourdieu does, I use experiential and narrative means to demonstrate the violence of such boundary projects. The networks in which people identify themselves, relate with others, and participate in institutions construct the limits of the possible. These networks have a fluid and dynamic nature and a complex layering of possibilities not captured by

⁴¹ Abu-Lughod, L., "Writing against culture" in Fox, R., ed., *Recapturing anthropology: working in the present*. (Santa Fe: School for American Research, 1992; pp. 137-162), p.137.

⁴² Ferguson, J. and A. Gupta "Beyond 'culture': space, identity and the politics of difference" *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1), 1992: 6-23, 8.

⁴³ Spivak, G. 1992, 785.

the static metaphor of a cultural map. An effective and responsible politics of location cannot leave undisturbed either these fictions of cultural holism or the boundary projects of colonialism. This is because the local places ethnographies describe are part of a local that is “contingent, historicized and never separable from larger, macro, social forces.”⁴⁴ ‘Writing against culture,’ then, requires the acknowledgement that any localizing strategy, be it the naming of community, culture, region, nation, centre or periphery, obscures particular facets of experience as it reveals others. This is a caveat that applies both to strategies of localization I employ, and those used by my hosts. Hence, I pay attention to the ways in which local communities are constituting themselves through their global connections – becoming translocalities.⁴⁵ I not only track the reinscription of images from the historical archive into the internet, I chart the movements of individuals and communities back and forth from local places across the globe.

Thinking about place in such a space of flows is complicated. Place is not a category or a territorial concept but defined in relational terms – places are made through alliances and resistances deployed across terrains of power. Alan Pred and Michael Watts describe the contemporary community “a domain in which local experience no longer coincides with the place in which it takes place.”⁴⁶ Thus “community” does not necessarily signify “territorially enclosed, face-to-face in interaction, pure in origin or even necessarily monolingual,” as Paula Ebron and Anna Tsing argue.⁴⁷ Instead, community retains distinctive identity by organizing around allegorical materials. In such a context, place is not simply the contextual setting of the definition of social power and identity, but rather crucial to the terms of reference of such negotiations of identity. This spatiality is a complex nexus of the local and the

⁴⁴ Kaplan, C. *Questions of travel: postmodern discourses of displacement* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 18.

⁴⁵ For definitions of locality and translocality see Appadurai, A. “The production of locality” in R. Fardon, ed. *Counterworks: managing the diversity of knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 1994, pp. 204 – 225), p. 216.

⁴⁶ Pred, A. and M. Watts, *Reworking modernity: capitalism and symbolic discontent* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1992), p. 6-7.

⁴⁷ Ebron, P. and A. Tsing, “From allegories of identity to sites of dialogue,” *Diasporas* 4(2), 1995: 125-151, 127.

global. What Jane Jacobs describes for the imperial heart of London holds equally true for the indigenous upland Philippines:

In contemporary settings, the global does not simply reach into the local. The local does not always resist the global. In the contemporary moment that which may be identified as the local constitutes itself through an inward-outward 'gathering of difference.'⁴⁸

2.5 Methodology - working between data and theory

Writing, turning data into ethnography, is a process of creating a fiction representative of data and experience. It creates 'the field' anew for an audience. Methodology draws data through the theoretical frame in order to produce this representation but "data" themselves are unwieldy, illimitable. Research is far more than retrieving answers to questions. Often, I learned what it was people thought I needed to know, rather having pre-formulated queries answered. Different techniques of data collection and narrative styles crosscut the experiences and encounters I call data. Much lies outside this text, some of it in notes and questionnaires, other bits eroding in memory.

In constructing this dissertation, I have followed an ethnographic methodology outlined by Michael Burawoy, the extended case method.⁴⁹ The goal of this methodology is to improve on, refine and extend theorizations of the world. Theories are introduced as flashpoints to further thinking on particular concepts and a singular case or event is not examined as a representative of all similar cases but as revealing discursive norms of the worlding in which it is embedded. David Slater has advocated this methodology in geography as a strategy of subverting the dominance of apparently hegemonic Eurocentric norms: "the 'marginal' or 'peripheral' case...reveals that which does not appear in what seem to be more 'normal' cases."⁵⁰ Derek Gregory adds an important Foucauldian gloss to this: "it is the very production of the categories of the normal and the marginal – centre and periphery – that needs to

⁴⁸ Jacobs, J. "Negotiating the heart: heritage, development and identity in postimperial London" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* **12**, 1994: 751-772, 770.

⁴⁹ Burawoy, M., "The extended case method" in M. Burawoy, ed. *Ethnography unbound: power and resistance in the modern metropolis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, pp. 271 - 300.)

⁵⁰ Slater, D., "On the borders of social theory: learning from other regions. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* **10** (1992), 307 – 327, 308.

be called to account."⁵¹ My analytical goal here is to acknowledge dominant interpretations of history and discourses on gender and ethnicity but point out how the performances of individuals and groups fracture these norms. My intention is to subvert the process through which dominance is endowed with hegemonic qualities, pointing out, instead, its fictive and unstable nature.⁵²

The particular cases I have selected to analyze and report here were the exceptional and surprising ones - stories, practices and events that were exceptions to the expected norms I recorded for local culture and experience. These are not the 'exceptions that prove the rule' - for they do not exist - but the lives and actions of exceptional individuals who deny the efficacy of limits and point out the negotiated and fluid nature of both identity performances and original affiliations. In analyzing and presenting my data here, I am focusing on disruptive practice, disparities and contradictions and people who do not "fit in."

2.5.1 Analytical techniques

To identify exceptions, one first must establish some shared idea of what the typical might be. For this, survey data were tabulated and analyzed with simple statistics. Interviews were transcribed from tapes or re-read from notes. Transcripts were approached as texts and analyzed for common structures of argument and terminology. This approach to data, treating it as text, is a discursive analysis. A useful definition of discourse is a "framework that embraces a particular combination of narrative, concepts, ideologies and signifying practices, each relevant to a particular realm of social action."⁵³ Discourses are embedded in the material world while naturalizing (implicitly making universal) a specified enframing of the world and an equally particular position occupied by the subject. Discourses are, despite their universal claims, situated. Discourses represent only partial knowledges of the world. Thus, particular

⁵¹ Gregory, D., "Power, knowledge, and geography" in his *Explorations in critical human geography*, Hettner-Lecture 1997, (Heidelberg: Department of Geography: University of Heidelberg, 1998; 9 – 44), p. 34.

⁵² This strategy follows the methodology of thinking against ideas that constitute the realities they purport to describe advocated by J.K. Gibson –Graham in *The end of capitalism (as we knew it)* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 76 - 79.

⁵³ Gregory, D. "Discourse." In Johnston, R., Gregory, D. and D. Smith, eds., *The dictionary of human geography*, 3rd ed., (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 136-137.

discursive practices are contested or contestable by strands of other discourses. Discourses always travel - slip into areas that their originators did not anticipate - and split into strands. Their component metaphors, figures and practices always have the potential to be used for unintended ends. A discourse is thus an explanatory and descriptive framework embedded in material relations. This framework is created by combining familiar narratives, techniques of representation, concepts and ideologies to map the world and specify the positions of subjects. While social actors claim their discourse reveals the 'true' world, all discourses arise from situated and partial knowledges. Thus, they can be contested by other discourses. As they proliferate through social action, discourses contradict, overlap, and borrow from each other but are not of one piece.

This technique of discursive analysis was applied to selections from the colonial archives and the comments of other ethnographers, colonial travelers and officials. My own efforts here must be acknowledged to work in some ways as an extension, albeit a critical one, of this kind of colonial enterprise of creating a set of narratives, hence the self-reflexivity.

Secondary and tertiary or media sources were also important to my analysis. They provided critiques of primary authors and their stereotypical constructions of indigenous Others or examples where the same tropes were repeated in a process of intertextuality that reinscribed the colonial archive across the symbolism of the contemporary national-popular imaginary in the Philippines.

2.6 Ethics and representations

The way we present ourselves makes us responsible for what we come to know, even before we write.

Writing ethnography is not a neutral reporting of culture, and always a process of constructing the writer's own identity as well as that of her subjects.⁵⁴ Thus, I argue that ethnographic autobiographical notes belong, not as an addendum to a monograph, or a chapter of a separate collection of "field stories,"

⁵⁴ See Clifford, J. *The predicament of culture: twentieth century ethnography, literature and art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), Clifford, J. and Marcus, G., eds., *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) and Visweswaran, K. *Fictions of feminist ethnography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.)

but as an exercise explored in dialogue in "the field." Autobiographical notes should then appear in the resulting text to mark processes that might be called 'establishing rapport' and 'narrating one's autobiography to explain one's intention' as ethical concerns in field research and its representation.⁵⁵

2.6.1 Positionality

Personal anecdotes are thus grounded within and made available to the reader to ground the partial knowledges produced by reflections on "field experience." As Bourdieu argues, the truth of an interaction between people can never be fully contained within that interaction: "It is because subjects do not, strictly speaking, know what they are doing that what they are doing has more meaning than they know."⁵⁶ However, when this observation is leveled against the practice of the ethnographer, the relationship becomes a circular one and she loses her privileged position for delimiting "truth."

This brings to mind a picture taken in the clinic kitchen. Using me as a model, my friend, a long-distance truck driver in his mid-twenties, created a pastiche he named: "What we are sold: Coca-Cola, Christianity and *napudaw ti babae* (pale-skinned women)." In it, I appear in his Coca-Cola baseball cap, with a Christian bumper sticker in the distinctive Coke script on my chest. It reads: Jesus Christ is the real thing. I am standing, somewhat self-consciously, in front of our cache of empty bottles-*cum*-lamps. He retains the original, I have a slide to use for presentations and I am never sure whether I should show it or not. My objectification was part of his commentary on experiences of integrating, as indigenous and "pagan," into a Filipino and global culture of consumption. It was also a comment on my transient role in his community, a resistance to my prying, yet constantly vanishing to elsewhere, researcher's presence. And, by participating in making this image and writing about it here, it became obvious to me that my own strategy had recapitulated that of commodifying femininity: I objectified myself and then manipulated it

⁵⁵ This is an adaptation of Donna Haraway's idea of responsible situation as developed in Haraway, D., 1992, 190.

⁵⁶ Bourdieu, P., 1977, 72.

This dynamic intersection of my white identity and gendered performance is one theorized in the work of Ann Laura Stoler. She observes that colonial authority in Asia was constructed on two premises, both false: first, that a singular European identity could easily be defined and second, that the boundaries of colonizer and colonized were self-evident.⁵⁷ Thus, within Southeast Asian history, racial difference was constituted and culturally encoded in gendered terms. The subtext of virtue and sexuality that emerges from colonial plays on morality is never absent from or completely contained by any contemporary interaction.⁵⁸ This subtext of virtue and sexuality is neither absent from nor completely contained by the interactions in which I participated. My disruptive practices were limited by the advertisement that is written through me by a globalizing conception of the feminine, and I reassured myself with the delusion that I could function within it as if on familiar terrain. What constrained me is not some bounded form of gender oppression, localized within a holistic culture, but supposedly common ideas on femininity that resonated within a (post)colonial field. As *kana* – a Westerner and a woman – I was simultaneously constructed and constructing myself as central, yet peripheral to a central masculine power, and as sharing a common femininity with my hosts, yet radically out of place and different.

Telling stories like this about oneself – the ‘see, it happened to me’ tale – does not seem like a particularly useful argumentative strategy. By freezing the narrator into the voice of authentic interpretation and the reader into that deferential listener, such stories can short-circuit the possibilities of constructive interaction. Yet, in work based on partial and personal experiences, the autobiographical is unavoidable. I see this as a problematic, not something to be celebrated without examination. Lest my reliance on it makes the reader think otherwise, I affirm that personal anecdote is not experience, but a means of creating self-contained narratives out of events that occur. In telling anecdotes about myself doing fieldwork, I am choosing important components of complex memories to construct a linear

⁵⁷ Stoler, A., "Carnal knowledge and imperial power: gender, race and morality in colonial Asia" in di Leonardo, M., ed., *Gender at the crossroads of knowledge: feminist anthropology in the postmodern era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991; pp. 51-101), p. 152.

⁵⁸ Tadiar, N. "Sexual economics in the Asia-Pacific community" in Dirlik, A., ed. *What's in a rim?: critical perspectives on the Pacific Region idea* (Boulder: Westview, 1993; pp. 183-210.)

narrative, told from a single viewpoint. These events were no doubt experienced from a plurality of perspectives other than my own but here only one interpretation is available. Things that happen to you are not the same as books you read or stories you are told. Relating them comes dangerously close to forgoing the authority of academic discourse and creating the authorial self as the object of inquiry. This is an unavoidable dynamic for, named as a woman, I share, depending on the performance and context, in the identities of local women. This line between authority and the subversion of academic norms is one I walk with some trepidation.

The same charge can be leveled at other people's anecdotes – particularly my respondents' stories of their lives, minus the concern for academic authority. Nevertheless, these anecdotes, recorded from conversations in which I shared, are treated here as texts for analysis from a somewhat more distant remove than I achieve in approaching my own journal entries. These interviews, as sources of data, also contain a large autobiographical element, a dynamic I attempt to reveal in my text. As a methodology, autobiographical exchange has always been used by ethnographers, but has been marked as "establishing rapport." Here, I argue that it does far more than that.

Autobiographical exchange creates an articulation between lives that allows experiences from both to be shared and, combining strategies of friendship with those of research, allows one party to conceal the other's location and identity, releasing the information in ways which are intended to ameliorate problematic relations. The documentation and reception of this information, however, can only be partially controlled. This illimitability of the context of one's performance creates an element of risk in the practice. So, too, does the potential for gossip to others in a un-researched social exchange. Yet, the desire to share experiences, to create a common ground, was a motivating factor for many women who spoke with me about their time 'abroad.' Doing an interview was a chance to speak plainly, to some extent, in a context where the information might have an impact on someone else's decisions.

Finally, and most tellingly, listening to my tapes and rereading my notes, I am aware of how much I left

out, demurred on, glossed over and otherwise misrepresented in these exchanges. I am sure the other women did the same.⁵⁹ What marked out these interview spaces here as real connections for me was my discussions with these *balikbayan* women about our ambivalent feelings towards marriage and partnership and the restrictions placed on women who, by necessity and choice, traveled. That I have not felt comfortable retrieving these discussions in a truly equitable fashion speaks to my interest in preserving an academic persona in this space of writing. Thus this text does not, in many ways, do full justice to the interviews we created and the courage and self-awareness of my respondents. I can only hope to return to the material again in a different venue, having thought through some of these issues at greater length. However, all this does not preclude taking responsibility here for reporting the better part of what was told to 'me-as-researcher' in good faith.

2.6.2 Ethics

Living a research project twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week provides endless ethical challenges. My obligation to make my own actions transparent to my hosts was often difficult to meet. Oral consent was obtained in the respondent's preference of English or Ifugao after explanations of: the purpose and methods of the research; access to information on the research after the interview; respondent's right to withdraw or refuse particular questions; and procedures for assuring confidentiality of individual responses.⁶⁰ Local responses to this, the prescribed form for university-approved research, were often amusing, simply because of the presumption of power that this statement expressed on my part. In one of my first interviews, my research assistant translated the form to our respondent, a middle-aged female farmer. In mid-stream, she cut my assistant off in a brusque tone. Turning back to me, my

⁵⁹ A common Ph.D. research cliché applies: long after my relationship in Canada had collapsed under the pressure of my long absence, I was still telling most people that I planned to marry my fiancé when I completed my degree.

⁶⁰ All respondents were given a guarantee that their identity would be kept confidential and identifying information concealed in any data released to others, including this text. Moreover, they were assured that the results of the research would have no direct impact on household economy or opportunities. This confidentiality was maintained by recording and storing identifying information separately from questionnaire forms, interview guides, transcripts, notebooks and fieldnotes. Alphanumeric codes were used for cross-referencing between the two data clusters. People were advised to contact either the mayor's office or my academic hosts in Baguio if they had questions about my research project and intentions.

assistant reported: "Yes. She is bored with this. She knows this is her house and you are a guest. Do you want to hear her story or tell her yours?" Apparently, for people living largely outside the purview of state surveillance, the idea that this might not be a consensual interaction seemed rather bizarre.

Broader ethical considerations underpinned the methods I used to collect data, the analytical techniques I selected to treat it, and my selection of results to present here. What might seem 'neutral' or apolitical research reporting can have devastating impacts at the local level.⁶¹ For instance, while extensive statistics on household income might buttress my arguments in particular places, generating this information with accuracy was nearly impossible. Faced with direct questions on cash income, respondents refused to answer questions, did not know or simply lied. Statistics on household income obtained from the Municipal Office in Asipulo did not coincide with any figures that could be generated from my surveys and observations. Household income had been clearly under-reported as a strategy to access government development funds. Drawing attention to this discrepancy and providing corrected figures of any use to administrators would violate the terms of my agreement with my hosts. Beyond this lies another gray area - the difficult issue of income generated by activities constructed as 'illegal' by the state, but perfectly acceptable under local customary law. My aim here is not to assist the local police in enforcing laws or to dispossess people of their livelihoods.

I have used pseudonyms for everyone, including my research assistants. This is not because I do not wish to acknowledge their incredible contribution to my project, my learning, my health and my sanity while they hosted my stay. I am truly grateful for their work, but do not want to implicate them in my mistakes. At best, this strategy enables me to report some personal detail while effectively obscuring the actual identity of the individual in question. Since I fully anticipate that local readers will have access to the

text and try to guess who I am describing, the use of pseudonyms and obscuring of some detail is critical. At worst, it will allow particular individuals to dismiss as coincidence or simply deny any similarity between their situation and the case I report. Reporting on local geography also produces a difficult problematic. Detailed locations are not specified for people so singular that they are easily identifiable. This is of particular concern for the returned OCWs interviewed in Chapter 6. While an analysis of their distribution across the communities in question would reveal gradations of class to the reader, it would also, read within my host communities, locate specific individuals.

The autobiographical component in my OCW raised interviews some interesting ethical questions for me. If someone sits down beside you on an overnight bus trip, you introduce yourselves, you are a researcher, she is an OCW and she tells you her life story for 5 hours, and you tell her yours, is it informed consent or friendship or what? Can I use that information? How? Can I retell it in a paper? Repeat it, off the tape, to another OCW who has signed a consent form as a way of situating a question? Put it into the interview as a way of performing myself as 'understanding' and 'approachable' and 'knowledgeable' in the research process? Can I use the story verbally at a conference? If the audience may think that these stories in their retelling somehow apply to all "Filipinas," should I have them reviewed by other women who share one of many subject positions occupied by the respondent? The answers to these questions appear to depend on the context in which a representation will be received; some tales seem appropriate for exchange with other such women, but not for publication. This forces me to ask: what are the limits of the context for my academic performance?

⁶¹ One such concern is religious difference. While I share the Episcopalian/Anglican upbringing of some of my hosts, I am at some remove from the local animism – glossed as "pagan" – fundamentalist Protestant, Pentecostal, Catholic, Charismatic Catholic, and Iglesia ni Kristo practices of others. In communities that are split by religious factionalism and heavily missionized, the issues are complex and sensitive. I am not writing a historical geography of missionization here, nor am I an expert on religious beliefs. I shared worship, at various points, with all of these groups at weddings, wakes and other rites. I am not willing to pass judgement on individual choices in these matters, constructing local people as dupes or opportunists. Thus I have chosen, by and large, to bracket matters of faith in all but its most secular uses in colonial relations.

2.6.3 *On writing*

My control over inter-subjective space in the field was never assured. Control over this text, as the space of writing, has likewise been negotiated. Because decisions on what to cut and what to include remain my responsibility, I use a single voice and authorial perspective. Methodologies employing multiple accounts and polyvocality may well decolonize the text but they do not address the institutional relations that make the relationship of researcher/researched possible in the first place. This dissertation is written from experiences firmly grounded in this dichotomy of researcher/researched. Because of this grounding, I try to mark the personal nature of the research process in my text. I am not trying to write an “anti-conquest” narrative where I am innocent; I can do as I have done because of Western, metropolitan dominance.⁶² Moreover, my interactions and experience are overdetermined by this history and managed by local people, based on their own understandings of the world and of who Americans/ anthropologists/ metropolitan women are and what they ought to be doing. Thus, I have made what I see as an ethical choice to write more personally, and make myself more vulnerable to my audience, to reflect this dynamic.

This text allows the reader to distinguish between different forms of information, each with its own limitations. My own anecdotal observations recorded in journal entries appear in italics as do data from interviews, recorded in field notebooks. Information either transcribed or recorded as verbatim quotes are reported in quotation marks. I have marked the partial nature of ethnographic knowledge by presenting accounts of my fieldwork as stories.⁶³ These stories are intended to subvert my authorial position, even as they advance my argument. A dangerous strategy perhaps, because textual choices as discursive practice are often not so much products of individual preference as socially constructed by the demands of professionalism and disciplinary authority.⁶⁴

⁶² See Pratt, M-L. *Imperial eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 7.

⁶³ Clifford, J. 1997, 68.

⁶⁴ Alcoff, L. “The problem of speaking for others.” *Cultural Critique* Winter 1991-92: 5-32,11.

Here, I have chosen only to work from notes and transcripts on exchanges with *balikbayan* women who signed consent forms, rather than strangers on the bus. None of these women is in any way the prototypical Filipina. Their experiences stand alone and have no necessary predictive value for the lives of other women from their nation. They have consented to participate and their comments to me in a specific place and time have thus become, in a certain way, the object of my representation. They may object to what I have made of our interactions, of course, when this dissertation circulates in the Philippines. While of interest in the politics of representation and textual performance, objections raised by others on their behalf must remain a 'speaking for' the subaltern textual ground.

I also want to highlight the cuts I have made to the reportage on my own experience. Firstly, my own experiences are not particularly relevant to my arguments here, except that they established a common ground with my respondents.⁶⁵ Secondly, my identity cannot be concealed within this project. Thus, my respondents know far more about me than I am willing to share with a reader that I do not know. That they have likely repeated some of it, their own version, to other people I know and will meet again is a risk I accept. It is *quid pro quo* for research. From my *balikbayan* OCW friends, and from Foucault, I have learned the necessity of deflecting the judgements of others on my personal history, lest I become paralyzed. My performance of gender while travelling or at home, no more than that of my respondents, does not come to speak the truth of my being. Other narratives of the world, of the self, are both possible and important

The partial nature of stories makes any act of representation a rupture within an imagined whole - an act of violence. Writing is itself a boundary project where the author draws a line separating the story from the rest. Each image, vignette, and character could lead to another series of not-unimportant but tangential stories, some of which the reader will no doubt want to know. As this text has evolved, I have noticed there are some tales I just do not wish to tell, for fear of reinscribing the same stereotypes that oppress indigenes, migrants and Filipinas. In confronting this fear, I struggle to anticipate my audience.

What I am comfortable with on the page is at another remove from my research than the kind of interactive presentation I might give to an academic audience. That is, again, quite different from the stories I could choose to tell a small group of friends. My writing here thus anticipates an audience and a politics of reception that remain imaginary, beyond my control.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Stories of my misadventures while working illegally in the service sector while in South Africa

⁶⁶ There is a danger of epistemic violence -- that the claims to knowledge here will continue to produce the colonial present through the colonizing features of this academic ethnography.

Sally

Sally was a 21-year-old domestic helper newly returned from Singapore who I met, again, on a jeepney. She heard me answering another passenger's question about my origins. At the word "Canada," she turned and asked: "can you help me?" She pulled an envelope of papers out of her bag and asked me to look at them: "Are they fake? I got them in Singapore. Because it is your place, maybe you will know the agency." Yes, I did. The papers were familiar—FDI - the same ones I had been investigating for Gloria. Sally said she was given them by a friend in Singapore, but didn't want to send money in the mail until she knew if it was real. It is not, I told her, and asked her for her story.

Sally had grown up in an outmigration area and was returning to Ifugao to visit relatives after her three years in Singapore. Her real intention, she said, was to visit her parents' community of origin to recruit more DH for Singapore. An 'auntie' there had an agency and Sally was going to send her new, "first-time" DH. She was looking for "bored girls who married in High School" to send to her 'auntie' and had found six clients so far. Sally herself was setting her sights on Canada, if possible, where she'd heard salaries were better and immigration was possible. I explained to her that second year college was a requirement for the Canadian program. She had dropped out of high school to work abroad, making, she estimated, P6500 per month. Most of this was remitted to her parents to pay off mortgages and invest in fruit trees.

Sally, young and unmarried, had invested her personal savings in a calculated display of balikbayan femininity. She joined my research assistants and me for an evening at the clinic, en route to a wedding. Her overnight bag contained items of wonder: three different sorts of lipstick and a variety of formal clothes. Even as she displayed these things for my Ifugao research assistants, she acknowledged that what would impress people in Ifugao wouldn't impress me, turning to me and saying directly: "you know, my clothes aren't very nice; they aren't so expensive." Since I was wearing a T-shirt from a local market and tattered locally made Levi's jeans, I hardly felt that I was the "you" she should have been addressing. But I was somehow constructed both as arbiter of this performance and counterpoint to it. She showed me her lipstick and offered me some: "it's a nice color for you." When I responded that I had my own, she asked to see it. So, feeling somewhat sheepish, I showed her the somewhat melted contents of my black tube. "Oh, not like me, mine's only simple," she said, eyes lighting on the lettering, "yours is Lancôme. That's an expensive brand. You should wear it."

On the way to the wedding celebration, we walked together for two hours up a steep cowpath, me in muddy sneakers and spattered jeans beside Sally, wearing dress pants and a pair of red leather heels. "There are always lots of barbaros [unmarried men] and baballsangs [unmarried women] at weddings, so, if I use my good clothes, maybe someone will notice me," she told me. From this and other comments on the possibilities of meeting people during the dancing and banquet, I understood that she hoped to impress both potential clients and suitors, and, potentially, impress the former by attracting the latter. I felt like the backdrop for this display, since I clearly wasn't in formal clothes. This sentiment was only deepened by my research assistant's continual suggestions that I put on some lipstick. There seemed to be some sort of competition going on, as though this whole femininity business was clearly being staged. I felt I was being upstaged by Sally.

Sally was reluctant to answer questions about her recruiting efforts, giving me vague information on both the agency in Singapore and the names of her six recruits from Panubtuban and Haliap. We parted at the wedding, Sally heading back to her parent's house in the outmigration area. I was able to tell Sally that the papers were fake and that the Canadian program would require college. She left already talking about Taiwan or Hong Kong as her next destination. She wanted to save money for her marriage and, eventually, maybe her own agency.

Chapter 3 - Representations, places and colonial histories

(I)f there is anything that radically distinguished the imagination of anti-imperialism, it is the primacy of the geographical in it. Imperialism after all is an act of geographical violence through which virtually every space in the world is explored, charted and finally brought under control. For the native, the history of his or her colonial servitude is inaugurated by the loss to an outsider of the local place, whose concrete geographical identity must thereafter be searched for and somehow restored.¹

This chapter re-presents the historical geography of the Philippine Cordillera Central as composed of tales of ongoing displacements and the production of identities *de novo* as forms of resistance against colonial intrusions. The chapter searches for the institutions and inscriptions that create local identities both in local histories and experience and in the representations of the local to metropolitan audiences. It is the dynamic that renders local histories intelligible in a specific frame of metropolitan narration. This frame of narration determines the intelligibility of performances of particular ethnic identities. My argument in this chapter reverses that describing the loss of geography to imperialism outlined in the quote from Edward Said above. Instead, I demonstrate how the processes of colonial administration and the discourses of colonialism, rather than just effacing concrete geographies and identities, simultaneously produced both local identities and particular localities *de novo*.

This chapter does not present a close, archival study of the Spanish or American presence on the Philippine Cordillera, but develops a contextual history necessary to understand contemporary localities.² No global theory of colonial culture may be applied across the board to local histories and I am decidedly unable to do justice to the place-based and personal nature of the colonial encounters that resonate through the stories here. Instead, I problematize the results of the colonial encounter as they influence contemporary local politics and representations of the region that circulate more broadly. By re-telling stories from local history within this perspective, I attempt to write 'a history of the colonial present,'

¹ Said, E. "Yeats and decolonization" in Eagleton, T., Jameson, F. and E. Said *Nationalism, colonialism and literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990, pp. 69-95), p. 77.

² Much is unwritten thus far, but the closest thing to a definitive history can be found in the publications of W.H. Scott.

demonstrating the problematic nature of contemporary ideas of community, culture and history in the region.

My argument locates these concepts in the power relations of colonial discourses and representations, not conquest, *per se*, since the colonization of the Cordillera Central was never accomplished through large-scale warfare. The Spanish tried, but failed, to subdue scattered local populations by force of arms, while the Americans took over the administration of the region in a largely peaceful manner. In the extension of imperial power, the absence of pitched battles was not the absence of violence. The process of colonial administration for both the Spanish and American regimes relied not only on physical force but more subtle forms of epistemic violence associated with modes of representation, thought and interaction. These processes were all spatial and the historical record clearly shows how the trade relations, missionization, and administrative aspects of both the Spanish and American regimes worked their tendrils across the Cordillera landscape.³ Simon During comments that colonial regimes:

administered their subject peoples by hierarchizing them....encouraged indigenous educated elites who could act as buffers between the whites and the subaltern locals;.. constructed hard divisions between 'half-breeds' and 'full-blood' natives...; displaced gender differences so as to turn the local men into a disciplined labor force; ...played migrants against local workers ... and... tribalized relatively fluid and interactive communities.⁴

All these processes occurred to a varying degree across the geographical space that became known as the Philippine Cordillera and affected the 'primitive' peoples who came to be named as Igorots. The local histories outlined below will suggest that differences of gender, social structure, religious affiliation and historical experience pluralize this region as much as any other. This chapter then goes on to explore representations of this primitive ethnicity in its globalization through the spectacle of the World's Fair, the commodity of the postcard, and the story of the film. These explorations help to explain the persistence of the stereotype of Igorot-as-primitive.

³ See W.H. Scott's *The discovery of the Igorots: Spanish contacts with the pagans of Northern Luzon*. (Manila: New Day, 1974.)

⁴ During, S., "Postcolonialism and globalization" *Meanjin* 51(1), 1992, 339-353, 340.

3.1 *Problematizing the local - Ihaliap*

The search for and restoration of local identities is a growth industry in the upland Philippines. Where once a single ethnolinguistic identity, Ifugao, denoted the residents of the entire province, the 1990 Socio-economic Survey lists over forty “tribes” belonging to four linguistic groups (see Table 3-1). For Haliap/Panubtuban, there is a single entry: the Ihaliap “tribe.” The prefix *i-* means ‘people of’ or ‘resident of.’ Haliap is the central Ifugao or Tawali⁵ gloss and the map name of a community that terms itself, in its own Ayangan dialect, *Holyap*. *Holyap*, is, in turn, an Ayangan rendering of a familiar English expression: “hurry up.” How does an indigenous Philippine community comes to be constituted as the ‘tribe’ of the ‘people – from – hurry – up?’ What does this sort of naming – the transmutation of the foreign into the local and its reinscription as tradition – tell us about the ways in which places and identities are framed? Where people do not define themselves as time-less, place-based pre-contact tribes, how and why are such categories retrieved?

Said asserts that the recapture of a pre-colonial geography is a key task of anti-imperial struggles.⁶

Where peripheral areas and tribal peoples are concerned, this process of geographical reassertion is often narrated by indigenes themselves as the story of a time-less, place-based, pre-contact tribe whose lands were lost to colonial power, now struggling to achieve some recognition of the community’s status - formerly sovereign and currently dispossessed. Yet, this does not explain ‘the-people-from-hurry-up.’

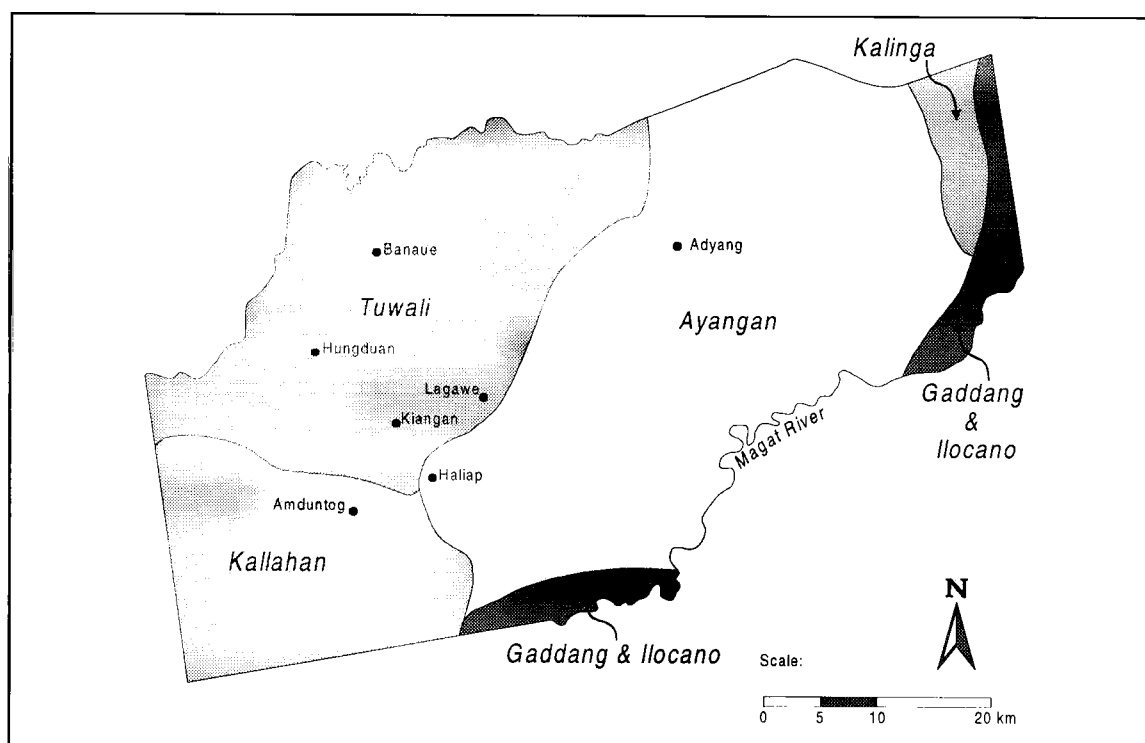
⁵ Tawali comes from the word for ‘certain’ or ‘real’ in the dialect shared by a group of central Ifugao communities. For an explanation of names, see Patricia Afable, “Language, culture and society in a Kallahan community, Northern Luzon, Philippines,” unpublished doctoral dissertation, Yale University, 1989; pp. 87 – 114.

⁶ Said, *E. op. cit.*, 77.

Table 3-1 Four ethnolinguistic groups of Ifugao Province, listed by 'tribe'

Group			
<i>Ayangan</i>	<i>Tuwali</i>	<i>Kalanguya</i>	<i>Kalinga</i>
Tribe			(Alfonso Lista Municipality)
I Olilican	Ilag-aw-Munkanape	Iddaya	
I Ihananga	Ibunne	Itenec	
I Alimit	Munkigo-a	Itabuy	
I Guinhon	Munalyon		
I Adyang	Munganu/Mungkalyoj		
	Kele-e		
	Yattuka		
	Ipakawol		
	Imuntabiong		
	Ihaliap		
	Iboliwong		
	Iambabag		
	Dikkaloy		
	Ikamandag		
	Ibannawol		
	Icambulo		
	Igohang		
	Ihapo		

Map 3-1 Major ethnolinguistic groups within Ifugao Province



The Spanish presence in southeastern Ifugao was fleeting and never strongly consolidated, as the continual failure of missions in Kiangan and Lagawe during the eighteenth century attests.⁷ American colonization of Ifugao after the departure of Spain in 1898 likewise did not relocate peoples from their lands into missions or special settlements. It is not simply a matter of arguing that colonialisms and their institutions did or did not penetrate as far as the central mountains of northern Luzon in the Philippines but of recognizing colonialisms as fundamentally geographic processes. Colonial influences were concentrated in particular spatial nodes and traveled specific geographic and cultural pathways, reworking pre-existing centre and periphery relations across the mountains.

Ethnic names clearly function at a particular geographic scale. *Ihaliap* is a term intelligible only to a local audience in Ifugao Province, usually subsumed under the umbrella of an Ifugao provincial identity. This, in turn, is covered by the pan-regional name for inhabitants of the Cordillera - Igorot – that defines an “ethnic group” composed of “tribes.” Before exploring the specific histories of *Ihaliap*, it is necessary to set out the larger ethnic frame and representational history of the Igorot identity that was defined by metropolitan discourses of primitivism.

3.2 Definitions of “Igorot”

The inhabitants of the Philippine Cordillera Central are called Igorots by the Manila-based national, lowland, Spanish, and American historians. “The inhabitants of the Philippine Cordillera Central are collectively known as Igorots,” asserts W. H. Scott in his history of resistance to Spanish colonization on the Cordillera.⁸ The term entered the Spanish language during the colonization of the northwestern coast of Luzon as a reference to the peoples of the uncolonized uplands immediately beyond the Ilocos region.⁹ The word itself already signals a displacement -- a standing away from a place of origin, specified in most general terms. *I* – the prefix denoting “people of”- is combined with *golot*, a word for

⁷ See Scott, W. *The discovery of the Igorots: Spanish contacts with the pagans of Northern Luzon* (Manila: New Day, 1973) for details.

⁸ Scott, W, *op. cit.*

mountain or upland. *Golot* occurs throughout the Philippine islands and is variously rendered as *gulut*, *gurut*, and *golod*, depending on local linguistics. As one Igorot explains it:

it doesn't mean much to say you are an igorot when you are still in the golod. It means something when you are somewhere else and the people name you based on where you came from. (The same is true in a situation like this: You are from Banaue. So while you are in Banaue, you are just another person. But when you go somewhere else, then the name i-Banaue gains meaning.) In short, the answer is 'igorot' when the question is, '*ay into nan nagapuam?*' (where did you come from?) Usually, the person who asks such a question is a non-kailian¹⁰.

The *gurut* term for mountain people entered the American vocabulary during the Philippine-American War (1898 – 1901) as the English-language “gook.” It was later applied in the Vietnam campaign, much as it had been in the Philippine-American War on the island of Mindanao, to name the enemy in the hills.

It was as the enemy in the hills, the heathens that refused both the cross and the forced labor of the *hacienda*, that imperial power constituted Igorot identity. The Spaniards declared war on the recalcitrant *Ygorotes* in 1620 in an attempt to take their gold mines.¹¹ The ecclesiastical deliberations on the morality of such a war centered on the “high improbability of God's having hidden all that gold in the mountains for the exclusive use of a horde of naked savages.”¹² Whether or not all the communities denoted as *Ygorotes* on the maps of the day were, in fact, possessed of gold, was a moot point. This decision that the conflict with the upland peoples had divine support initiated two and a half centuries of Igorots successfully repelling, displacing and otherwise avoiding Spanish attempts to exert colonial control over their persons and the terrain they occupied.

⁹ Afable, P. “The peoples of Eduardo é photographs” *Discovery* 25(2), 1995: 11-19, 12.

¹⁰ Posted to igorots@onelist.com by TF. *Kailian* is an Ilocano term for village-mate, meaning someone who comes from shared home-place.

¹¹ Scott, W., 1974, 26.

¹² *Ibid.*, 26 - 30.

Since the early seventeenth century, the name Igorot has continued to denote similar geographies and histories of anti-colonial resistance rather than defining peoples based on commonalities between their languages or cultures. One Filipina describes Igorot as:

(A) catchall name, a twentieth century term that emerged out of an array of names used for the many groups of people who live in the northern Philippine highlands. It is a colonial epithet; in the early Spanish (time), Ygolotes, and later spelled Igorrotes. Today, there are ten commonly identified cultural groups living on the rugged mountain ranges of the Gran Cordillera Central, referred to many times as the geologic backbone of the largest and most populous island of Luzon.¹³

In the contemporary Philippines, Igorot has acquired a strong political charge. It has been adopted as a common name by highland Luzon groups, especially when dealing with common regional and ethnic issues like control over ancestral lands or the devolution of State jurisdiction. The name has also been used as part of a widespread reinvigoration of ethnic and cultural pride, especially in the contest of upland-lowland inter-ethnic relations. Asserting Igorot identity works to counter the lowland majority's interest in fostering a unified "national cultural identity" based on the Tagalog language and culture which predominate in Southern Luzon, centered around Manila and its environs.¹⁴ The more recent dynamics of the word Igorot highlight the tensions of upland/lowland and tribal/non-tribal antagonisms that emerge from colonial histories:

The term Igorots has often been used as a generic for all Luzon mountain cultures. Its use became so widespread among the general public outside the area that the individual identities of the various peoples living there were obscured. Igorot can easily be translated as "mountaineer." Once, and sometimes still, used in a pejorative sense by the lowlanders, it has in recent years come to be used with pride by younger members of the mountain community as a positive expression of their ethnic identity.¹⁵

Self-defined Igorots now have their own Internet web sites and mailing list where they circulated a definition from Grollier's Multimedia Encyclopaedia:

¹³ Quizon, C., "Ethnographic knowledge and the display of Philippines Igorots in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904" unpublished MA thesis, SUNY Stony Brook, 1991, 10.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

¹⁵ Ellis, G., "Arts and peoples of the northern Philippines" in *The people and art of the Philippines* (Los Angeles: Museum of Cultural History, University of California at Los Angeles, 1981), p.184.

IGOROT (ee-guh-roht) Igorot (Tagalog for “mountaineer”) is a general name applied to various groups of Filipinos living mainly in the mountainous interior of northern Luzon, the Philippines. Groups referred to by this term include the Bontok, Kalinga, Ibaloi (Nabaloi), Ifugao, Tingguian, and Isneg (Apayao). Ethnically they are Filipinos and speak languages affiliated with the Austronesian language family. The Igorot live in villages of raised thatched houses and grow rice, sweet potatoes, vegetables, and fruits. The marvelous terraced rice fields of the Ifugao are world famous for their immense size and skilful engineering. Among Igorot groups, genealogical descent is traced through both parents. Although no longer practiced, warfare, including the occasional headhunting expedition, was frequent in earlier times among many of these groups. Most Igorot retain their traditional animistic religious beliefs, but today an increasing number are Christian. Many attend local public schools, work in mining and other industries in their region, and have adopted Christian Filipino values and customs.¹⁶

The reception of this definition was highly critical. Those who posted in response suggested that their Igorot Global Organization ought to take on a project of challenging encyclopaedia definitions: “being a ‘good’ Igorot is not good enough – we need to challenge definitions that are misleading”¹⁷ This disgust stems from the fact that the sources used describe Igorot history in the Spanish era. The author has taken this information to represent the present, staging Igorots as a form of living museum, rather than as engaged participants in a contemporary world.

This kind of representation of Igorots as living history has a long and familiar history in the Filipino national imaginary that, in turn, can be located in a more globalized form of Western primitivism. Since the groups named Igorot had become ‘national minorities’ through four hundred years of more or less effective resistance to the Spanish colonial influences that transformed the rest of the archipelago, their relationship to hispanicized lowland populations is contradictory. Igorots are presented with ambivalence in the Manila-based Philippine media. Sometimes they embody a pure pre-colonial Filipino spirit and, at other points, locate the flawed, barbarian souls that colonization redeemed and transformed.¹⁸ There is a market for representations of mountain people as the internal others where hyperbolic, unsubstantiated, and largely fantastic charges from colonial histories – cannibalism, uncontrolled violence, promiscuous

¹⁶ The author of this entry is given as Don V. Hart and the bibliography contains two items: Felix Keesing’s *The ethnohistory of Northern Luzon* (1962) and William Henry Scott’s *The discovery of the Igorots: Spanish contacts with the pagans of Northern Luzon* (1974).

¹⁷ Posted to igorots@onelist.com by A.

sexual practices - continue to be repeated as contemporary descriptions.¹⁹ The Igorots, for many metropolitan Filipinos and for the West, represent the primitive.

3.3 Retrieving the primitive

Primitivism celebrates the authentic, traditional native and denigrates or marginalizes the urban, acculturated members of indigenous populations – those who do not wear ethnic dress, speak the colonizers language, do not create folk art or conduct rituals or support themselves through traditional subsistence. To talk of authenticity relies on ideas of rigid tradition, closure, fixity and conservation. This requires a devaluation of present-day indigenous cultures under the guise of celebrating their past – what Renato Rosaldo terms an “imperialist nostalgia.”²⁰ Indigenous peoples must be “either completely separate from the imagined ‘us’ of modernity or else... ‘we’ have nothing to learn from people who are only shabbier, less educated and privileged versions of ourselves.”²¹ Discrepancies between metropolitan stereotypical expectations and experiences of individual natives or contact situations lead to the conclusion, not that the idea of a primitive, essential nature is false, but that the specimen at hand is inauthentic.

Such binary categories for Others emerged from modern philosophies and aesthetics through their formalization within academic disciplines such as anthropology and geography. Though no longer the creed of professionals in those fields, these concepts have taken on a life of their own in the vernacular imagination. Thus, metropolitan desires for the knowledge that “someone, somewhere lives like that” produce primitive ethnicity by judging and then consuming its authenticity. Primitivism creates and then

¹⁸ See, for example, F. Sionil Jose’s novel, *Poon* (Manila: Solidaridad, 1984), where mountain people appear as the spiritual heirs of the revolutionary hero, Diego Silang, but horribly marked by pox.

¹⁹ Anima, N., *The headhunting tribes of the Philippines* (Quezon City: Cultural Foundation for Asia, 1985) is an example of this that reworks colonial and anthropological sources on historical practices to describes Igorots as fierce, warlike and “cannibals.”

²⁰ Rosaldo, R., *Culture and truth: the remaking of social analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.)

²¹ Tsing, A., *In the realm of the Diamond Queen: marginality in an out-of-the-way place* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.)

inverts the binaries of civilized/barbarian and modern/traditional. Where there is no primitive and no civilized, there would be no pleasure, no entertainment in representing the violation of the boundary between them. Primitivism polices this boundary and purifies hybridity into its component parts. Thus primitivism is primarily a politics of representation: "To study the primitive is thus to enter an exotic world which is also a familiar world, one that is structured by sets of images and ideas – tropes – that have slipped from their original metaphoric status to control our perceptions of primitives."²² These tropes have much more to do with metropolitan notions of human nature and projects of identity than with the periphery itself. In this respect, the creation of the primitive as a discursive category is described as "some inevitable form of the West's self-reflexive psychotherapy."²³ Mary-Louise Pratt sees a blindness to this representational circle: "the imperial metropolis tends to understand itself as determining the periphery (in the emanating glow of the civilizing mission or the cash flow of development, for example), it habitually blinds itself to the ways in which the periphery determines the metropolis – beginning, perhaps, with the latter's obsessive need to present and re-present its others continually to itself."²⁴ As peripheral Others outside the international division of labor, peoples of the primitive join the rest of the subjects of the metropolitan identity project described by Gayatri Spivak: "subsistence farmers, unorganized peasant labor, the tribals ...To confront them is not to represent (*vertreten*) them but to learn to re(-)present (*darstellen*) ourselves."²⁵

Primitivism works through dichotomous Western ideas of human nature that posit either an essential savage nature or a hierarchical perfectibility. This dichotomy splits into four discursive strands deployed throughout colonial and imperialist metropolitan rhetoric on the inhabitants of the periphery. These discourses have a long history and much has been written on their genealogy in Western geographical

²² Torgovnick, M., *Gone primitive: modern intellects, savage minds* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 8.

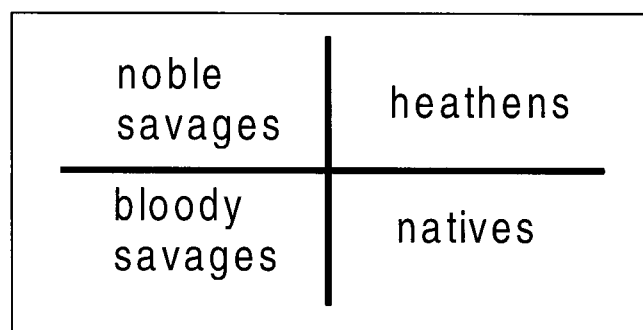
²³ *Ibid.*, 192.

²⁴ Pratt, M-L. *Imperial eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.6.

imaginaries. Periodizations of this discursive history are both messy and tendentious. Since this text discusses peoples colonized after all these discursive tactics had emerged and been installed in various imperial imaginations, a brief mapping will suffice.

There are four spaces of the primitive at play (see Figure 3-1): noble savage, bloody savage, the heathen, and the native. As a stereotype, the savage is either above or not yet ready for civilization. Where the essential nature of the noble savage is constructed as “good,” “they” have much to teach a metropolitan “us” because they are *viri a diis recentes* – natural man in an innocent state, prior to corruption by progress.²⁶ Where the nature of the bloody savage is irredeemably bad, the primitive cannot be salvaged by the civilizing mission and remains the locus of uncontrolled violence and passion. The idea of perfectibility envisions primitives as heathens who can be modified through religion or education. As Johannes Fabian points out, the pagan is always already marked for salvation.²⁷ Finally, Social Darwinism posits primitives as ‘natives’ fixed at the bottom of an evolutionary hierarchy. While they may ‘develop’ or ‘progress’ as societies, their relative position remains ‘underevolved’ on the global scale.

Figure 3-1 Four Spaces of the Primitive



²⁵ Spivak, G. "Can the subaltern speak?" in Grossberg, L. and Nelson C., eds., *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988; pp. 271-312), p. 288.

²⁶ "Men fresh from the gods" – this draws on a much older European discourse on progress and civilization that draws on Latin texts.

²⁷ Fabian, J., *Time and the other: how anthropology makes its object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 26.

On the Philippine Cordillera, all these discourses are deployed at cross purposes, at different times and in different texts. Since both colonizers and colonized are culturally complex groups, heterogeneous and held together by relations marked by dissension and jealousy, tensions between factions can be assuaged by the tropes of governance and resistance deployed as the primitive. Together, holding these simultaneous and contradictory ideas of the primitive allows colonial cultures to manipulate the periphery in a ventriloqual fashion and the periphery to displace the intentions of the colonial regime by subverting the performances associated with these categories.

Contemporary, progressive forms of primitivism can be found in Green consumption or ideas of special indigenous knowledges. These practices and concepts at once critique colonial prejudice and rely on colonialist tropes and narratives representing authenticity.²⁸ Even this kind of primitivism seeks to hold the periphery to a version of tradition authenticated by metropolitan knowledge and power.

Contemporary primitivism thus exemplifies a further kind of colonial culture, producing and codifying knowledges that legitimate the subordination of peripheral peoples to metropolitan ends.

Identifying the discourses of contemporary colonialism questions the categories and assumptions that underpin metropolitan modernities. The oppressive hierarchy of central selves/peripheral Others has a long and complex history which has relied on particular representations of spaces, both imagined and real. The common feature of these spaces is that they are somehow outside time. Metropolitan imaginaries constructed primitive spaces populated by peoples "contained and disciplined not as socially or geographically different.... thus equally valid, but as temporally different and thus as irrevocably superannuated by history."²⁹ The place of the primitive is a space mistaken for time. This space is represented in contradictory ways that reflect modern anxieties about identity, development, and

²⁸ Root, D., *Cannibal culture: art, appropriation and the commodification of difference* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996.) and Francis, D., *The imaginary Indian: the image of the Indian in Canadian culture* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992.)

²⁹ The 'primitive' was clearly constructed in quite different terms from 'the Orient' and it would be interesting to explore how these two constructs overlapped in representations of Asia. The quote is from Anne McClintock, *Imperial leather: race, gender and sexuality in the colonial contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 40.

progress. In images of the primitive, moderns can see spectacular landscapes and human relics of an age long gone, yet still struggling to survive. Metropolitan viewers can also find a humorous (for them) juxtaposition between modern and primitive, that ironically reassures the viewer that the forces of change have tamed the primitive society. There is a thrilling ambivalence here –the primitive alternates between scaring us with its power and submitting, bewildered to modern discipline.³⁰ Where there is no primitive and no civilized, there would be no pleasure, no entertainment in representing the violation of the boundary between them. Primitivist discourses are policing tactics that patrol this boundary and purify local hybridities by labeling the component parts as primitive and modern.

Both ideas of the relative evolutionary advancement of societies and concepts of racial difference were and remain encoded through gender in particular modes of colonial representation.³¹ This gendering of metropolitan vision works to enframe indigenous women and read relations of debasement from their bodies.³² The more labor performed by women, the lower the society on the evolutionary scale. Nicholas Thomas describes this gendering as based on: “(t)he notion that the women of the more savage societies were distinctly uglythe character of the women internalized the brutality of their social environment (itself sometimes taken as a reflection of ...rugged natural environment) and made them unappealing to European eyes.”³³

The production of “the primitive” is usually approached through the study of its presence in tourism, art, and the metropolitan archives of colonial expansion and display. I see both useful aspects and limits to these approaches. Archival work continues to silence those represented in the archives by extending a dialogue of the West with itself about Others that demarcates a historical metropolitan space. This

³⁰ “...be very wary of a ”postmodern primitivism” which, in an affirmative mode, discovers non-Western travelers (“nomads”) with hybrid, syncretic cultures, and in the process project onto their different histories of culture contact, migration and inequality a homogeneous (historically “avant garde”) experience.” Clifford, J. 1997, 41.

³¹ Thomas, N. 1994, 35.

³² *Ibid.*, 35.

³³ *Ibid.*, 102.

excludes, yet again, the people who are named as 'primitives' from the conversations that define them. Exploring artistic production likewise separates people from their objects and ritual performances. Out of its originary context, a focus on the artifact can just as easily entrench colonial assumptions of native cultures in decline as it may be interpreted as evidence of modern vitality.³⁴ Tourist practice, on the other hand, appears to offer an opening for dialogue by bringing together peoples from metropolis and local places in a single space. Yet, as Dean McCannell suggests in his *Empty meeting grounds*, studies of tourism rarely retrieve metropolitan-local dialogues.³⁵

McCannell argues that much of the literature on tourism tends to focus on an easily defined and delimited set of events and practices. To begin with tourists themselves and tourist routes and representations risks becoming caught in authenticity politics long before the permeability of local lives to globalized flows and discourses can be established. To study tourism as the consumption of authentic ethnicities would pre-suppose that the object consumed – ethnicity – pre-exists the practice of its consumption, yet people clearly perform ethnicity as a commodity for tourism.³⁶ It is the movement of the tourists that would become problematized – they are out of place. Meanwhile, the implication is that everyone has a place – is bounded spatially – would go unquestioned. My goal here is not to investigate tourism, but to demonstrate that, beyond the tourist's experiential purview, other transnational flows – of migrants, discourses and remittances – embodied in local people are constituting the localities and the ethnicities performed. It is these transnational flows of bodies and other representations to and from Cordillera localities that are my focus here.

³⁴ "An ignorance of cultural context seems almost a precondition for artistic appreciation. In this object system a tribal piece is detached from one milieu in order to circulate freely in another, a world of art – of museums, markets and connoisseurship." Clifford, J., *The predicament of culture: twentieth century ethnography, literature and art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 200.

³⁵ McCannell, D., *Empty meeting grounds: the tourist papers*. (London: Routledge, 1992.)

³⁶ For examples and discussion, McCannell, *op. cit.*

3.3.1 *Primitivism at work*

Differences in the colonial histories are embodied in the distinctions between Igorots and lowlanders.

Opposing discursive constructions of the value of Igorot cultures as "authentic" and "uncolonized," or "primitive" and "savage," are contained in the ambivalence in the metropolitan centre as well as produced on the periphery. The discursive construction of the Philippine nation as modern relies on an opposition between a metropolitan culture that is opposed to indigenous – Igorots are not found in the malls of Manila. Where representations of Igorots enter the imaginary metropolis as figures of potency and mastery, rather than buffoons and beggars, it is as male spiritual specialists, called down to cleanse the modern city of its ghosts.³⁷ Where real-world Igorots appear in Manila in contemporary, non-ritual guise, it represents evidence of 'postmodernity' and the spread of global labor markets that draw other Filipinos much farther afield.³⁸ The differences between Igorot and mainstream create a hierarchy of development, inscribed on bodies, that sustains an ideology of progress. This is clear in the comments of someone seeing overseas Igorots on Philippine Television: "What struck me was the realization that an Igorot in the States wouldn't appear any different from any Ilocano, Tagalog, or Visayan who is likewise in the same area...I guess the differences (between these Filipino ethnic groups- DM) are more pronounced here but out there the similarities become apparent."³⁹

Of course, in a region dissected by mountains, any pan-regional ethnicity is a contentious assertion. The significant problem in the acceptance of Igorot as a regional identity is the perception on the part of lowland Filipinos that Igorots are beggars, are backward, ill-educated, short and dark-skinned.

The extent of many a Filipino's knowledge of the Igorots is confined to whatever misleading impressions are gained from short vacations to Baguio City. In years past, at tourist spots like Mines View Park, many encountered Igorots as beggars, banging away at iron gongs for coins flung at them from on-high by amused gaggles of summering lowlanders.

³⁷ Hamilton-Paterson, J., *Ghosts of Manila* (London: Vintage, 1995.)

³⁸ Pertierra, R., *Philippine localities and global perspectives* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1995) p. 7.

³⁹ This is a universal phenomenon, most likely, but was reported to me with surprise in correspondence from a Baguio-based friend who had seen video coverage of the Second International Igorot Consultation (Washington D.C., July, 1977) on television.

Like the American Indian, the Igorots are a people displaced from their ancestral lands by irresistible waves of a new dispensation. But unlike the American Indian at the hands of white settlers, and quite unbeknownst to many Filipinos, the Igorots never succumbed to either the Cross or the Sword of the white conquistadores of Spain.⁴⁰

Where Igorots are popularly conceived of as primitives, out of place in a modern world, it is not surprising that people try to distance themselves from the identity. Local identities, relating individuals to kin groups in particular communities, prevail at the provincial and municipal levels. The pan-regional identification as Igorot applied by non-Cordillerans and accepted by some mountain communities is problematic for others. In particular, peoples of the provinces of Ifugao, Kalinga and Apayao (see Map 5-3) reject the appellation Igorot for themselves.

According to respondents I interviewed in 1996 – 97, this rejection of Igorot identity occurs on two grounds: hereditary enmity and economic marginalization. Historically, the people of Mountain Province (the Bontok) were the traditional enemies of neighboring groups who spoke different languages, a condition that also applies to peoples of Ifugao and Kalinga. Few such disputes over land or slaves still fester. Moreover, many of these disputes flourished between communities in Mountain Province itself, communities who now share a common identity as Igorot. Yet there is, at the local level, a strong trend to defer the difference (us/them) of primitivism beyond the immediate locality and on to some other group who can bear the stigmata of the Other. For instance, in Baguio City, I have been told that beggars from Saklit, Mountain Province, are really not Igorots. The logic being that, because their municipality is closer to Kalinga Province, they are really Kalingas– and everyone (in the northern Philippines) knows Kalingas do not accept the appellation Igorot.⁴¹ However, in the discussions of the mailing list in an instance where Ifugao identity is given positive valuation in the Philippine press,

⁴⁰ Bocobo, D. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, <http://www.inquirer.net/issues/jan99/jan24/lifestyle>.

⁴¹ Afable, P., 1995.

people identifying as from across the 'Igorot region' share in the acclaim accorded to 'a fellow Igorot' or *kailian*.⁴²

Experiences of mainstream prejudice are harrowing. Here are the words of an Igorot who is now living in the United States describing his experiences of these stereotypes within the Filipino community there:

How the rest of the Filipino look down on us...in the cities where I had been in contact with different people. What horrified me was their classic perception of Igorots: very dark coloring, kinky hair, wearing a g-string and no shoes at all. They sometimes contradict themselves for they believe that anybody with rosy cheeks is from the mountains and that we have better command of the English language.

I had the chance to work in a nursing home [in the States – DM] operated by Filipinos...They never considered me as an Igorot (they thought I am Chinese) until I told them where I came from. You should have seen the look in their faces! Then they proceeded to tease me why I do not have any tails [*bahag* – the “g-string” or loincloth] and why am I fair.

One acquaintance was surprised when I told him that I read newspapers ever since I was young. This is his exact question to me: “*Ibig mong sabihin, may newspaper na noon sa Bontoc?* [Do you mean to say that you got newspapers in Bontoc? DM] Tell me, how can I answer such a stupid question?”⁴³

Other questions Igorots are asked include: *Hindi ka naman maitim at pandak?* (Tagalog: Aren't you dark and short?) This traps Igorots into a discussion of whether or not they resemble the stereotypes for Aetas, another Philippine ethnic group sometimes called negritos. Some Igorots admit that they do argue that they are as good-looking as other Filipinos and do not resemble “negritos.” Then they also recognize that this approach affirms the categorization of human value by skin color. *Hindi ba mga Igorots yung mga nagpapalimos?* (Tagalog: Aren't Igorots beggars?) Few Igorots, proportionately, beg, but those that do are highly visible. The most common response is to argue that those begging are not from their place, but of some other ethnicity or community. Such efforts to defer these identifications on to other groups now meet with criticisms in the self-defined Igorot community: “I wish that we Igorots will someday be

⁴² This is an Ilocano term meaning “from the same village” and was applied to describe the affinity between an Ifugao military cadet who had received a Presidential commendation and other young men from Kankanaey-speaking areas in Mountain Province.

⁴³ Posted to Igorot mailing list by Laddeeyan.aol.com Sept 18, 1997.

known as people not only proud of our own features and successes but who also, more importantly, are in unity with the disadvantaged.”⁴⁴

It comes as no surprise, then, that quite a number of ‘Igorots’ make strategic choices not to identify as such in contexts where they feel they will suffer this kind of discrimination. Igorots delight in circulating positive colonial assessments of their ethnic group(s) that undermine the prevalent stereotypes, such as this quote “one Spanish historian said about the Igorots... ‘the Igorots are “well-proportioned, big-bodied, athletic, fleet as a deer, and so strong . . . better built and lighter skinned than their lowland brethren . . .”⁴⁵,” that appeared on the Igorot E-mail network. This group of Igorots chooses to assert group identity in conditions where advocacy appears possible. Not incidentally, there is significant Ifugao and Kalinga participation on the internet, mostly from US resident “Igorots” with antecedents in those provinces and ethnic communities. The group members have resolved the debate amongst themselves in the American, outmigrant context. They have decided to gloss their collective identity as “Igorots and related peoples” and proceeded to forge a path of “igorotism.” Correcting encyclopaedia definitions of Igorot and critiquing histories of Igorot communities are among the practices of “igorotism” as it is defined in these on-line discussions. Others accept the terms of primitivist discourses when they can demonstrate progress has occurred, claiming that they are “the same with any culture, we have all had ‘primitive’ roots. Yet, we need to be proud of that too for it demonstrates very clearly how we have grown as a people.”⁴⁶

Igorot ethnicity is very much linked to the different history of colonization on the Cordillera, a fact in which many Igorots take pride. Thus, the following comments were posted to the internet discussions on resisting prejudice from fellow Filipinos in Manila:

⁴⁴ Posted to igorots@onelist.com by Pag-et

⁴⁵ Posted to igorots@onelist.com by Dabudab.

⁴⁶ Posted to igorots@onelist.com by CN.

I studied the Tagalog Language hard. I was able to remove my own "tonong probinsyano" or "punto" or whatchamacallit. I learned that it was useless in a sense. Because I become just one of the "people." I lost one identity. So I gave up, and whenever I talk in Tagalog, I do it harshly, the way Bontocs talk. When the way I talk is noticed, I switch to a devil-may-care attitude, and converse in grammatically correct English Sentences. One thing I can tell you, I really loved every minute of it afterwards, since I know that the person I am conversing with can't really do what I am doing.⁴⁷

Quite clearly, Igorot ethnicity was constituted - and continues to work - as a negotiable signifier in changing articulations between concepts of geography and nation. In the following sections, it will become clear that this identity is linked to ideas of development and national patrimony. A nostalgic version of Igorot identity is thus important for, and partially defined by, a national resistance to imperialism. Likewise, a contemporary definition of Igorot is desired by those who feel trapped by this nostalgia.

Creating a novel definition of Igorot identity is not my project here, it belongs to those so-named and they assert this right to self-definition. "We do not need other people, whether they are professional writers or historians, to define who we are. Only ourselves can define that word [*Igorot* – DM]."⁴⁸ What I want to do is point out how these productions of identity are never closed; facts are not already made, but in process. And such productions are inherently geographical: where and how one is or is not Igorot is contingent on the place of reception for that statement -- on the historical knowledge and understanding of one's audience. The making and unmaking of social worlds relies on concepts of history which are themselves contingent on particular interpretations of events and the frames which support them. These ideas, in turn, can be destabilized. As part of this destabilization, local people and foreign scholars are rewriting the history of the Cordillera Central, Igorots and Ifugao peoples. My contribution here will be a sketch, at the micro-level of the history of Haliap – 'the people from – hurry –up.'

⁴⁷ Posted to igorots@onelist.com by DD.

⁴⁸ Posted to igorots@onelist.com by L.

3.4 Retrieving local histories

The local history of Haliap and Panubtuban is one of displacements and resistances. The name Haliap should not be expected to appear in the Spanish records since it derives from English. This did not deter two older men I interviewed from assuring me that it was in response to the exhortations of a Spanish overseer to “hurry-up, hurry-up” that their place got its name. When I suggested that perhaps it was the Americans, because it was an English-language phrase, they gave me the sanguine reply: “It doesn’t matter. They’re the same thing... A letter needed to be carried to Kiangnan and they called to the man they chose to make him go fast. So here we said it was the place of *holypap*.” This cheerful disrespect for colonial periodizations makes their point very clearly: someone has always been pushing us around, and that’s why we have named our place this way.

This section draws on in-depth interviews on the stories of historical displacement and occupation of the valley of Haliap/Panubtuban (see Map 5-2), as well as gender relations in the colonial encounter.

Working with elders in the oral history mode like this is a ritualistic situation. Preceded by presentations of tobacco and alcohol and the gathering of an audience, narrative control is held by the respondent.

Ethnographically speaking, you provide the reason for the telling and then minimize your interventions.

Afterward, after the gift of the story has been shared, it would be the worst breach of manners to approach another elder and ask, so did *Lakai* ____ get it right? Of course, people may choose to embellish and correct what they have heard or accidentally retell the same shared tale, but to request specific fact checking would be supremely ungrateful. Thus, my analysis here works between folk histories or oral histories that are not considered as inferior to written records. Instead, I approach these narratives as supplements and correctives to written historical texts, often exceeding their purview and, as my respondents did above, bringing the performance of resistance in the present day.

Panubtuban likewise does not appear in the Spanish records, though neighboring communities of Tuwali and Kallahan speakers (see Map 3-1) were described in Spanish texts dating from the late 1890s.⁴⁹ Local

⁴⁹ Felix Keesing, *The ethnohistory of Northern Luzon* (Stanford University Press, 1962), pp. 267-300.

respondents explained that Panubtuban was “pioneered” in the “late Spanish time” by Ayangan migrants from Ducligan, an area outside Banaue, located near the Ayangan community of “origin,” Adyang.

Drawing from the oral histories contained in “pagan” religious rituals, my respondents told the story of people displaced by Spanish incursions along the Magat River (see Map 3-1 and Map 5-3) that separates present day Ifugao Province from the neighboring provinces of Isabela and Nueva Viscaya. From Ducligan, a young woman named Bugan passed down the Ibulao River valley, farming rice at Lamut, and then across to Ibong (present day Villaverde, Nueva Viscaya). With her traveled others and, “sailing across the land like a boat on water,” they searched for a permanent place along the river, like the space from which the Spanish had dispossessed their fathers and grandfathers.

These people were known as I-Adyang or Adyangan to themselves and as Ayangan to their Tuwali-speaking neighbors. There was never enough land for all the people at Adyang. Many people made *habal* (shifting cultivation fields) and grew *camote* (sweet potato) because there was not enough land for rice fields. By the end of the Spanish period, there was a famine in Adyang and people like Bugan left the settlement in an attempt to return to their old place along the Magat near Ibong. However, when they got to Ibong, their old fields were occupied by missionized Ilocano-speaking Filipinos. Even worse, the missionized communities were infected with disease. The small group who had left Adyang with Bugan retreated up the Ibulao valley, after taking some Ilocano heads as a symbolic “payment” for the land. They sought refuge with distant relatives in the most westerly Ayangan community at Bolog. Over the Santo Domingo Mountain from Bolog, some of them found a suitable valley, “almost empty” which they “pioneered.” When they had built their houses and cleared their first *habal*, they made a ritual where they cursed the Ilocanos so that they, too, would not become ill. They called their new settlement “place-of-cursing” or *panubtuban*.

Using genealogical reckoning with seven generations reported as the ‘oldest’ lineage of inhabitants, it appears that this settlement at Panubtuban was made about one hundred and twenty years ago, or approximately 1875. Just how ‘empty’ this corner of the Antipolo valley actually was when the Adyang

group arrived is a matter of dispute. Some respondents claimed that they created all the ricefields themselves, *de novo*, others said that their ancestors had found empty fields, having frightened away the Kallahan inhabitants with magic and *ngayaw* (head-taking warfare). Two respondents reported that their ancestors' fields had been purchased from Kallahan speakers with the trade of *kalabaw* – water buffaloes – stolen from Spanish settlements in the lowlands.

This trade of livestock indicates the way in which the Asipulo valley, like the rest of the Cordillera settlements, was linked with the lowlands through complex networks. Trade, political and cultural exchanges crisscrossed the regional terrain long before any ongoing contact with Europeans was established. Trade in livestock stolen from the Spanish frontier settlements resulted in the spread of this draft animal and the plough through communities that had previously tilled their rice terraces with wooden spades. This transformation occurred in a matter of decades and, in most cases, actually predated the arrival of the Spanish themselves. The theft of the animals by raiders from the uplands was constructed by the natives as a form of payment exacted from the Spanish for the use of the land.⁵⁰ As one Haliap respondent described it: "First, we just killed the *carabao* and carried the meat. Then we saw that it could be done to lead the *carabao* back. That was our pride, to kill many *carabaos* for meat when there was a death. That's how we were rich, sharing the meat. Then we saw the plowing and were challenged to try that, too. But that, using the plough, was only after the Japanese war..." Curious, I asked elders in a neighboring Kallahan-speaking community of Amduntog where they got their *carabaos*. "From the Ayangans, through Panubtuban," they replied.

The first mention of Panubtuban occurs in the records of the American colonial regime in a report from First Lieutenant Bates to Captain Thompson, senior Inspector of Nueva Viscaya.⁵¹ According to this report, three men and two women from "Panitubang" (sic) were en route to Ibong when attacked by

⁵⁰ Father Wilfred Vermuelen, pers. comm., 8 June 1996.

⁵¹ Bates, C.J. Report to Captain W.E. Thompson, July 28, 1904. Typescript document, Beyer Collection of Filipiniana, Yale University (microfilm), New Haven, Connecticut. As cited by Frank Jenista, *The white Apos: American governors on the Cordillera Central* (Quezon City: New Day, 1987), p. 42.

assailants – “Igorots” (sic) - hiding along the trail. A woman named Imuc was killed with spears and her head taken. Her companions returned the body to her relatives in Panubtuban. I could find nobody who knew of this incident or the dead woman, Imuc, in 1996 – 1997, but they did confirm that Americans arrived to end *ngayaw* in the valley about five years after the Spanish left. The report of the killing was submitted to Bates by a woman named Dominga Alandada. She was a female ‘*presidenta*’ or community leader, who had met with the first American expedition to pacify Ifugao led by Captain Patstone in March of 1903, first at the American headquarters and later in her home community of Dullayan in Ifugao.⁵² Like Imuc, Dominga Alandada could not be traced by my respondents. People noted that Dullayan might be the present day *barangay* of Cawayan, farther to the south. Dominga is clearly a Christian name, suggesting missionization and Alandada is a Gaddang name, an ethnic group not found in the Antipolo valley today. Bates comments on his task of visiting Panubtuban to begin an investigation of the headtaking by people from Banhitan (sic) are instructive: “...if I succeed in getting the guide I will leave here on the 31st. I cannot inform you how long I shall be on the trip, not knowing where the place is, but will stay out until I find it and will try to capture the outfit...that committed the murder.” The valley is clearly a zone of conflict where people and places are shifting, vanishing and re-emerging along the particular lines of a local place caught up in struggles for land and access to colonial preference. I speculated that Banhitan was likely the present-day *sitio* of Banetionon, but my hosts were particularly reluctant to comment on this notion.

Local respondents are well aware of the kind of reputation their warfare acquired under the American regime. They provided me with stories that contradict this stereotype of head-taking mayhem controllable only by American intervention. I was told numerous foundation narratives and origin myths, several of which involve the requisite displacement of a male and a female after interaction with a

⁵² Capt. L. Patstone, Report of an expedition into the Igorot District of Quiangan, Nueva Viscaya, April 1903. Typescript document, Beyer Collection of Filipiniana, Yale University (microfilm), New Haven, Connecticut. As cited by Frank Jenista, *op. cit.*, 35-36.

serpent. Below is one of these stories that emphasizes ethnic compromise, codes of civilized conduct, and the role of women as peacemakers through intermarriage.⁵³

3.4.1 *The story of the deer*

*Pallagattang, a Kallahan man from Amduntog, went to hunt wild animals with his spear and dogs. He went as far as the Panagogaquan forest, between Yukko and the Ibulao River. There, his dogs flushed out a deer and chased it to the Ibulao, closed behind. Unfortunately, the deer fell unaware into the river. Upon hearing the roaring sound of the dogs barking, the Ayangan people of Pula and Caba, already knew that someone was hunting deer so they followed the barking until they came to the place where the deer jumped in to the River. These people caught the deer, butchered the meat, and shared it out among themselves. They left a share and then some for the absent hunter because Pallagattang had not arrived. He was hiding on the way, fearing that he would be killed by those butchering the meat. They spoke no common language. Finally, he prayed to Afunian (God), a prayer called Halupoy to prevent his being cursed with bad luck, and then approached the group. The people gave him his meat and asked him to stay overnight at their settlement. The next morning, those who had eaten the deer gave him mongo beans (a symbol of reconciliation) in payment for the meat. He accepted the gifts and they talked for the day. Since the deer meat was now going to spoil, Pallagattang gave it to his hosts to cook. Then he and Bulahao, an Ayangan, led a group of Pulaan people back to Amduntog. There, at Amduntog, they agreed to stop the war between the Kallahan of Amduntog and the Ayangan of Pula by marrying Pallagattang's daughter to Bulahao's son. Bulahao saw that the valley was wide and fertile, so he migrated to Mayubba, now part of Haliap, passing above Baguinge and Alimit. That is how the Ayangan people came to this valley. The children of that marriage, their descendants live in Haliap today.*⁵⁴

These stories are material practices and are exercised as modes of power. Responding here to 'what anthropologists want,' my interviewee produced a foundational narrative that circumvents the stereotypes of headhunting savages he knows circulate outside the community. It is not evidence of local confusion that I have retrieved several foundational narratives that do not match up, but proof of local innovation. The discussion fails to retrieve the 'authentic' history of Ihaliap both because of the partial nature of stories and because local people are long conversant with these 'Westernized' ideas about them. Thus, the incommensurability of stories reveals that 'authenticity' is part of a regime of truth imposed on local people through the dominant representations circulating in the colonial record and the metropolis. In the search for a modern moral balance that idealizes the primitive, the peoples of the primitive have

⁵³ The role of intermarried women in inter-community conflicts is explored by June Prill-Brett in her unpublished doctoral dissertation, "Bontok Warfare," University of the Philippines, Diliman, 1982.

⁵⁴ Interview, Lakai G, Mayubba, Haliap, May, 1996. Translation Jeannette D. Mataag.

always been more than objects. They actively redirect the colonial or tourist gaze whether as models, guides, informants or respondents.

In the reports of American colonial officials, the inaccessibility of these 'remote' settlements emerged as a feature of the natural landscape and evidence of their 'primitive' status. These conceptions of the mountains have entered the national imaginary where, today, Manila-based news columnists write about vanished civilizations and landscapes that create, from this remoteness in space and time, an imagined 'us' and 'them':

Even today, in places like Sagada and Bontoc and Ifugao, and less known, remote places along the way that were already Igorot havens perhaps millennia ago...one senses the ancient presence of a vanished civilization. Peering at pictures of these mountain peoples taken by anthropologists at the turn of the 19th century, in vistas that rival in physical and natural beauty anything in America or Europe, one cannot but develop a pride and sympathy for the Igorot peoples that make our latent prejudice toward them puzzling, despicable and self-demeaning.⁵⁵

The pictures that contain these vistas are most likely to be contemporary postcard images, rather than found in historical books. They feature both primitive peoples and spectacular landscapes, in constructions of people and places that date to the American colonial period. American conceptions of this glorious nature are found in surveys and descriptions of the Cordillera, as well photographs. The terrain is represented in a way that evokes emotional connection while emptying it of its contemporary inhabitants.⁵⁶ Such discourse fills the reports of early colonial officials and features in photo-essays in the *National Geographic* of the day. This is part of a larger project of imaginative appropriation and remaking of the local landscape which constructs the local people as unappreciative viewers of nature and recalcitrant laborers on the road to modern accessibility. Remoteness was not seen as the result of creating particular places as centre of governance and religious worship.

Local people today speak of "far-flung" *barangays* in the same terms – as if someone had hurled these communities into being, far from the road, rather than constructed a road that ran along particular

⁵⁵ Bocobo, D. *Philippine Daily Inquirer* <http://www.inquirer.net/issues/jan99/jan24/lifestyle>.

conduits of colonial power. Building roads across the spectacular local landscape was one of the American tasks that created endless frustration on both sides over the contribution of local labor and its timing. It also partitioned the countryside and its populations into units of governance, constituting communities as bounded objects for surveillance, missionization, and measurement. As the colonizers drew borders at will, inscribing their appropriations on a map, communities were produced through the colonial gaze, local leaders appointed, and boundaries determined. Becoming accessible by road was the first step in rendering a disorderly and irregular past to be disciplined into a 'progressive' and 'modern' present. Quite fittingly, it was carrying messages for Americans along the road that gave the local place its "modern" name.

Of course, resistance to this foreign view of civilization proved far more resilient than anticipated, particularly in the area of traditional warfare and dispute resolution – i.e. head-taking. Anecdotal reports suggest that American promises to eradicate headhunting were never really fulfilled anywhere in the valley. However, by the 1930s, the American presence was powerful enough in most places to maintain a semblance of control over the local populations and old conflicts over land-grabbing and resource use had been put aside. The "warring tribes of the Antipolo valley" described by Bates were now pacified and, according to local respondents, the Ayangans of Panubtuban had given up hope of reclaiming lands at Ibong and were using the American transportation network to seek new lands to settle elsewhere in the Upper Cagayan valley. Here, just before the Japanese invaded, the history of occupation ends, and that of outmigration begins.

The population movements of the late Spanish era, though distant, continue to underpin local politics. A neighboring community claims part of Panubtuban as their traditional pastureland. Since cattle were introduced by the Spanish, this claim likely originates in a period before the arrival of the Ayangan migrants, but after the first Spanish incursions. Conflicting claims mean that local communities cannot yet apply to the national government for official recognition of their indigenous title – a Certificate of

⁵⁶ See M. Carino, "Translations in the wilderness," a forthcoming essay on colonial representations of nature.

Ancestral Domain. The history of displacement and uncertainty of ancestral domain mean that all sites are conceived of as in some way “temporary” places for an Ayangan “home.” The local definition of “home” is a matter of context and political expediency. People will narrate their histories in such a way as to entitle them to the livelihood they are developing. Nobody would concede that Panubtuban is only a temporary home. However, people did use other pre-Hispanic histories to claim rights of residence to areas lying outside of Ifugao province, particularly those outmigration areas currently being “pioneered” by members of the Haliap community in the provinces of Isabela and Quirino.

The local, in this case Ihaliap, is forged as a category through colonial history, but not without insertions of native agency in the process. The indigenous authenticity produced by this community is thus negotiated in a historical context not of its own choosing. Current attempts to survey local people as indigenous communities relies on falsely unambiguous definitions for colonial categories such as ‘tribe.’ However, they conceived of themselves in relation to their relatives, their linguistically different neighbors, and their historical places of settlement, none of my respondents ever mentioned the concept of a “tribe.” The category ‘tribe’ was developed under American law to distinguish settled Indians from roving bands. It distinguished the legitimate natives from the outlaws by placing a premium on localism and rootedness in a particular place and vesting leadership in a particular individual. The need to map the Philippines with the same sort of ‘tribal’ organization that officials thought they had found among the American Plains Indians created jobs for anthropologists and administrators. Tribalizing the Philippine uplands reflected a preoccupation with the morality of colonial administration that was a direct result of the presumed disappearance of North American Indian culture from the American Great Plains. Describing and classifying the Filipino non-Christian “tribes” became linked to the representations of Native Americans, not least, because the same cadres of soldiers and administrators were involved.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Paulet, A., "The only good Indian is a dead Indian: the use of United States Indian policy as a guide for the conquest and occupation of the Philippines, 1898 –1905" unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 1995.

Dealings with the Filipinos were at some point seen as opportunities for white America to redeem itself after the debacle of the Indian Wars. This was true for in-country administrators, who circulated copies of Rudyard Kipling's poem "The White Man's Burden" after Dean Worcester declared "Kipling wrote for these men of mine up in the hills without knowing it."⁵⁸ It was also true for those remaining in the colonial metropolis.⁵⁹ This redemption was to occur through careful scientific classification, ethnological study and their product, policies leading to the benign administration of the tribes' affairs. A presidential introduction to a 1905 report to the National Academy of Sciences sets out the colonial mission as follows:

The honor of the United States demands that every means be taken to avoid mistakes of ignorance in dealing with the vast and relatively helpless population of these islands. This first attempt of the United States to bring alien races of the Tropics into the fold of Anglo-Saxon civilization should be guided by strictly scientific data and principles. This necessitates, firstly thorough knowledge of the peoples to be assisted, and the measures which accord with their various customs and capabilities. Only a thoroughly scientific anthropological survey can provide the information required or the attainment of enlightenment and humane results.⁶⁰

Thus Filipino natives were classified, categorized and bounded by the colonial regime as part of a distinctively modern and anthropological imagination that mapped the peoples of the Philippines into nation, races, cultures and tribes, however these distinctions might contradict.⁶¹ These mappings favored particular local centers and reflected the knowledges of local groups with relatively better access to American administrators and scholars. For example, Banaue became a major center of American administration and thus 'authentic' Ifugao culture. Kiangnan, an important pre-colonial trade and cultural center, was comparatively secondary to Banaue within the American discourse on 'authentic Ifugao' that developed over the course of American administration. This redrew pre-existing centers and peripheries

⁵⁸ Worcester, D., personal correspondence, as quoted in F. Jenista, *op. cit.*, 241.

⁵⁹ See F. Jenista, *op. cit.*, 78.

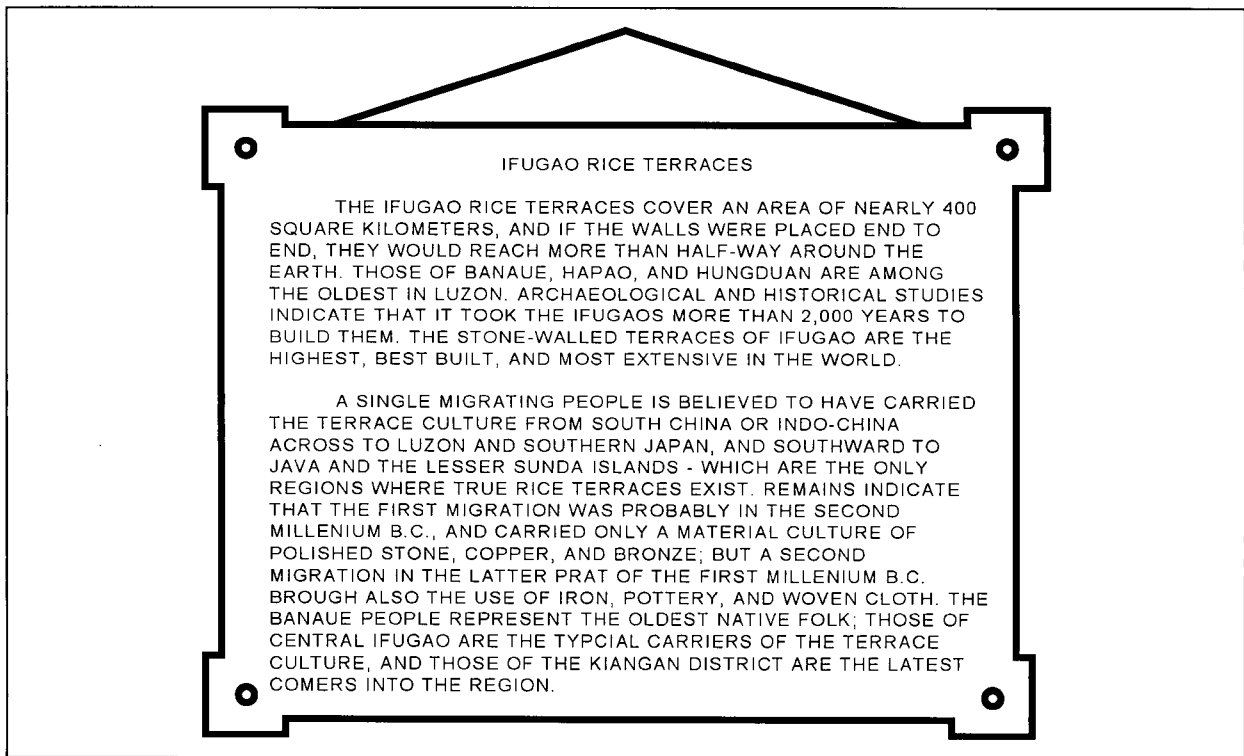
⁶⁰ Remarks made February 7, 1905, as quoted in Acosta, J., "Loss, emergence and retribalization." Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1994, p.53.

⁶¹ Vergara, B., *Displaying Filipinos: photography and colonialism in early 20th century Philippines*. (Quezon City: University of the Philippine Press, 1995.)

in new terms, locating the important Ifugao tourist sites, *the* rice terraces (one should see), in Banaue. Kiangnan, by no means terrace-less, is not a tourist destination.

These were not simply academic exercises in ethnological description that graced library shelves and intrigued metropolitan students. The studies of American-era anthropologists, geographers, surveyors, and travelers entered colonial policy and the national imaginary in very important ways. Sometimes, the results were quite literally inscribed into the landscape.

Figure 3-2 Text of monument at Banaue



In Banaue, Ifugao, distinctions of local authenticity are monumentalized as the text which explains the surrounding rice terraces (see Figure 3-2): “The Banaue people represent the oldest native folk; those of central Ifugao are the typical carriers of the terrace culture; and those of the Kiangnan district are the latest comers into the region.” Though the Beyer theory of wave migration that this plaque rehearses has been long discredited, its presentation to locals and tourists alike on this official-looking brass confirms that

authenticity belongs to Banaue, a major American administrative centre.⁶² This monument, apparently erected by the municipality, stands at a major passenger transfer point along the highway system that links Ifugao to Mountain Province and above the Banaue Municipal Market. Spatially, it occupies the town's transportation and commercial hub. Other Ifugao communities, such as those of Kiangan and its environs are 'latecomers' and thus inauthentic, even as their inhabitants pass through Banaue. Tourists, on the other hand, are likely to be reassured by this official sign that they are seeing the "real" Ifugao.

Colonial discourses manipulated differences and similarities, refiguring the axes along which identity was understood. For instance, the Spanish had recorded local populations within the same administrative unit as Christian converts and non-Christians or *infieles*, regardless of whether or not they shared a common language or way of life. Initially, the Americans picked up these distinctions and applied them to entire ethnic groups. Thus, all Igorots were named as "non-Christian tribes," even though there were some groups of Christian converts among them. Since the Spanish regime had never extended any sustained or effective form of colonial administration over the mountains, information on *Ygorotes* was particularly inaccurate. Beginning their administration by consulting the Spanish classifications, American definitions tended to anticipate and thus produce the existence of the group 'for the records.' Yet, by borrowing the discursive regime of the Spanish colonial era, the American officials suggested that Igorots possessed a perfectibility that could be accessed through conversion and education. This Spanish religious discourse thus insulated the Cordillera from the space of economic calculation, creating a paternalistic attitude on the part of Americans towards picturesque "tribes" who inhabited the remote mountains of a colony that, after all, would never be settled.

By the second decade of American colonization, the Spanish emphasis on faith was abandoned in favor of the 'scientific' classifications of both natural histories and human physiques and their relationship to moral character. These taxonomies were based on the assumption that Others possess distinct and

⁶² Scott, W., *Barangay: sixteenth century Filipino culture and society* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila Press, 1994) pp. 10-12.

specific characters or “nature” according to their group and locality. Thus Filipino groups were hierarchized as physical types and then displayed for metropolitan edification in magazines and fairs.⁶³ These displays of Igorots were accompanied by texts that emphasized their primitive nature. Often the stories reported in the colonial records and the pictures that circulated serve as legitimization devices for colonial control. The American narratives of hyper-masculine headhunting conflict on the Cordillera were part of such spectacular retrievals of primitivism. They appeared in traveler’s accounts and magazines of the day as self-evident truths of the primitive.⁶⁴ Another way this occurred was through the production and circulation of images as commodities themselves – as postcards.

Turning to classify the Cordillera provinces in the present, local administrators must deal with the sedimentation of these colonial images and taxonomies in the metropolitan centre -- they must speak to Manila offices in terms that the national bureaucracy has inherited from the American regime and the English-language educational system. Thus, the classification of upland communities as ‘tribes’ prevails. However, Ihaliap is clearly not much of a name for a ‘tribe’ that has inhabited the mountains ‘since time immemorial.’ I am not arguing that the Haliap case is paradigmatic of the history of all mountain communities. My point is that this example fractures Said’s description of the restoration of a concrete geographical identity as the work of anti-imperialism. The idea of a concrete pre-colonial geographical identity is, itself, part of a colonial geographical imaginary. This background of colonial displacements, the proliferation of categories and representations, is the terrain on which the very possibility of a contemporary community comes into view. Imperialism and colonialism do not destroy the local but incite its production. I have shown that, in this local place, community was not destroyed and recaptured by resistance, but very clearly produced in a mutually constitutive exercise of power between colonized

⁶³ For physical types see Bean, R. *The racial anatomy of the Philippine Islanders* (New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1910.) A discussion of Igorots at the World’s Fair can be found in Rydell, R., *All the world’s a fair: visions of empire at American International Expositions 1876 - 1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) and Benedict, B., ed., *The anthropology of world’s fairs*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.)

⁶⁴ For a contextualization, see Lutz, C. and J. Collins, *Reading National Geographic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.)

and colonizers. This is how ‘the people-from-hurry-up’ have chosen their name to enter ‘history,’ a naming that speaks their resistance to this process.

3.4.2 Embedding local narratives in ‘history’

In local history interviews, I collected a large number of ‘foundation’ stories, like the story of the deer.

Many of these, unlike the tale of *panubtuban* as ‘place-of-cursing,’ did not intersect with the available secondary sources, but recapitulated Tawali Ifugao folk tales and Christian narratives of Adam and Eve.

These stories were fascinating in their cultural detail and told me, allegorically, that the tellers wished to represent intersections and similarities between what they saw as their cultural history and my own.

A second source of puzzlement was that the official historians were most often male. Several female respondents claimed to know ‘nothing’ about local history, other than the details of their own lives. Their life histories were rich and interesting, but did not date as far back as the initial settlement of the community. For those tales, male respondents spoke. Their information came from oral histories shared during ‘pagan’ religious rituals and passed from *mumbakis* (native ritual specialists) to their trainees. Such occasions and training are particularly gendered, women having different stories and rituals – of folk heroes and planting magic – shared in different circumstances.

During this set of interviews, I often found that, approaching male elders and gatekeepers as a young woman, I was ‘interviewed’ first to ensure that I actually knew something of the colonial history of the place. This assumed gendering of knowledge produced a tricky dynamic, where I would have to argue with male translators and hangers-on who thought my questions impertinent. Once I was told by a ‘translator’ who joined our interview to ‘help’, “I won’t like to ask him that question. We have always had *carabaos*! We’re not backward here!,” as an elder, his eyes glinting with suppressed laughter, struggled to formulate a sentence in English to correct the problem: “*Kalabaw*, came Ayangan side.” The listening audience was somewhat shocked to have my supposed outsider’s prejudice confirmed as local history.

This dynamic struck me as peculiar until I realized just how firmly local self-conceptions within these communities were embedded in their representations in national and global popular culture. Local understandings of ethnicity were clearly constituted, not entirely through processes of locally-led self-definition, but by the necessary cultural and economic interactions with “out,” whether it is the lowland populations, the Spanish colonizers, the American administrators, or the global media. Sitting in a storefront café one day, I heard the following on a radio broadcast, a snippet of opinion floating, it seemed, without context, between songs and news:

The ethnic – tobacco, g-strings, betel nut. Now we have Hope, Levi's, Juicy Fruit – the modern Pinoy. The ethnic is now in the far barrios, never seen here in the centre. Fading away... That is the fate of the ethnic.⁶⁵

Here, blaring out of the omnipresent radios, was ethnicity inscribed on the male body. Non-moderns smoked loose tobacco in pipes, wore the traditional loincloths called ‘g-strings’ by the American colonial administrators, and chewed the nuts of the betel palm as stimulants. Moderns, who inhabit the progressive and wealthy centre, wear the globalized brand name of Levi's, chew Juicy Fruit gum, and smoke the popular Filipino cigarette brand of Hope. Moderns are Pinoy – Filipinos – implying that ethnics are not, but remain something other than members of the community of national imagination, stuck somewhere beyond even the edges of the centre. The radio from the nearby marketing town broadcasts this vision of progress as performance with what appears to be some influence. Men, even elders, in my observations, never wore traditional clothes outside ritual occasions while older women would go into market in their ‘native uniform’ of *tapis* (woven skirts) and trade beads. If the radio announcer’s version of the demise of gendered ethnicity as progress enters local living spaces, it may have suggested to his listeners in Ifugao a broader stereotyping of those in ethnic dress as backward and naïve. When I asked how she felt about this radio broadcast, my friend the storeowner replied: “That’s just... Viscaya, how they see us... We don’t mind, because we use Levi’s anyway.” This suggested that this image was not (yet) one that local people were prepared to challenge.

⁶⁵ Radio DZNV, broadcasting from Solano, Nueva Viscaya, December 2, 1996.

This discourse on indigenous men's dress labels the *wanes* (Kankanaey) or *bahag* (Tagalog) as "G-string" or "tails" and feminizes local men. This was evident in the often repeated joke several men told me about either a "lowland" or "*kana*" woman who 'innocently' asks if she can see the Igorot man's "tails" for which he is famous - meaning loincloth or, perhaps, vestigial monkey-like stub. The quick-witted Igorot response is, "With respect, madam, only if we are married first." There are many versions of this joke, in each case resisting the patronizing, feminizing gaze of the foreign woman with a response asserting Igorot virility and masculinity.

As suggested by the radio broadcast and the recurring sexual theme of this joke, there appeared to be a popular identification of masculine performance with the progress of 'development' or 'civilization' and the absorption of the periphery into the narratives of the centre. Perhaps this was the background against which the stories of Imuc and Dominga Alandada, both female protagonists, of a sort, in the American records of 1904, had vanished from oral histories by 1996.

In the following chapter, I explore the ways one story of female agency did enter local history. Below, I turn to the visual economy, the set of images which organizes outsider's perceptions of local people and local understandings of being mapped into modernity by the visual.⁶⁶ Local histories are embedded in the processes in which these images are produced, circulated and commodified, thus local narrators must engage with the organizing tropes found in these visual representations in their retellings of their stories. This visual economy is very much inscribed into local social and economic landscapes. It is not simply relegated to distant museums, metropolitan texts, or particular tourist sites, but omnipresent. Seeing 'historic postcards' for sale along the tourist route to Banaue brought home to me the ways that local history was not an academic concern, but a conflicted and vibrant terrain across which local struggles for access to resources and self-definition were waged on a daily basis.

⁶⁶ For elaboration, see Poole, D., *Vision, race and modernity: a visual economy of the Andean image world* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.)

3.5 Postcard images

We live in an emphatically colonial present. This colonial character is evident in a nostalgia for the visual economy of the imperial era that devalues present day indigenous cultures under the guise of celebrating their past.⁶⁷ This section argues that these nostalgic images matter in local development because they delimit local and viewers' or tourist identities in particular ways. Postcards of the Cordillera and its peoples date to the early days of the American regime and are part of a spectacular retrieval of the primitive as a cultural commodity.

Postcards enjoyed their heyday at the beginning of the American colonial period in the Philippines. In Manila, they were primarily produced to mark the presence of the colonizer in the colony, circulating as images that "confirm... attendance in the presence of the Other and, by certifying the validity of the experience, herald the...successful return from the journey."⁶⁸ As all visual images and technologies, picture postcards move across the imagined boundaries that separate cultures and classes. Cultural and racial discourses animated the images for the purchasers. These images also played a role in constituting the imaginations and identities of those portrayed.⁶⁹ Images function to constitute identity by normalizing and limiting the range of meanings that can be ascribed to the subjects of the image by its viewers: "Travelers and colonists could regard a space and another society, not as a geographic tract, nor an array of practices and relations, but as a thing depicted or described, that was immediately subject to their gaze."⁷⁰ This process creates a peculiar sense of power in the viewer, the power of policing authenticity, which is, of course, no reflection of actual control over the subjects depicted nor necessary power extended to fix a definition of the space of intersubjective meaning.

⁶⁷ Rosaldo, R., *Culture and truth: the remaking of social analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.)

⁶⁸ Cooper, D., "Portraits of paradise: theme and images of the tourist industry" *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* 22 (1994): 144-60; 144.

⁶⁹ See Poole, D. *op. cit.*, for discussion.

⁷⁰ Thomas, N. 1994, 112.

My interest in postcards began when, walking along a Baguio City street, I saw a book on antique picture postcards in the storefront window of *National Bookstore*. Inside, I was startled to find that most of the images that had been collected were colorized versions of pictures I had seen in the *National Geographic*. Even more surprising was the extent to which these images were replicated in the contemporary examples on sale in the chain's racks of postcards. I bought the book, many of the cards on sale, and began collecting more contemporary postcards on my travels. Examining the collection of antique Philippine postcards put together by Jonathan Best in the book, it is clear that many of the images that sold and were mailed back to the United States were distinctively ethnic and gendered.⁷¹ I wish to explore these historical images that appeared first in the *National Geographic* and later as colorized postcards here. My goal is to use these images to contextualize the contemporary politics of representation of the Cordillera region and its Igorot inhabitants.

While it has been argued that exhibitions and the cinema supplanted the postcard as a means of normalizing and managing the periphery in modernity, I argue against this kind of temporal notion of progress in (mis)representations.⁷² This kind of periodization in the visual economy of the primitive is unhelpful. For those peoples imagined still to lie outside the viewing society, in the 'primitive realms,' such forms of representation persist. I have selected postcard images here to argue that continuity between historical and contemporary postcard images of the Cordillera shows how the colonial categories continue to proliferate and enframe local experiences in distinctly ethnic and gendered terms.

Beginning with gender identities, it is evident in the postcard images created by American colonialism that Filipina identity emerged as a commodity fetish. The image of the Filipina was tied to the incitement to represent colonial experiences in the consumption and staging of the "authentic" Philippines. For instance, in 1908, a Manila photo studio was giving away free "nice photos" of Filipinas as souvenirs to

⁷¹ Best, J., *Philippine picture postcards 1900-1920* (Manila: Bookmark, 1994.) The author does not make it clear how he chose his selections for the book. Presumably, they were based on availability and thus reflect, to some extent, the popularity of the images with purchasers of the day.

⁷² Poole, D., *op. cit.*, 13-17.

entice customers.⁷³ Somehow, this reproduced image of an unknown woman became tied to colonial efforts to experience the “truth” of the country. In Best’s collection, one of the most compelling images is a colorized version of the Filipina as “a Visayan tipe.” This is an image that first appeared in the pages of *National Geographic* (see Plate 3-1).

Many postcards are accompanied by textual explanations that overdetermine the interpretation of the image, supposedly repressing all but a single possible meaning. What does ‘a type’ mean? I suggest that the connection between image and text is actually a productive relation – inciting further representations to connect (or disconnect) the text more firmly to the image. This has produced an ongoing series of Filipina ‘types’ – as seen in Best’s collection and the contemporary postcards on sale at bookstores and tourist kiosks nation-wide. Each is ‘typical’ of Filipina beauty and each can also be constructed and commodified as more ‘modern’ or ‘authentic’ than the last. Because of the referentiality and intertextuality of this process of representation, texts are often implied, rather than stated, so contemporary postcards in the ‘Filipina babe’ genre often have no caption; ‘type’ is understood.⁷⁴ The circulation of an image of a nameless woman, identified only as a ‘type’ representative of a Philippine region as ‘truth’ of colonial experience clearly demonstrates the intertextuality of colonial representational norms.”

It would be interesting to assess the extent to which the pictures that sold in that colonial era were of the truly “traditional” Filipinas or the modernized and thus “inauthentic” examples that embodied the inevitability of progress. Perhaps it was the postcard contrasting the “civilized” Manilena and her “Igorot” sister that sold (see Plate 3-2)?⁷⁵

⁷³ Vergara B., *op. cit.*, 26 – 27.

⁷⁴ I have chosen not to display examples of these images here because I do not wish to further this discursive practice, even through critique.

⁷⁵ The image of the young woman on the right appears in Worcester, D.C. “The non-Christian peoples of the Philippines - with an account of what has been done for them under American Rule” *National Geographic* 24(11), 1913: 1157-1256, 1185.

Plate 3-1 Postcard of a Visayan tipe, taken from *National Geographic*



Plate 3-2 Postcard, titled a Manilena and her uncivilized sister



Certainly, during the same period bare-breasted Philippine farm-workers were turning up on the pages of *National Geographic* as 'types' distinct from that of the hispanicized Visayan women mentioned above. Neither the stereotypical exotic, primitivized ethnographic specimen nor the completely Americanized "modern" woman portrayed in the cards reflected the situations of most women living in the country under American rule. Nevertheless, these remained powerful demonstrations of how colonialists/imperialists could mould and then manipulate feminine identities and ethnicities.

The images I have selected from Best's collection of cards of the 'national minorities' are all colorized versions of the plates from *National Geographic* of 1911 and 1912. The provenance of the images in the journal is unclear. The photographs of Igorots on the Cordillera may have been taken during the census activities of the American regime in the region or perhaps, produced *de novo*, in the census style, to illustrate particular articles. The natural history mode of representation favored in the early *National Geographic* articles on the Philippines abstracted human 'specimens' from their social and ecological context, thus opening the way for restructuring of societies and the management of nature.⁷⁶ In 1911, an influential American colonial administrator, Dean C. "Non-Christian" Worcester (so-called for his advocacy of 'tribal' issues on the Cordillera) published a pictorial essay on people of the mountain province – Igorots. These people were already well known to the magazine's American readership from their exhibition in the 1904 World's Fair where they were literally mapped onto the 'Upper Barbaric' in the great pageant of human evolution laid out for fair-goers.⁷⁷ From these colonial encounters at St. Louis and in the Philippines, the American public developed a sense of a hierarchy of human development and then the sentiment that current 'types' were the last of a vanishing tribe. This process of sense and sentiment is how the image of the Igorot became important for Americans and for lowland Filipinos. As an image of the primitive, the photographic Igorot from the World's Fair reassured the

⁷⁶ Pratt, M.-L., 1992, 31.

⁷⁷ For details on the World's Fair and the Igorot Exhibition see Robert Rydell, *All the world's a fair: visions of empire at American International Expositions 1876 - 1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) and B. Benedict, ed. *The anthropology of world's fairs*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.)

viewer that progress was indeed occurring and that they, positioned as viewer rather than spectacle themselves, were ahead of the game.⁷⁸ This created an ongoing demand for pictures of Filipino peoples, one that was met, apparently, by the production of more postcards from *National Geographic* images. These picture postcards of Igorots were sold to the American audience and to others, including Filipinos wishing to position themselves beyond the primitive and in the modern world.

The production and circulation of such images has had an often unacknowledged impact on how many peoples – including those who became known as Igorots - are perceived *and* how they experience the world. One author writes that “To hypothesize that the Igorots at St. Louis were profoundly moved by the idea of their own “Late Barbarism” is an interesting proposition that I would argue is a losing one. It was a narrative that ultimately signified most to the universalized outsider-audience it was primarily written for.”⁷⁹ The popularity of the Igorot display, however, made the Igorots representative of all Filipinos in the American popular understanding.⁸⁰ Seeing that the image of the headhunting savage generalized to the entire population would preclude independence, Manila-based Filipino nationalists from hispanicized communities tried to distance the metropolitan Philippines from the periphery. Carlos Romulo, later Secretary General of the United Nations, argued that Igorots were a small minority group, different in “racial character from the lowland Christians.”⁸¹ This idea of a racial distinction incited debate about discourses on race within the Filipino popular imaginary, bringing longstanding charges that Romulo argued ‘Igorots are not Filipinos.’ In the 1960s, militant Igorot students in Baguio City burned Romulo in effigy to protest the impact of this assertion on their lives.

Pictures of Igorots sold at St. Louis, they sold copies of *National Geographic* to its readership, and the same pictures from the *Geographic*, colorized, sold as postcards to be mailed home to the States.

⁷⁸ See Robert Rydell, *op. cit.*

⁷⁹ Cherubim Quizon, “Ethnographic knowledge and the display of Philippine Igorots in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904,” unpublished MA, SUNY Stony Brook 1991, p.82.

⁸⁰ Afable, P., 1995, 16.

Jonathan Best explains the mechanics behind the profligate circulation and re-presentation of these images well:

Copyright laws were either lax or non-existent at the time and a good photograph would be used by various publishers, not only for postcards but also in books, magazines and for souvenir items. Some cards had different colors added, and the backgrounds altered or removed entirely. Captions were commonly deleted or changed over time, which led to many errors, particularly with ethnographic identifications or place names. It is not always possible to accurately date a postcard by the photo alone; old photographs were sometimes used and popular images remained in print for many years.⁸²

On its own, this should not be shocking – the images of the colonial era persisted into the 1920s.

Moreover, they are of contemporary interest. As Best again explains

Ironically, some of the cards initially made to project a primitive, backward or uncivilized picture of the country in dire need of America's 'beneficent' administration ... have come to be highly valued. Many of these are now seen as examples of the beauty and charm of the indigenous Filipino... The over abundance of pictures of bare chested Ifugao girls ..., were snickered at in 'civilized' parlors a century ago. Today the textile and jewelry designs they illustrated are respected the world over. Old postcards of the national minorities are highly sought after by collectors and researchers.⁸³

One such image, taken from the plates accompanying Worcester's *National Geographic* article of 1911, appears in Plate 3-3.⁸⁴ The colorizing and the caption attempt to recreate this image into a picture of a natural innocent or, perhaps, a Filipina beauty. It seems to me, however, that the young woman photographed is an uncomfortable model. She gazes into the distance, dressed for cleaning the fields in a grass skirt. In the profile shot that accompanies this photograph in the *National Geographic*, she sits with a slumped posture. Her expression seems perhaps dazed, perhaps bored or bewildered and perhaps unwilling as she sits in front of the photographers white drop-cloth as a physical "specimen," recorded face-on and in profile like the criminals of the day.

⁸¹ Romulo, C., *Mother America: A living story of democracy*, (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1943), p. 59.

⁸² Best, J. *Philippine picture postcards 1900-1920* (Manila: Bookmark, 1994) p. 3.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸⁴ The image appears in Worcester, D. "Head-hunters of Northern Luzon" *National Geographic* 23(9), 1912: 833-930, 915.

Plate 3-3 Bontoc woman, postcard



Plate 3-4 Pagan Gaddangs



This facial expression, or lack of it, as a signal of discomfort is not an isolated phenomenon. Facial expressions suggesting fear and annoyance appear in several of the postcard, including that of the young Gaddang couple on their wedding day, another image that originally appeared in the 1911 *National Geographic* (Plate 3-4). These facial expressions are not typical for all photographs of this period. In comparison to the Masferré photos, taken during the same era by a local Igorot-mestizo photographer, it appears that these census subjects may have been sometimes unwilling participants. Their faces may be registering their resistance through either anger, fear or withdrawal. Nonetheless, and perhaps because of the possible interpretations of resistance incorporated within them, these images circulated as cards of 'savages.'

For contrast, I include two photographs of (topless) young women taken by Eduardo Masferré during the 1930s.⁸⁵ The first, Plate 3-5 is a studio portrait of a young woman dressed for a formal occasion in a small fortune in trade beads. Her expression is solemn and she does not make eye contact with the camera, yet she smiles slightly and her eyes seem fixed on some focal point beyond both the camera and photographer. She posed for this picture as a personal portrait, likely a keepsake for herself and her family, most probably recording the event of her betrothal or wedding. The second, Plate 3-6 is a photograph of a young woman from Kalinga sitting, un-posed, knees to chest on a rock, watching the photographer, Masferré, who was shooting landscape images of the rice paddies opposite.⁸⁶ The photographer noted her interest and turned to ask her if she would also like to have her picture taken. In the resulting image, her face glows with curiosity and she looks to me as if she may begin to laugh.

⁸⁵ These images were purchased as postcards in 1997 from the late Eduardo Masferré's studio in Sagada and are reproduced here, for purposes of academic review, with the kind permission of Ms. Nena Masferré. A detailed account of Masferré's work and copies of his photographs can be found in de Villa, G., Garcia-Farr, M., and G. Jones, eds. *Eduardo Masferré: people of the Philippine Cordillera, photographs 1934 – 1956* (Manila: Devcon I.P., Inc., 1988.)

⁸⁶ Ms. Nena Masferré, pers. comm., 17 February, 1997.

Plate 3-5 Kalinga woman, studio portrait, Eduardo Masferré



Plate 3-6 Kalinga girl on rock, Eduardo Masferré



Both of these photographs were taken in very different circumstances – a studio and a lone photographer’s expedition – than the colonial photographic census that produced the image in the colorized postcard of the young woman in the grass skirt. That this particular image of a woman, with its distant and unengaged expression, became a salacious postcard that established and recirculated stereotypes of the immoral habits of Filipino ‘tribes’ speaks volumes about the gendering of primitive space. This image was produced in 1911 and circulated before the war. As Best indicates, it is an antique or curiosity today, yet its subject matter and the subject’s body position are replicated in the images in other, contemporary postcards that I found for sale on the Cordillera during my field work.

In many of these colorized postcards and *National Geographic* illustrations, women were represented in ways that eroticized and primitivized them while suggesting that their visible musculature was incongruent with civilized femininity. Thus, the same bare limbs that made them sexual objects rendered them unappealing. Likewise, indigenous masculinity was represented with ambivalence. Amidst recurrent images of Igorot men as hyper-masculine warriors, I found one card that actually feminized men by representing a man as a woman. Plate 3-7 shows a young man with a backbasket designed to protect the contents from monsoon downpours. It likely contains a lunch to sustain him during a day in the fields. The caption, however, reads: Iggorote maid with head basket, thus combining, into a single image of savagery, the thrill of men’s head-taking with the horrid appearance of women. This confusion over sex and gender in the colonial gaze seemed to emphasize the savagery of the people by suggesting that not only were the women heavy-bodied and thus ‘ugly,’ both men and women were interchangeably violent.⁸⁷ This mis-labeling brings to mind Thomas’s comments on the way in which colonialism read debasement from the female native’s body and, in this case, even substituted in a male body to fit the image within the discursive frame of primitivism.

⁸⁷ This mistake of gender was made at the point in which the image was colorized and captioned, then sold. The subject of the photograph is not identified as female in the *National Geographic* nor is he identified as male – the emphasis is on the local technology represented by the waterproof backbasket. See plates and text in Worcester, D. “Head-hunters of Northern Luzon” *National Geographic* 23(9), 1912: 833-930.

Plate 3-7 Maid with headbasket, postcard



POST

What is missing here is the relationship between these antique cards and the ones currently being sold to tourists in National Bookstore, the markets of Baguio City (primate city of the Cordillera), and the viewpoint at Banaue, the major rural tourist site. This relationship between the historical images and contemporary ones is disturbing because it is one of clear intertextuality and, at times, almost complete reproduction. Because of the intertextuality of the images that circulate as postcards, texts are often implied, rather than stated on contemporary cards. It is, as my Plates will show you, the images themselves that repeat or refer to each other. This intertextuality emerges from the colonial archive and the complexities of colonial relations that are not only forms of political and economic subordination justified by ideologies of race or progress but essentially cultural projects. As such, colonial relations are also constituted through the imagination of symbols, signs, stories and nation or community. Postcards demonstrate the photographic history of this phenomenon. A single image from the upland Philippines, one of two Kankanaey girls, has perhaps appeared as a postcard for most of this century (Plate 3-8). Originally published in the *National Geographic* of 1911, it was colorized and circulated through American hands, appearing in a collection of historic postcards published by Jonathan Best.⁸⁸ In 1996, I purchased a watercolor version of this image, produced by a Filipina artist, in several branches of National Bookstore in Manila. What is of interest here is that these images continue to be treated as contemporary, rather than strictly historical, continuing the representational practices of formal colonialism and, through that, the colonial era.

In contemporary practices, postcards continue to function as an instrument of confirmation and serve to mark the presence of the tourist or visitor in the appropriate places. A site is not really a destination until it has a range of commodified images that represent its touristic consumption. The Cordillera and its rice terraces form such a complex of destination and image in the contemporary Philippines. A visit to the National Bookstore will net you several images of rice terraces, Igorots and their culture.

⁸⁸ Best, J. *op. cit.*

Plate 3-8 (A) and (B) Two Kankaney girls



There is a clear relation between the postcards of Igorots I collected in 1995 – 1997 and the colonial tropes of representing the primitive and the Igorot, particularly their gendering. These images should not be dismissed as merely representations created for tourism and, as such, limited to a particular discursive realm. These pictures are positioned in an important and disturbing intertextuality of with the representational tropes of the colonial era. Such contemporary images, too, have a political and material impact on mountain people's daily experiences, at home and abroad. It is crucial to keep in mind that these images circulate to a much broader audience than will ever get to the mountains. If and when these people arrive, they will already have these images at hand as reference and guide, for, as tourists, whether visiting nationals, anthropologists or film crews: "We go not to test the image by reality, but to test reality by the image."⁸⁹ This dynamic explained why, on three occasions, I met tourists carrying postcards already purchased in Baguio City, wandering through the streets of Sagada, asking where they might find the 'tribal people.' They found the local reply somewhat startling: "You are looking at them." In the following section, I take apart this touristic practice of representation.

3.5.1 Tourism and the postcard

Tourism is constructed around the staging of particular places: "a production of sites which are linked in a time-space itinerary and sights that are organized into a hierarchy of cultural significance."⁹⁰ Tourists follow routinized paths, each trip in its turn contributing to the layering of imaginative geographies. Tracing these routes produces a sedimentation of representations which shapes the experiences and expectations of subsequent tourists. A key role in this sedimentation of imaginaries and images is played by the material artifact of the postcard because it functions as an instrument of confirmation, marking the presence of the tourist in the appropriate places. Landscapes as *sights* clearly do not become the *sites* of

⁸⁹ Boorstin, D. "From traveler to tourist: the lost art of travel" in his *The Image – or what happened to the American Dream*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961), p.123.

⁹⁰ Gregory, D. "Scripting Egypt: Orientalism and the culture of travel" in Duncan, J. and D. Gregory, eds. *Writes of passage* (London: Routledge, 1999; pp. 114 - 150), p. 116.

tourist visits until images are made, circulated and seen.⁹¹ Images of place create signposts for tourist visits to particular sites. Simultaneously, more visits sediment a particular catalogue of acceptable images into an imaginary of place. This happens when tourists recirculate what see on these landscapes as sketches or photographic images they make or acquire. The exchange of images between past visitors and potential travelers thus reinforces the value of a particular place as a destination. For decades, postcards have been the ubiquitous commodity markers of this sedimentary accumulation of images into imaginaries.

Tourists are enticed by these imaginaries. Capturing the place for one's self - being there and sending back one's own series of postcards, making one's own photographs - is a performance that constitutes a particularly modern identity. Contemporary postcard images of Igorots and their landscapes are produced by, for and marketed to metropolitan Filipino and foreign tourists. Culturally powerful forces encourage those who locate themselves within 'western' or European cultural heritages - that pervasive, imagined 'we' - to search for authenticity in the Other through the seductive images of tourism. Confronting the primitive Other actually constructs that imaginary 'we' in the experience of the participants. In images of the primitive as indigenous peoples, we can see human relics of an age long gone, struggling to survive. Tourist destinations in 'the primitive' mode survive as remnants of a timeless past and 'we' engage in a form of time travel when we visit them. We find a humorous juxtaposition between modern and primitive that ironically reassures our viewing selves that the forces of change have tamed the primitive society. Simultaneously holding and enacting contradictory ideas of the primitive allows colonial cultures and colonized alike to manipulate each other. In the Cordillera tourist context, this manipulation occurs over performances of 'tribal' authenticity.

Within the images of the primitive sold as postcards, we find an interesting journey played out. As Dave Cooper argues: "Postcard images are not simply a random selection of picturesque views of landscapes or portraits of the local inhabitants in traditional costumes, engaged in ritual or cultural activities. They

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

act as signifiers of verification and authentication, testifying to the successful completion of the ritual progressions necessary to traverse 'sacred space.'"⁹²

I argue that this "sacred space" is the place of the primitive. This place and its inhabitants are represented in contradictory ways that reflect modern anxieties about identity, development and progress. I can identify four themes within the cards I have collected: depopulated landscapes, de-contextualized artifacts, naïve nostalgia and tribal documentary. Each is worthy of commentary but, here, I choose to follow the politics of one representational theme – that of the Banaue Rice Terraces as depopulated landscapes – into its representation across a broader Philippine mediascape.⁹³

Ifugao people who build and maintain these terraces dispute their identification as Igorots in some venues, but accept it in others. Therefore, this is disputed as an Igorot site, even as Igorots are popularly identified by nationalists as the authentic terrace-builders of a virile pre-Hispanic Filipino past. Thus, colonial distinctions and their reinscriptions thus underlie even local ideas of the periphery, destabilizing the terrain where critical analysis of their effects might be undertaken. Postcard-type images and the tropes they recirculate impact directly on local struggles to control land and development.

Since 1992, concerns over the decline of 'traditional' rice agriculture and the Ifugao landscape have emerged in the metropolitan media.⁹⁴ In 1994, the Philippine government created the Ifugao Terraces Commission to preserve the rice terraces in Central Ifugao as a national treasure. In 1997, UNESCO designated the terraces a World Heritage Site. In the media coverage, the Ifugao are presented as an

⁹² Cooper, D. 1994, 159.

⁹³ I have selected this image because of its iconic status and colonial history.

⁹⁴ See *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "Agriculture: Manila tries to save Banaue's crumbling rice terraces," Sept. 15, 1994, v. 157, n. 37, page 50; Garcellano, R. 1995 "2,000 years and counting: time is running out on Banaue's 'skyways'," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, March 19, 1995, page B11; Villalon, A. 1995a "Paddied landscape an Asian symbol," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, March 4, 1995, page C6; Villalon, A. 1995b "Delicate balance of culture and nature," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, March 27, 1995, page D2, for examples of this debate.

"authentic, tribal culture" and as the "oldest agricultural community" in the Philippines.⁹⁵ They are supposedly untouched by Spanish and American colonialism, disturbed only by their recent integration into the commercial vegetable market.⁹⁶ With the attention has come a variety of projects and policies aimed at keeping commercial bean farming off the terraces – especially the 'visible' ones. The drying-out of fields so as to free land for beans or labor for other purposes has destabilized the rice terrace system in Banaue to the extent that some fields are now permanently dry. The deforestation of upslope recharge zones to produce woodcarvings for the tourist market and the water demands of tourist development are no doubt contributing factors. A program of restoration was announced by the Department of Tourism and the Banaue Rice Terraces Commission in September of 1998: "if we restore the terraces, we'll be doing the world a favor."⁹⁷

The 'authentic tribal' image of Banaue persists despite these local effects of a reputation for pristine culture and dramatic landscape: the Banaue rice terraces drew 25,000 tourists in 1994 and the number is expected to increase yearly.⁹⁸ Ifugao culture and landscape are seen as the location of pre-colonial past; they have symbolic and educational value for Philippine society. Contemporary Filipinos thus owe the Ifugao a debt of gratitude for preserving this symbol: "Many of the terraces are being left to decay. Our Cordillera brothers have yet to realize they're custodians of a most precious symbol, and we have yet to thank them for keeping it alive."⁹⁹ The nineteenth century American assumptions which predicted discontinuity and demise for indigenous cultures have been met with evidence of survival and continuity. Yet, admiration of Ifugao agriculture here is tinged with this familiar nostalgia for vanishing peoples and places. The same phenomenon can be seen in the nostalgia for the visual economy in the postcard

⁹⁵ Villalon, A. 1995b "Delicate balance of culture and nature" *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, March 27, 1995, page D2.

⁹⁶ Garcellano, R. *op. cit.*

⁹⁷ Philippine Tourism Secretary Gemma Cruz-Araneta, quoted in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Sept 18, 1998 article circulated on igorots@onelist.com.

⁹⁸ Garcellano, R. *op. cit.*

⁹⁹ Villalon, A., 1995b.

images of people- a devaluation of present-day indigenous cultures under the guise of celebrating their past – what Renato Rosaldo terms an “imperialist nostalgia.”¹⁰⁰

This nostalgic discourse on the Ifugao rice terraces distinguishes the indigenous Ifugao from other Filipinos and commodifies their culture. Though “brothers,” Ifugao local economies are marginal to the symbolic interests of the nation and the potential of tourism development. In this discourse on tribal decline, local people are presented as hapless victims of progress. The Manila-based media do not portray the Ifugao as rational and active agents caught up in global networks. Instead, the Ifugao are represented as in need of the assistance of tourists, journalists, and agricultural and development experts to save their landscape. Such representations of Igorots as hapless indigenes are gendered. Men are the active agents of valuable tradition and potential for progress; women are passive and backward. Contemporary representations reflect this distinction, showing men as masters of the terraced landscape and women as backward (see Plate 3-9.) While nationalist Filipinos can talk to their (male) “Cordillera brothers” about terrace rehabilitation and further tourism development, indigenous women represent the stagnant aspects of tradition.

The article from the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* that provided the “Cordillera brothers” quote, above, was illustrated with a picture of “an Ifugao tribeswoman” in “traditional” dress waiting for tourists to pay for her photograph.¹⁰¹ Postcards of similar images are widely available. In this photograph, the indigenous woman embodies the embarrassing decline of a once-proud ‘tribal’ heritage. The *Inquirer* reader was informed that this heritage needed to be saved as a nationalist symbol by assisting the active male

¹⁰⁰ Rosaldo, R. *Culture and truth: the remaking of social analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.)

¹⁰¹ Villalon, A., 1995b.

Plate 3-9 Contemporary postcard, three Ifugao men on the Banaue terraces



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A land of smiles with warm hospitality and vast cultural heritage.

cultural aspect.¹⁰² Women and subsistence production are not mentioned, perhaps because the dominant discourse on gender locates women and feminized "tradition" in the realm of the domestic, passive and underdeveloped. It is not surprising that, in this representational context, younger women choose to leave traditional farming.¹⁰³ Many work as artisans for the tourist industry, pursue education and hope to go "abroad." By absenting themselves from a 'traditional' realm, they become hybrid figures who are no longer essential to reproducing the touristic imaginary that sells the area. They do not appear in postcards and rarely grace tourist brochures, unless in full indigenous costume.

The purification of local hybridities to meet tourist expectations has development implications beyond the presence or absence of performing bodies. People I interviewed were proud to be visited, to be a "site" of tourism - "where Igorots live is very much appreciated by peoples of the whole world. I'm proud to be from here" - but they clearly saw this as a function of landscape, not their presence. This was a message conveyed to them by the performances of tourists themselves. I have heard tourists exclaim more than once, "these people are ruined" within the hearing of their local hosts.¹⁰⁴ Such comments reflect the impatience generated in the postcard-educated discerning viewer by the 'ruined' or 'hybrid' masquerading as the real.¹⁰⁵ Local performances of authenticity can only strive to catch up with the tourist imaginary, in order to keep the cash flowing in. One local observer told me: "The government is trying to promote a commercial type of tourism - a tourism that is distorting the indigenous concepts... The economic side is so powerful that it already erases part of their indigenous way of looking, their aesthetic. Somebody says: 'you create these kinds of images' and then the people here say that is right

¹⁰² *Inquirer* readership is national, but the anticipated audience seems to be largely Manila-based. The quote on the availability of newspapers in the mountains coming as a surprise to Manila-focused Filipinos that appears earlier for corroborates this idea.

¹⁰³ This politics of representation is one reason among several that will be elaborated in chapters 5 and 6.

¹⁰⁴ Tourists from the U.S., Canada, Germany, Israel, South Korea, Italy and Australia all expressed this, or equivalent, evaluations to me over the course of my research.

¹⁰⁵ McCannell, D. *op. cit.*, 28.

because it is what those people want to see here, seeing us from outside.”¹⁰⁶ Thus, images produced for tourism create a boundary between two distinct categories with specific kinds of mobility, knowledges and particular histories: one is either a buyer (tourist) or a performer (local).¹⁰⁷ The postcard image serves as a common ground or organizing point not only for the touristic encounter but also for the constitution of community, regional and even national identities that rely on this distinction. In the last year alone, I have found articles encouraging visitors to Banaue not only in Swedish travel magazines, but also in Filipino publications aimed at overseas workers. The image of Banaue, as tourist site, has become the organizing allegory for the pre- or uncolonized nation and for nationalistic resistance to the forces of (post)colonial global politics.

3.6 The local, the primitive and the cartographic impulse

By producing place as endangered and peoples as marginalized, the visual economy that connects colonialism to tourism through postcards confirms identities for both tourists and locals. Local people are bound to place, supposedly limited in their spatial experience and living outside of ‘modern’ time. What they have left to them is history. Ironically, as they defend and enact history in a representational realm, it is precisely the control of a very material present and future place that they then lose. Tourists are place-less nomads, moving through the primitive as if engaged in time-travel. In their quest to get back to the authentic primitive, they demand the reenaction of authentic pasts drawn from images they have seen before. The touristic ideal of the primitive as a magic well of experience that can be used without possessing or diminishing it is a false dream. Becoming trapped in enacting the past for tourism, locals lose their present.¹⁰⁸ Because the past they enact is constructed as a shared element of national heritage, it is representationally divorced from contemporary communities and local lands are thus emptied.

¹⁰⁶ Notes from an interview with a Cordillera Municipal Officer.

¹⁰⁷ Such identities, of course, cannot remain stable. Locals, gone transnational and then returning for a visit, can take on the identity of tourists.

¹⁰⁸ Specifically, they lose control over their lands and their economic development under government policies of resource extraction and tourism development.

What Said calls the “cartographic impulse,” the desire to “seek out, map, invent or to discover” an uncolonized nature as the source of an authentic space in which to ground anti-imperialist struggles is at work here.¹⁰⁹ Deferred from the urban centers to peripheral nature by nationalists, it empties the land, again, of contemporary inhabitants. One Filipino poet describes the relation between his world of the metropolitan centre and the peripheral mountains he visits as a tourist in these terms:

we have had to live here
remembering the mountains
remembering to live
knowing we must thrive
after all
survive the well-kempt days
wanderers together
now
prospectors
hungering
to see a land
not claimed by anyone
not even by ourselves
except by that proprietary wish
to be whole again¹¹⁰

“Anyone” does not include, it seems, local farmers who are likewise not “ourselves.” Thus the cartographic impulse empties the land of in-authentic, contemporary indigenous communities, foregrounding only those indigenes who fit into its romantic views of pristine nature and pure tradition. This becomes the context for performances of indigenous ethnicity for tourism development.

The purification of local hybridities to meet tourist expectations of primitive authenticity and pristine landscapes has implications not just for local experiences of tourists but for the trajectories open to local development. In Hungduan, near Banaue, Ifugao, I met several returned overseas workers who had accumulated money to re-roof their houses with galvanized iron sheets. However, they were forbidden from doing so by a political leader. He was interested in promoting Hungduan as the site of authenticity for tourism development. As the owner of a tourist hostel, his rationale is that the “native” authenticity of the grass roofs will attract more tourists to the area. Clearly, images that structure tourist expectations

¹⁰⁹ Said, E., *op. cit.*, 79.

have a direct impact on local struggles to control land and development. This discourse does not portray the Ifugao as rational and active agents caught up in global networks that have decided to invest their capital and labor in a commercial crop as part of a small-scale commodity production strategy. If they were not indigenous people in a historic site, they might be recognizable as peasants behaving as rational capitalist actors.

As representatives of the primitive, the Ifugao must remain bound to their land, becoming 'inauthentic' depraved or lost when they depart from 'traditional' farming. Igorot women as beggars are often pictured in the popular press. Writing on "Endangered People," journalist Bambi Harper reports: "there are few images as heart-rending as the sight of an old Igorot woman, begging for alms in the polluted, traffic-clogged corners of Manila – a symbol of the ruin of her culture."¹¹¹ Note that in this quote, there is a clear separation between the ruined culture of the mountains and that of the putatively 'mainstream' audience the author constructs. Apparently, Igorots are still not expected to read newspapers or purchase postcards but remain the passive recipients of the metropolitan gaze. Likewise, there is no acknowledgement that before the arrival of the Spanish, the groups that are now contemporary uplanders and lowlanders mixed freely and shared many common cultural practices. In tourist sites, local people, dressed in their jeans and T-shirts, smoking Hope and chewing Juicy Fruit, pass by the stalls selling their historicized images daily. They listen to the comments of tourists on their 'decline' knowing, all the while, that their performance of the 'modern' is what will enable them to sell their crops in the national market, educate their children in the national school system, and join the imagined community of Filipinos.

3.6.1 From postcard and tourism to cinema

The gendered gaze of the metropolis has opened other realms of representation for local people as examples of authentic primitives. Differences in the embodied performance of gender have led to other

¹¹⁰ Macansantos, F. "Sagada" *Jose – the literary quarterly of the Philippines*, 1 (3): 1983: 30.

¹¹¹ Harper, B. "Endangered people," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, June 13, 1995.

opportunities emerging from tourist practices. For instance, on the advice of crew members who had seen performers from Banaue enacting Ifugao culture at a Manila hotel, Francis Ford Coppola cast Ifugao women as the locals in the battle scenes of his 1979 film, *Apocalypse Now*. Based on Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, perhaps the best known internal critique of Western colonialism, Coppola's film re-stages Conrad's tale, taking it up the Mekong, through Vietnam into Cambodia, during the Vietnam war. Crewmembers who had visited Ifugao and seen Ifugao dancers affirmed that, unlike lowland women, Ifugao women did not "walk sexy."¹¹² They could then, apparently, withstand the simulated warfare on the film set with a simulacrum of 'realistic' female movement, because they were 'tribal' women, used to the hardships of mountain life.

The distinctive value of Ifugao performances of feminine embodiment led to the presence of a large contingent of Ifugao people, recruited from the major tourist centre at Banaue, on the *Apocalypse Now* set. Paid forty Philippine pesos per day per person through a small coterie of 'managers,' the group was attempting to garner all the extras it could from the production company. One successful idea was to request a *carabao* for a ritual slaughter. In Eleanor Coppola's film *Hearts of Darkness*, a documentary on the making of *Apocalypse Now*, it is the Ifugao request for a *carabao* to slaughter that gives Coppola his ingenious solution to the final scene. To this point, we have followed him as genius/filmmaker, up the river into his own dark hour. He is sick, over budget and out of creative inspiration, having no idea what to do for the finale. As he ponders how to stage the death of Kurtz, his wife calls him to see the ritual slaughter and he becomes inspired. His genius as filmmaker is in the images he incorporates – images taken straight from the authentic primitive of the Ifugao ritual. On screen the Ifugao hack apart a *carabao*, but Coppola does not know the entire story.

This scene replicates the old colonial relations reported in the 1911 *National Geographic*. There, the American governors staged "*canaos*" (large redistributive prestige feasts) to make peace between fractious villages and establish colonial hegemony over the redistribution of wealth and justice. They

¹¹² Interview with Joseph Blas, Banaue, Ifugao, February 1997.

used this local idiom of feasting to consolidate power. Of course, the biggest prestige feasts were those in which a *carabao* or more was slaughtered and the meat would be doled out by precedence – those with the closest kinship ties receiving most. Since the Americans had no relatives, the strongest client relations symbolically went to those who got the most meat. Thus the *carabao* slaughter was a ‘free-for-all’ that reinforced American ideas of primitive indiscipline and barbarism. The *carabao* remained a symbol of colonial power and its slaughter the symbolic tax on the Spanish as colonial overlord. Therefore, the prestige and the feast retain an ambivalent quality in the local understanding. Even as the Ifugao accept the gift of meat, they are symbolically assassinating the imperial donor.

In the final scene of *Apocalypse Now*, where Willard kills Kurtz against the backdrop of a “Cambodian” festival, Kurtz’s demise is closely paralleled by the ritual slaughter of a *carabao*. In the actual filming of this scene, the natives are played by extras recruited from Bocos, Banaue, Ifugao Province. Though they “represent Cambodians” in the dance and ritual, they are led by Guimbatan, a respected *mumbaki* (native ritual specialist) from Banaue, and their performances retain definitive Ifugao elements of expression and gesture.¹¹³ Here we have resistance that appears to be primitivism, the stealthy slaughter of imperial power amidst it all. As James Clifford describes it, local people have inserted “contestatory expressions from the site of imperial intervention, long ignored in the metropolis; the critique of empire coded ongoingly on the spot, in ceremony, dance, parody, philosophy, counterknowledge and counterhistory, in texts unwitnessed, suppressed, lost or simply overlain with repetition and unreality” into the text of the film.¹¹⁴

Screening *Apocalypse Now* for my Ihaliap hosts was an interesting experience. To begin, the long, suspense-filled journey up the river into the ‘*Heart of Darkness*’ was unfamiliar and sleep-inducing. The

¹¹³ Such Cambodian elements of dress and design that overlay the Ifugao participation in the film were reportedly inspired by George Condominas’s *We have eaten the forest: the story of a Montagnard village in the central highlands of Vietnam*, trans. A. Foulke (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977.) Having read the book, seen the movie, and interviewed participants, I have failed to establish any connection, except that reference to the ethnography legitimated Coppola’s scripting of and re-presenting the Ifugao performances.

¹¹⁴ Pratt, M-L. *Imperial Eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 2.

action scenes were well received because war movies, particularly *Rambo*, are a familiar genre. The final scene of the *carabao* slaughter with its burlesque of Ifugao ritual did not elicit comment from the audience that I collected. I asked one friend if he thought the scene was not a bit wrong:

It is a movie... they're supposed to be representing Cambodians, not Ifugaos, so maybe that's why it is different. We do not wear chickens as jewelry...It doesn't look like that.

However, to catch his attention to answer this question, I had to interrupt his murmured chant of "the horror, the horror..." He had definitely identified, not with the Ifugao performers or the warrior protagonist but with Marlon Brando's crazy and dissolute Kurtz. Trying to pull his wandering subjectivity back into an Ifugao subject position so he could give me an 'authentic Ifugao' critique of Coppola's use of the performance felt like an act of colonial violence. I let the line of questioning lapse.

3.7 Narratives, histories and gendering

These stories of local history, gender and ethnicity matter, as do the tropes and images they deploy. This is why the *Igorot Quarterly*, a publication of the American outmigrant group that organizes the internet discussions, is planning to publish a revisionist article on Igorot experiences at the St. Louis exhibition. Clearly, the stories of preceding generations influence how they and their inheritors are to be treated and represented in the contemporary world.

Narratives are, and always have been, political tactics and this is why the discussion of indigenous identity, which opens this essay, is such a critical exercise. This chapter is not intended to pre-empt or redefine identity debates but to explicate the complex context in which this discussion is situated. If, at the end of this chapter, ethnicities remain unclear - are Ihaliap people Ifugao people and are Ifugao people Igorots - it is because they are performatives overdetermined by contexts. It is clearly not up to the author to decide, but to the members of these communities, the people who share the common experiences and stories, who are forging something anew out of these narratives and thus reimagining themselves and their world. A critical part of the constitution of the local by this community has been the reworking of local gender. From the historical sketches and representations presented here, a particular

problem emerges: why, in an area with egalitarian principles when it comes to gender labor and inheritance, were women always relegated to the historical background as the counterpoint figures for masculine progress? If women were not such supporting performers, then how does this come about?

Luz

Luz was thirty-three and worked in Hong Kong as a domestic helper for seven years. I met Luz at her store along the National Highway. She heard that I was Canadian and asked me to her house for tea. And what tea it was! A perfectly brewed cup of Fortnum and Mason's loose Earl Grey. Tea, she explained, sent to her by her British employer from Hong Kong who had taught her how to brew it properly. "I'm glad you're here," she said, "nobody here understands tea." So we sat in her living room, over several afternoons, amidst old issues of *Canadian Living*, and she told me her story.

Luz finished a degree in Home Economics at the local college. "And after that, what kind of job do you find? I got married right away." Several months later, her son was born, and she and her husband were still living with his parents and farming. "We had nothing, no lands and no money. So my parents mortgaged their ricefield and I went to Hong Kong. My son was maybe one year, six months..." She wasn't sure what she was getting herself into: "I was really koboy¹¹⁵ then – working in the fields, rough hands, dark skin. I took the Home Economics course, yes, but we never saw appliances. I had been to Manila maybe once, with my friend. Hong Kong was like... I was dismayed."

In Hong Kong, her first employer was a Chinese family. The parents were nice and kind to her, though she worked hard. Once, her "male employer" allowed her to have a Filipina friend stay with her while she was looking for work. The wife didn't speak English, so information was relayed to her by the children. This was very hard for Luz, who reported being told: "You're just a maid, you can't do anything here," and, "Mummy says to tell you if you do anything naughty, she will send you back in the Philippines." Luz felt that she could not care for the children properly if they were allowed to be disrespectful, so she began looking for another position through a network of Filipina friends.

"It is very important to have barkadas [friends] there. They are the ones who will help you if you must leave your employer. So, I went with the other Filipina girls who worked in the neighborhood and they introduced me to other girls at the malls." When I asked her if she revealed her ethnicity to these women, she explained that she did not. "Nobody asked me, 'do you come from Baguio?', like that... So, I just keep quiet. I do not like to say Ifugao, because people have bad impressions already. When they say 'where are you from?', I say, 'near Solano, Nueva Viscaya.' That's true, I just live Ifugao side. So maybe they think I'm from Viscaya?" (laughs) Through this group of women, Luz was able to find a network of Filipinas working for expatriate European and North American families. "I went with the girls who had good employers – you know, nice clothes and days off and good salaries. They all work for foreigners there in Hong Kong. One girl recommended me for a job with a British family." Luz agreed with me that, like her, the 'girls' seemed to be looking each other over, trying to find friends who would prove to be helpful contacts.

¹¹⁵ Literally, cowboy, implying rough and ready style.

After one year with her Chinese employer, Luz spent five with this family. It was, she assessed, on the whole, a good situation. She learned to make tea, something her female employer insisted on immediately. And she also asserted herself: "With foreigners, they like to be fair. So, it's ok. My employer, she asked me to wash the car. And I do not like that, they say 'there is the maid, outside, washing the car'—it's really a work for men. So, I find my contract and I say: 'Mam, it says here that I am responsible for everything in the house. But the car is outside. Maybe you can move it here, so when I fix up the house, it's inside, too?' My employer, she just laughed and laughed. And she said, 'No, Luz, it's an extra. If you do it, we'll give you one hundred dollars each week.' So, I washed the car, but I earned more."

Maintaining good relations with the female employer was key to Luz's strategy in managing her work. "You must always go with the woman employer. Even if the man is more sympathetic, you cannot be too close with him. There will be gossip. You must always be with the woman, even if you do not really like her character. You can learn." Luz listed clothes, mannerisms, and language as the things she learned from her female employers. "If the woman likes you, then you have your tea together, you talk about the children and... less work for you. And maybe she gives you things to use – a shoulder bag, a lipstick.... My employer, she liked me to read books. She was always saying: 'Here, Luz. Read this...' and she gave me a dictionary. She liked to see me reading." When I asked, she acknowledged that "Yes, you become like your female employer. They like to see that. After all, it is their home and their children, so they like a good character and appearance." By the time her employers returned to England, Luz was regularly being included in informal social occasions. She still receives an annual Christmas package from the family.

Luz's next contract was with an Australian couple, found through the same network of Filipina girls. "I went for the interview and the woman showed me the apartment, the appliances, ok... Then she had no more questions and I said, 'Mam, shall I make tea?' I brought my tea that they'd given me before, the British family. So, I bring the tray.... one cup. And she says, 'what about you?' So, it's easier again... I'm not the maid, I'm the housekeeper now." The Australian couple had no children and both were employed, so Luz secured their permission to take a part-time position with a Canadian family. "It was good for them... I was gone when they were home but the work was done."

This part-time work was for a Cathay Pacific Airlines pilot, his wife and two children. After almost a year, they were transferred to Vancouver. The Canadian family wanted her to join them in Canada and began an application for her under the Live-In Caregiver program. Luz was exceptionally close to the wife and children and excited about the chance of getting permanent residency in Canada. She left the Australian employers and, once the Canadians had departed Hong Kong, returned home to the Philippines to apply directly to Canada from Manila.

Luz had come home every year on her vacation and remitted money regularly to her household in the Philippines. Her husband, however, did not approve of her plans to move to Canada. He thought it was too far away and that she had been gone far too long, already. He was afraid she would go "forever" and pointed out that the only person looking after their son, now seven, was the kattulong [domestic helper.] So, her husband confiscated her passport. "He is holding my passport. And I must write my Canadian employer and tell her it cannot be....," Luz explained with sadness. "Here it is not the same, nobody understands me, my life in Hong Kong..."

Luz's alienation and frustration were palpable, but she has consolidated her household's position within the local elite. Luz's earnings were remitted monthly through bank-to-bank transfers. She sent money to her husband to buy a jeepney and later, the capital to start an auto-repair business. They have invested in a large property along the highway where this business is located and own several jeeps. Luz did not remit all her earnings, though; "I kept some for myself, in case it would be that my husband would scatter it." She has bought 10,000 hectares of riceland in the outmigration site at Cordon, Isabela, and has arranged to have it farmed by tenants from her home barangay. These fields produce three harvests a year of commercial rice. She has also taken a mortgage on land in her barangay that she intends to buy. To 'keep herself busy,' Luz has opened a small store alongside her house – a sari-sari – where she sells imported canned goods, imported clothes, and jewelry. Since her son is now in school most of the day, she tells me she is also planning to have another child.

Chapter 4– Gendered subjectivities, identities and resistance

The subaltern cannot speak. There is not virtue in global laundry lists with 'woman' as a pious item. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual as intellectual has a circumscribed task which she must not disown with a flourish.¹

This chapter focuses on discourses on gender made visible through the representations of violence on the part of colonized women. Violent acts committed by one individual can be interpreted as somehow representative of all people in that socially relevant category, whether it be ethnicity, class, caste or gender.² Regardless of a putative criminal's sex, one can distinguish between two contexts for thinking about their gender. One is an enabling way of explaining the gendering of particular acts of violence. The second is the extension of moral tales about the lives of specific individuals to all in that subject position. It is this second context, the extension of moral tales, that I explore here. This chapter presents an analysis of the representations of femininities in the cases of two Filipina murderesses. I select these examples where the lives of individuals exceed the limits specified for femininity. Reading the two cases in tandem, I demonstrate that the identity of "woman" in the post-colonial Philippines differs between the representations of the metropolis and those of the indigenous periphery. Considering the ways in which the violent acts of individual women are framed under both colonial regimes and the conditions of the contemporary diaspora of Filipina migrant workers reveals how the dominant discourse on Filipina femininity may be reinforced or contested through the historical record or the official media story.

In these cases, the figure of woman is the ground of representation for struggles carried on over her body and in her identity, a position that Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak names as the gendered subaltern. This chapter extends Spivak's theorization of the female subaltern in order to establish the historical and nationalist terrain that the individuals in following chapters must negotiate as they move between local

¹ Spivak, G. "Can the subaltern speak?" in Grossberg, L. and Nelson C., eds., *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988; pp. 271-312), p. 308.

² Considering gender, Harriet Bird argues that, in representations of crime in the popular Western media, murderesses seem to have come much more easily to symbolize their entire gender, whereas male perpetrators of murder were more likely to be treated as unique individuals. Bird, H., ed. *Moving targets: women murder and representation* (London: Virago, 1993.)

and global, emphasizing not the universality of gender but the importance of context - the geography of colonialisms and of discourses on gender in a (post)colonial present.

My strategy in approaching the two cases here is to examine the waves of meaning that wash over the spot where the female subaltern vanishes, exploring how they blur the contours of that space. My interest is not in the individual women themselves but in the forms of speculation and techniques of contestation after the fact. I am intrigued by what is made out of the subaltern after her disappearance. This chapter serves as a contrapuntal introduction to the following chapters. Chapters 5 and 6 present vignettes from the lives of particular women that fracture generalizations about "woman" as a singular position and challenged the idea of the laundry list (above) with woman added. I accomplish this through strategies of representing the flexibilities of the local 'norm' for gendered labor and the telling the stories of women who (choose to) fall outside it.

4.1 Problematic: violence on the part of subaltern women

To establish the problematic of female violence and its representation, I want to situate myself, as participant and observer, in a particular moment.

I am standing outside a downtown Vancouver theatre with a candle in my hand. It keeps going out, as do the candles held by the circle of Filipina activists around me. On a cold, wet spring afternoon, I have been asked to participate in a vigil for Filipina Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs). The vigil takes place before the Vancouver premiere of Joel Lamangan's movie, "The Flor Contemplacion Story." Flor Contemplacion was a Filipina OCW executed for murder by Singapore. In the film, she is played by the madly popular actress Nora Aunor. Of course, the activists seem to me to be outnumbered by the avid Noranians; it's rumored La Aunor will make a personal appearance for the Vancouver opening. The activists are themselves from the Philippines and many are OCWs. Here, they are trying to draw Canadian public attention to the exploitation of Filipinas, using the film screening as a vehicle. There have been other demos, in the Philippines and around the globe, first trying to gain a stay of execution, and then protesting Flor's death

And me, I am here at the invitation of the Philippine Women Centre. My friend Cecelia phoned me up the day before to ask me to come out and join the protest. I had been following the case on the Internet. Perhaps because I am a grad student, I asked her a couple of questions about the case -- like, how do we know for sure she's innocent. Cecelia replied in terms of ethnic and gender identities: "you know how Filipinas are - mabain (ashamed), mahinhin (modest) - how could she do that?" I agreed with her; I, too, wanted Flor to be innocent. After I hung up, it struck me that Cecelia hadn't said "we" - though she identifies as a Filipina, too.

Standing on the chilly downtown street clutching a candle, I began to wonder about my easy acceptance of these stereotypes. Do they adequately explain individual lives and behavior? Meanwhile, my Filipina companions chased down indifferent Canadian pedestrians to sign petitions to free Sarah Balabagan, another OCW interned for murder – this time in Saudi Arabia. In the spirit of Spivak's dictum that we must persist in critiquing that which we cannot not want, I started to think the unthinkable. What to do with the Contemplacion case if she could not be proven innocent? If Flor is guilty, should we all pack up our candles and go away?

I left this gathering with an uneasy feeling. It seemed to me that Contemplacion's innocence in the murder for which she was executed was a necessary condition to legitimate protest against her own murder by the state. Her innocence needed to be reasserted against the anxiety of not having the all the "true" details, assuring the protesters of her value as an allegorical figure within their own struggles for Filipina migrants' rights. Hence, speculations founded on gender categories and assertions based on 'national character' entered the representations of Flor Contemplacion in Vancouver, echoing similar statements circulating in the Philippine media. In what follows, I show that this speculation on Contemplacion relies on a narrative of female subjectivity - a discourse on the Filipina - that reinforces the exploitation of female migrant workers.³ To me, the interpretations attributing various motives and emotional dispositions to Contemplacion situation echoed Spivak's comments on the gendered subaltern: "she is not allowed to speak: everyone speaks for her, so that she is rewritten constantly as the object of patriarchy or of imperialism."⁴

4.1.1 The subaltern and the politics of silencing

The female subaltern figures a double negation, naming the voice that is not not silent. The subaltern's attempts to represent herself and her intentions are not attended to as intelligible, thus exposing the problematic of coming to voice where resistance cannot speak itself as resistance.⁵ Building on Ranajit Guha's borrowing of "subaltern" from Gramsci to mark the subordination of the resisting peasant classes

³ This narrative results from a complex local/global nexus of colonial relations and resistances which merits intense exploration. My intervention here is only a gesture toward the trajectory such investigations might follow and its limitations, a challenge to further research.

⁴ Young, R. "Spivak: decolonization, deconstruction" in his *White mythologies: writing history and the west* (London: Routledge, 1990; 157-175), p. 164.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 164 - 165.

in Indian history, Spivak redefined the concept of the subaltern to figure the particular problematic of representing women in postcolonial historiography. After deconstructing Guha's *Subaltern Studies* usage as "no more than an allegorical fiction to entitle the project of reading," Spivak then recreates the term as a potent tool for postcolonial feminism.⁶ Developed through a critique of colonial representations of *sati* (widow burning) which deny the native woman a subjectivity, the subaltern's inability to speak is predicated upon an attempt to speak to which no appropriate response is made. The subaltern thus emerges from the point where Hindu patriarchy and British colonial narratives of native culture converge to silence woman's voice. In the analysis of British colonialism in India, for example, female anti-colonial violence is dismissed as impossible. This is the hegemonic moral tale, revealed, in particular, in the constructions of *sati*. Gayatri Spivak's reading of *sati* argues that, in India, the native patriarchy intersected with the British regime to silence women's voices. It was impossible for a woman to resist colonialism because she never acted in the public domain, only the patriarchal domestic realm. Spivak's analysis is supported by the familial and nationalist misreading of Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri's nationalist suicide as yet another case of "illicit love."⁷ Spivak locates the popular reconstruction of this in a "regulative psychobiography" - a discourse that specifies a single subjectivity for a 'woman.' This "regulative psychobiography" of feminine subjectivity derives from local and colonial histories.

In the representations of Contemplacion, I will show another version of this "regulative psychobiography" for 'the Filipina' is at work and nationalistic moral tales produce a silencing of female voices similar to that effected by colonial discourse on women. For, through her death: "Flor had really ceased to be a person in the (Philippine) public mind. She had become a kind of Filipino Everywoman."⁸ I argue that this "everywoman," the Filipina, is embraced out of guilt, even as she is denied through her

⁶ See Spivak, G., "Subaltern studies: deconstructing historiography" in her *In other worlds: essays in cultural politics* (New York: Routledge, 1988, 197-221), p. 204.

⁷ Spivak, G. "Can the subaltern speak?" in Grossberg, L. and Nelson C., eds., *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988; pp. 271-312.)

⁸ "Beyond the rage: lessons from the Contemplacion case" *Asiaweek*, April 7, 1995, 17-18, 17.

refiguring into a more sympathetic protagonist, one unmarked by the very class and ethnic relations that fuel the labor export process.

4.1.2 The Filipina identity

In colonial discourses on gender, if women are not meek and mild, their violence is further proof of the savagery of the people, the backwardness of the culture or is dismissed as 'unnatural' or impossible.⁹ To think about the impossibility of Filipinas as potentially violent actors requires a return to the origins of this national(ist) femininity. The term "Filipina" is itself Spanish in origin but now signifies the national femininity of a post-colonial Asian nation.¹⁰ How did this come about and what might it mean for the limitations that inhere in the label? Although a complete genealogy is the topic of a separate research project, I can suggest here ways in which gender identities in pre-colonial Philippine societies may have been transformed by the various colonialisms instituted through the archipelago.

Imperial power constructed separate subjectivities for men and women. Neither the introduction of commodity production or religious conversion are sufficient explanations for the subordination of women in the colonization of previously gender egalitarian societies such as those of the peoples of the northern Philippines. This transformation as a renegotiation of gender "requires not only a change in the material conditions of production and reproduction of social, economic and cultural life but also a change in what Foucault has called the "power/knowledge nexus." This is an intensive system of disciplined bodies and normalizing gazes possible only under a sustained colonial regime.¹¹ In the Philippines, as in other colonized spaces, colonial regimes were concentrated in particular nodes and along specific pathways. Experiences of colonial power were uneven across the archipelago, creating a series of local centers and peripheries. Thus, experiences ranged from intense and long-term systems such as convents, schools and haciendas with their churches, to sporadic contacts with administrators, tax collectors and

⁹ Anderson, K. "As gentle as little lambs: images of Huron and Montagnais-Naskapi women in the writings of the 17th century Jesuits," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 25(4), 1988: 560-76.

¹⁰ The genealogy of the Filipina identity will be the topic of a future research project.

itinerant missionaries.¹² The hegemonic character of the influence of the Spanish colonial regime the extent of its dominance in more remote and peripheral parts of Philippine society is therefore questionable.

With this uneven terrain, struggles to define local traditions of gender are part of a broader process of redefinitions of indigenous ethnicities and nationalism within the post-colonial state. The retrieval of 'tradition' enabled by histories of gender under colonialism functions to undermine or legitimate women's current and future roles. To retrieve such histories poses the problem of gender in the colonial archive where fabrications and exclusions in the writing and the naming of tradition are many. The colonial history of gender is largely undocumented, particularly places and groups not seen as central within contemporary narratives of nation and nationalism. Filipina academics such as Delia Aguilar and Elizabeth Eviota have begun to explore the impact of colonialism on gender relations in the Philippines.¹³ Additional work on regional difference, teasing apart generalizations about the entire archipelago into local understandings, is required to reveal the geographies of colonial restructurings of gender.

Within this emerging regional literature, Cristina Blanc-Szanton discusses the ideology of femininity imposed on the people of a particular Philippine region by the patriarchal Spanish regime.¹⁴ She locates her analysis in the colonial sugar *haciendas* of the Visayas, contrasting the behavior of the convent-educated native women with the culture of their colonizers. Blanc-Szanton suggests that the version of

¹¹ Anderson, K., *op. cit.*, 574.

¹² Convents, schools and haciendas were the colonial versions of the "complete and austere" institutions Michael Foucault describes for modern Europe. For specific Philippine examples, contrast the role of the school and the hacienda in Vincente Rafael's *Contracting colonialism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988) with W.H. Scott's *The discovery of the Igorots* (Manila: New Day, 1974).

¹³ Aguilar, D. "Gender, nation and colonialism: lessons from the Philippines" in Visvanathan, N., Duggan, L. Nisonoff, L., and B. Wyss, eds. *Women, gender and development* (Halifax: Fernwood, 1998; pp. 241 - 258) and Eviota, E. *The political economy of gender* (London: Zed Books, 1992).

¹⁴ Blanc-Szanton, C. "Collision of cultures: historical reformulations of gender in the lowland Visayas, Philippines" in Atkinson, J. and Errington, S., eds. *Power and difference: gender in Island Southeast Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990, 345 - 383).

femininity developed here can be extended to the area surrounding Manila. In the femininity that emerged from this colonial nexus, physical weakness suits a woman to lighter tasks such as housework and urban service or clerical occupations, rather than rural work, if, indeed, she must work to support her family. This nexus thus reinscribed a much older European construct of female domesticity into the colony. Accommodating oneself to this femininity is attractive not least because its accoutrements - pale skin, formal education and conspicuous consumption - are themselves Filipina cultural capital and have been since the Spanish era. Not until the rise of nineteenth century Philippine nationalism were colonized women actually named as "Filipina."

Under the Spanish, a *filipina* was a Spaniard born in the Philippine islands, rather than peninsular Spain. Perhaps the epitome of this Filipina is found in Maria Clara in Jose Rizal's novel, *Noli me tangere*. When 'el indio bravo' wrote, he used the imperial Spanish and his use of *filipina* was opposed to *peninsulara* in the nineteenth century sense.¹⁵ Not until after Rizal's execution in 1898 did the term come to refer to daughters of the nation, regardless of their ethnic antecedents. Moreover, it is unlikely Rizal intended his Maria Clara as a model for the women of the nation he envisioned; he wrote her as a character in a stinging social satire, not a documentary drama. Images of native savagery and backwardness are precisely what Rizal's writing is intended to satirize. Rizal shows that the oppression of the *indios* is unjust because they do meet the requirements for civilized behavior and have the abilities that ought to command respect from their imperial masters. Hence, they deserve their freedom.

In this context, Rizal was mobilizing categories largely over-determined by Spanish ideology. Female violence thus fell outside the strategic forms of local resistance. The exercise of patriarchal imperial power made female violence, even in resistance to that power, over into evidence of native degeneracy. I argue that *indios* did not dare to speak of women who kill because the tales would have been used to feed

¹⁵ See Anderson, B. "Hard to imagine: a puzzle in the history of Philippine nationalism" in R. Pertierra and E. Ugarte, eds. *Cultures and Texts: representations of Philippine Society* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1994), p.94-95.

imperialist representations of *indio* society as degenerate.¹⁶ I identify this same discomfort with the implications of female violence in contemporary representations of Filipinas, following the discourse on gender from the Spanish era, through the American regime and into its deployment in (post)colonial labor migration.

The American administration reinforced many of the ideologies of gender that were instituted under the Spanish as 'native tradition,' including pre-marital chastity and spousal control over women's movements and business. This was offset against American-style modernization, which brought 'timid, religious' women out of stifling and restrictive atmosphere of the colonial era and remade them as 'modern home-makers' by introducing American ideal of education, personal freedom and domestic life.¹⁷ Not only was the image of the Filipina a commodity fetish, as shown as shown by the postcards in the previous chapter, the appearance, demeanor and activities of women were mapped more generally on to levels of 'civilization' and 'development.'

Connected to official ideologies of development and progress, cultural representations of gender and ethnic identities, like the postcards, are embedded in histories of political, economic and labor relations. Following post-war decolonization, the disciplinary power of the Philippine State extended towards the colonial periphery through programs of "development." Funded by international borrowing and development aid, government initiatives aimed to rationalize subsistence agricultural production and

¹⁶ See the picture-postcard of the 'maid' with the 'headbasket' for an example of this discursive strategy at work in the Philippines. Further elaboration can be found in Anderson, K. "As gentle as little lambs: images of Huron and Montagnais-Naskapi women in the writings of the 17th century Jesuits," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 25(4), 1988: 560-76.

¹⁷ The Spanish introduced laws on marriage in 1870 that forbade women to live separately from their husbands and denied them the right to engage in business in without spousal approval. To be the target of legislation, women clearly must have been doing so. These restrictions were maintained by the American administrators. For further details on the impacts of Spanish gender ideologies and their reworking by the American regime, see Blanc-Szanton, C. "Collision of cultures: historical reformulations of gender in the lowland Visayas, Philippines" in Atkinson, J. and S. Errington, eds. *Power and difference: gender in Island Southeast Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990, 345-383.)

create a streamlined commercial sector.¹⁸ In doing so, it was thought that the proletarian labor force needed for nascent industry would be released. Within this modernization process, women's labor was first recognized as reproductive - part of the domestic, rather than the productive sphere. Through the uneven progress of development, female labor was later rendered "productive" through its displacement as cheap labor in a globalizing economy.

This transformation of female labor involves concomitant reformulations of what it is to be a "woman" and the value of feminine skills and knowledge. Many development initiatives were intended to free up more of a woman's time for being a "proper" wife and mother. Yet, women's earnings were not easily forgone by the household economy. Women displaced from agriculture by commercial rationalization looked for employment elsewhere. Some entered the informal sector, others service and entertainment industries. Among the women searching for secure waged work are many working class and lower-middle class women who have gone abroad to work.

Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs) contribute an approximate total of six billion dollars (US) per year to the Philippine economy with only about one half of this coming through official channels (see Figure 4-1). The total value of all Philippine exports is approximately twenty billion dollars (US) each year, so OCWs are among the country's most valuable products. In comparison, the country's top export commodity, semiconductors, brought in about seven billion dollars in foreign exchange in 1995 - 1996 while the manufacture of clothing and accessories, in second place, contributed about three billion dollars. In 1995, the country's debt payments totaled almost five billion dollars (US), with almost forty percent of that being paid in interest.¹⁹ It has thus been argued that OCW remittances that keep Philippine economy going. Officially, approximately 750,000 OCWs were deployed in 1994, a peak year since labor export began in earnest in the mid-1980s (see Figure 4-2.)

¹⁸ For an overview of post-war agricultural development in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, see Hart, G., Turton, A., and White, B., eds., *Agrarian transformations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.)

¹⁹ Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, published in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 25 October, 1996.

Figure 4-1 Official remittances of OCWs, 1985 – 1996 in \$US

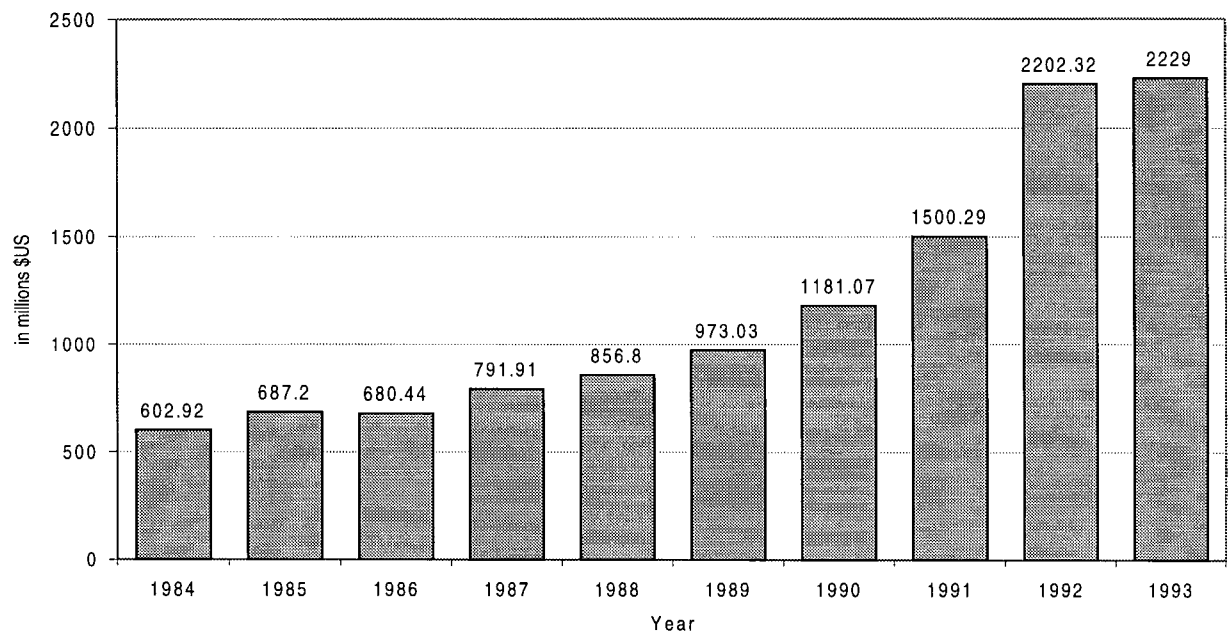
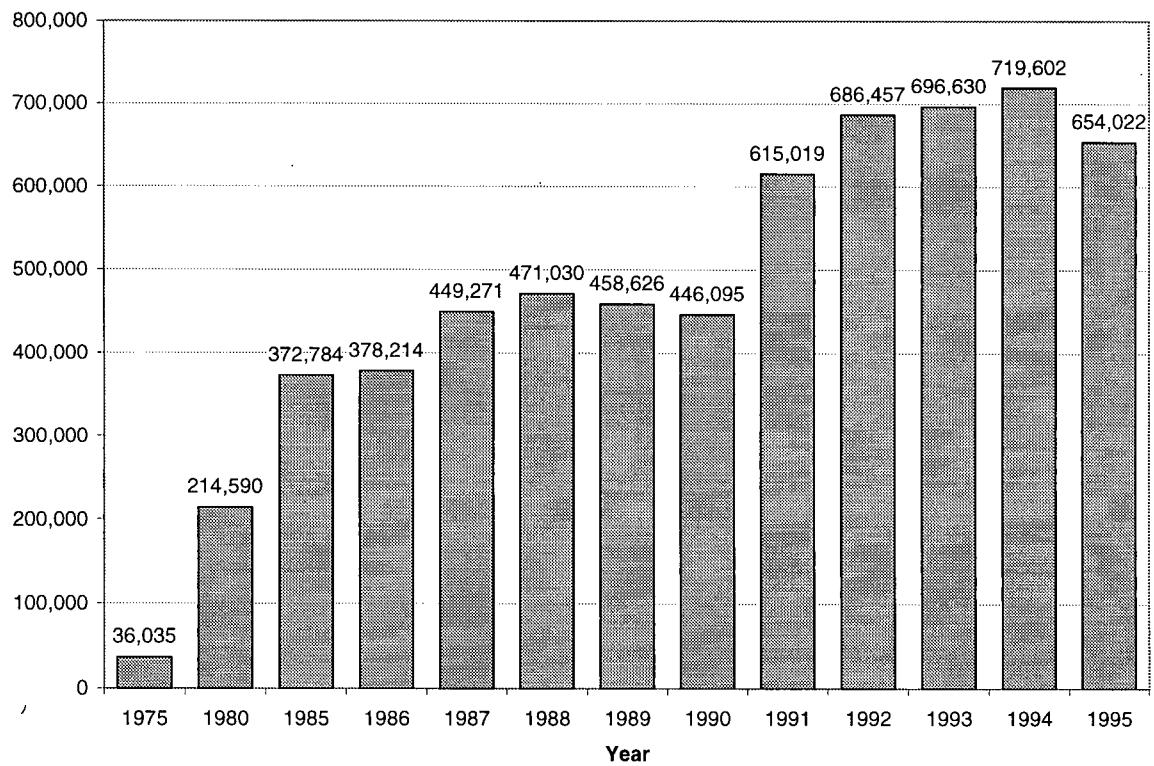


Figure 4-2 Deployment of OCWs, 1975 - 1995



When undocumented workers and long-time overseas stays are counted, OCWs may comprise up to four and a half million people from a total population of sixty-nine million. This represents about one in fourteen people and fifty-five percent of these workers are female.²⁰

Most female OCWs work in domestic service or entertainment in receiving nations such as Japan, Canada, Italy, Singapore, Hong Kong and the countries of the Arabian Gulf. The money remitted by overseas workers is crucial to the country's balance of payments and, under IMF guidance, the Philippines has committed to increasing labor exports. Thus, the relations between female migration, national debt and labor demand abroad can be characterized as (post)colonial.

Migration to perform domestic work and modifications of gendered agricultural practices both operate under the justificatory strategy of woman's reproductive responsibility to her family. In the construction of the Filipina as housewife, women's work expresses feminine virtue, acknowledging appropriate motherly and wifely responsibility.²¹ Feminine agricultural labor is not understood to represent the strength, intelligence and knowledge of a particular individual but domestic duty. Likewise, work abroad is also understood through domestic themes. Being household-centered is a desirable feminine trait and the motive that drives women abroad, sacrificing themselves in separation for the material benefit of their families.

²⁰ As reported from Philippine Government sources in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "A new kind of hero", March 30, 1995, 42-5. Isabel Vincent, "Canada beckons cream of nannies", *The Globe and Mail*, January 20, 1996, A5, cites figures from *Kilusing Miyo Uno* (1994), stating 4% of the country's total population is engaged in contract work overseas and, of those workers, 70% are female domestic workers.

²¹ Israel-Sobritchea, C. "The ideology of female domesticity" *Review of Women's Studies* 1(1): 1990, 26-41.

When women's bodies abroad are more valuable than their skills at home, this femininity becomes further normalized through its materialization in the Filipina-as-maid, a generalized unskilled body.²² Sending the surplus unskilled woman abroad naturalizes the colonialist assumption that the body of the female native can be essentialized and is interchangeable. This renegotiation of gender and the export of female labor rely on highly stratified class and ethnic relations within the Philippines. Research on migrant labor suggests that part of the lure of overseas work is that it presents a personal and familial ticket out of the skin-browning sun and into contacts with global "culture," particularly as consumed by and represented through middle-class Manila society.²³ Thus, to become Filipina one leaves the Philippines. In staying home, virtue can be found in embodying ideals of self-sacrificing maternal care and *mestiza* beauty.

Within the processes of political and economic change that mark decolonization and globalization, moral tales about women are mobilized as primary strategies of nationalist resistance. In these struggles, manipulations of discourses on "traditional" and "modern" or "foreign" femininities have played an important but ambivalent role in shaping female participation in the labor force within the nation and abroad. Since women in the pre-colonial Philippines were active in commerce as traders in their own right, contemporary female work outside the home could be named as 'traditional.' However, given the strong focus on female domesticity that emerged under the Spanish and American regimes, female formal sector labor could equally be named as 'modern.' Particularly when it comes to foreign-owned export-processing factories that demand same-sex, age-segregated, single female workers, the vision of the Filipina-as-factory-laborer could be named as 'foreign.' These categories themselves are largely fictional and remain open to revision as they continue to be deployed as strategies within struggles to define Filipina femininity.

²² Tadiar, N. "Sexual economies in the Asia-Pacific community" in Dirlik, A., ed., *What's in a rim?: critical perspectives on the Pacific Region idea* (Boulder: Westview, 1993, 183-210), p.197.

²³ Pertierra, R. "Lured abroad: the case of Ilocano overseas workers," *Sojourn* 9(1), 1994: 54-80, 56.

In the latest round of economic restructuring, the Filipina, formerly constructed as *maybahay*, *lang* (plain housewife) has been challenged by identification as Export Processing Zone factory laborer, *japayuki* (overseas entertainer), and *DH* (migrant domestic worker.) This refiguring of the Filipina happens through the perceptions of foreign capital and receiving nations. There is, I will show, a public perception that the Filipina is debased and the nation embarrassed by these new forms of labor. This cultural encoding of femininity is a nationalist ethnic fetish and the Filipina, constructed largely through colonialist structurings of female subjectivity, both a fantasy figure and an export commodity. I argue that such representations of women and femininity should not be seen as coterminous with material realities and daily practices, or we grant to colonialism in its several forms of domination far more power than it has ever achieved.

4.2 Representations of the Contemplacion case

Flor
 The flood of dawn
 quenched all hopes
 of seeing you basking
 once more under our
 native sun.
 The lion, that is Singapore,
 devoured you – Dreams and
 all
 and picked your bones clean
 of hopes and desires.
 Forgive us, sweet sister.
 We were lulled to sleep
 by the hangman's lullaby.²⁴

Instead of trying to establish facts, this section discusses selected representations. It is impossible to reconstruct the Contemplacion story in any hope of producing "truth."²⁵ Moreover, I argue that the desire to produce a "truth" of the Filipina through Contemplacion's story can oppress migrant women.

²⁴ Keith, G.B., "Flor" *Philippine Panorama*, 24 March, 1996, 15.

²⁵ That is not my aim here. The contradictory and speculative nature of media coverage in the case requires that I play with and refuse the desire to know "truth."

4.2.1 Flor Contemplacion, Filipina martyr

Using readings selected from the Philippine and Singaporean media, this section explores the representations of migrant worker, martyr and putative murderess, Flor Contemplacion. I consider how Contemplacion symbolizes the Filipina, framed by the conditions of contemporary labor migration and rooted in experiences of colonialism. I demonstrate that the urge to make this case into a moral tale about Filipina resistance erases Contemplacion's subjectivity. Current representations of the Filipina thus display a disturbing continuity with the dominant, colonial version of the historical past.

Filipina domestic worker Flor Contemplacion was hanged for double murder in Singapore in March of 1995. Her execution led to widespread public protest in the Philippines and demonstrations by overseas Filipinos. In death, Contemplacion took on the suppressed guilt of the Filipino people over the export of unskilled female labor:

When husbands and wives are separated by vast oceans, the children suffer, as do the bonds of marriage. As does society. We feel guilty that this is happening . . . We feel even guiltier when we realize that for our economy to keep afloat, our women have to lead bestial lives abroad. This kind of pressure cooker was building up for years.²⁶

This public outrage in the Philippines over Contemplacion's conviction and execution highlighted the issues of Filipina migrant workers. Expressions of outrage lead to a ban on the deployment of domestic workers to Singapore and the suggestion that such bans be extended to other receiving nations with reputations for abusing migrant workers. This labor export ban and the broader media attention to the conditions for migrant workers threatened to diminish the flow of remittances into the Philippine economy.

The Philippine public response to Contemplacion's execution was informed by the media coverage of the case.²⁷ Most Filipinos believed Contemplacion must be innocent and the media coverage reflected this

²⁶ Teodoro Benigno, quoted by Warren Fernandez, *The Straits Times Weekly Edition*, April 22, 1995, 14.

²⁷ Here, I examine representations of Contemplacion in the Manila English-language dailies and the international newsmagazines *Asiaweek* and *Far Eastern Economic Review*, papers and magazines that were available to me in Baguio City during the period just following Contemplacion's execution. This is a small cross-section of the media and its intended readers are located in the English-speaking Philippine middle-class and elites.

sentiment, reporting additional 'details' on the case while criticizing the justice system in Singapore. The Singapore media reported on the Philippine coverage as relations between the two nations hit a historical nadir.²⁸ Based on interpretation of these media reports, my comments here are an intervention in the politics of representation.

4.2.2 *Dead women do not tell tales*

Contemplacion was hanged for the murder of her friend and fellow Filipina domestic, Delia Maga, and Maga's ward, Nicholas Huang, aged four. This seems a simple statement, yet I am already negotiating contradictory media details and I must begin this story by admitting I cannot tell with certainty the victim's names.²⁹

According to the Singaporean authorities who arrested Contemplacion, the victims were discovered in the Huang family flat. Maga had been strangled and Huang drowned. The police found Contemplacion through an entry in Maga's diary. Contemplacion had apparently been to visit Maga on the morning of the murders. She came by the Huang's flat in order to give Maga a box to take with her on her coming trip to the Philippines. The box contained gifts for the Contemplacion family. The police apparently found some of Maga's possessions in Contemplacion's flat and, when taken for questioning, extracted a confession from her.

Public reaction among Filipinos at home and abroad was structured around denial and disbelief. Her supposed innocence originates from her position as wife and mother:

²⁸ For commentary on this exchange, see Asad Latif, "The world we live in: contemplating Contemplacion" *Singapore Business* 19(7), 1995, 96 as well as editorials and articles in *The Straits Times Weekly Edition*, March - July, 1995. For the Singaporean version of the Contemplacion story, I read *The Straits Times Weekly Edition*.

²⁹ *The Straits Times* consistently refers to Della Maga, while the Philippine papers and *Asiaweek* give her name as Delia. Likewise, Nicholas Huang is the Singaporean spelling for the four-year old victim. The Philippine papers give his surname as Wong and sometimes report his age as six years. I use the Philippine version for Maga and the Singaporean for Huang.

Many Filipinos just cannot believe Contemplacion could have done this. They say, she is a mother, she left home to provide for her children, she and the other maid are friends. How can she kill?³⁰

Disbelief led to the construction of moral tales based on speculation about Contemplacion as a mother and wife - her feelings, her background and her motivations. How could "a hardworking, God-fearing, family-oriented person" have any motive to commit this crime - murder a fellow Filipina and a child?³¹

Several newspapers in the Philippines published claims that Contemplacion had been stripped and tortured into confessing during her police interrogation. Others suggested she had been sexually assaulted.

Speculation in the Philippine press suggested that, if Contemplacion were guilty, she had "run amok" because of the stress of her husband's infidelity or the long separation from her children. More commonly, it was asserted that she was simply an innocent framed by a powerful foreigner. The media had to work from hearsay and conjecture. Expert opinions proliferated and her past was reconstructed for a public eager to believe her innocent:

If she ever cooks anything like a chicken, she has to ask her neighbor to kill the chicken. So how could she even kill a person? She is not a violent person. It is not in her nature.³²

At the centre of the case was a silence around which speculation swirled. Contemplacion did not make any public statement between her conviction and execution.

The justice system in Singapore claims that, while Contemplacion gave four police statements admitting the crime, she was then silent until her High Court trial. In this last trial, she entered evidence as to diminished mental state: "I was not myself during that time."³³ Meanwhile, the Singaporean press

³⁰ Nobleza Ascuncion-Lande, quoted in Warren Fernandez, "Making sense of Filipino's fury over the Contemplacion affair" *The Straits Times Weekly Edition*, April 22, 1995, 14.

³¹ Mrs. Yeyan Webb, Angono, Rizal, Philippines, letter in Almanac, *Asiaweek*, May 5 1995, 12.

³² Prof. Jerome Bailen, quoted by Leticia Perez, "Della Maga's murderer 'was left-handed'" *The Straits Times Weekly Edition*, April 29, 1995, 5.

³³ *Singapore Law Reports* quoted in "Beyond the rage," *Asiaweek*, April 7 1995, 18.

emphasized details that constructed Contemplacion as deviant, criminal and mentally unstable: "She was put in the punishment cell four times: twice for fighting with fellow inmates, once for tattooing herself and once for attempting suicide"³⁴ Singaporeans were bewildered when the coffin of this "criminal" was met at the airport by the Philippine First Lady, outraged when Contemplacion was hailed as a "heroine" by Philippine President Ramos.

According Flor martyr status suggests many people in the Philippines believed she had somehow been duped or tortured into her confession by the Singapore authorities. She was portrayed as a tragic figure and romanticized in the press as: "a mother who, in her last hours, could not hug her own children to say goodbye; a wife who came home in a box all dressed in white, and then was photographed being kissed like a sleeping bride by a philandering husband who had last seen her six years ago."³⁵

Public outrage was directed at the Philippine government for failing to provide Contemplacion with adequate protection and counsel. In this version of the story, she thus necessarily died at some level resisting the state and the (post)colonial economic relations that brought her to Singapore. Her resistance to torture and manipulation by Singapore and her own government was not given voice. Even so, this voiceless resistance was nonetheless assumed by the press and vocal groups within the Philippine public. Contemplacion, in the popular narrative version, if not in life, symbolized the devoted wife and mother forced by state mismanagement and exploitative labor policy into servitude in an even more insecure and patriarchal realm abroad. In Filipino narratives of Contemplacion's framing by Singaporean authorities, her "utter vulnerability" as a Filipina results "because she carries a passport originating from a country whose women have become synonymous with the lowly maid or the cheap and easy whore."³⁶

³⁴ "Ministry rebuts new charges about maid," *The Straits Times Weekly Edition*, March 25, 1995, 7.

³⁵ Magay, M. "Flor Contemplacion: requiem for a people" *Sunday Inquirer Magazine*, May 28, 1995, 3-5, and 20, 20.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

In response to the public outcry, the media attempted to reconstruct a version of Contemplacion that would fit into the traditional Filipina mold. The public thus wanted details that would fit into this narrative of the Filipina as housewife; information that made a particular kind of sense. This intense public interest in the details and desire for clarification and punishment for those responsible led to two forms of response. In the realm of popular culture, two movies proclaiming Contemplacion's innocence were quickly put into production. At the same time, in an exercise that also had a feeling of "public theatre," the Philippine government constituted a seven-member commission to investigate the case.

4.2.3 Popular cultures - two movies

This popular interpretation of innocence is retold in Contemplacion's cinematic portrayal. Both films discussed here show her as framed by the Singapore government and abandoned by a ruthless and uncaring Filipino bureaucracy. *The Flor Contemplacion Story*, directed by Joel Lamanagan, is a documentary-drama that stars popular actress Nora Aunor and features Contemplacion's twin sons as themselves. The other film, director Tikoy Aguiluz's *Bagong Bayani: OCW*, features Helen Gamboa in the lead. Both films attempt to construct authenticity by reference to other forms of resistance against the state. However, they are grounded within nationalist narratives, asserting that such crimes are not within "the Filipina character." Aguiluz derives authenticity for his film through the "guerrilla activity" of filming actual sites of events in Singapore, ignoring the usual permits, diplomatic relations and government channels of approval. Both films publicized their consultation of Amnesty International reports that "confirmed" that victims of torture behaved in ways similar to what sympathetic witnesses from Changi Prison told reporters about Flor's actions.³⁷ Deriving representational authority through reference to international institutional critiques of past human rights violations in both Singapore and the Philippines, these films accuse both states of complicity in woman's export, exploitation and eventual death.

³⁷ Medina, F. "Chronicles of a death foretold," *Today*, May 29, 1995, C21.

Seen only as a trace, Flor Contemplacion is retrieved as the essential subject of torture and the machinations of abusive state power. Addressing a Philippine audience infuriated both by perceived racism in Singapore and government exploitation and inaction at home, these representations leave the gendering of the Philippine government response unchallenged.

4.2.4 State responses - reports from the Gancayo Commission

The intensity of Philippine media interest in the Contemplacion case was also a function of its timing.

The execution of a Philippine national by a foreign jurisdiction - and over the protests of Philippine President Ramos himself - threatened the government in the run up to an election. Unfolding in an atmosphere of election hysteria, the case was not without its moments of high irony: Maga strangled, Contemplacion hanged and President Ramos is quoted as saying: "It's my neck that's on the line!"³⁸

Responding to the public desire for "truth" as to the identity of Maga's murderer, the government's Gancayo Commission reopened the forensic investigation of the remains of the Filipina victim, Delia Maga.³⁹ In testimony before the Commission, experts from the Philippine National Bureau of investigation maintained that Maga had been severely beaten before she was strangled. The media reported that, in their expert opinion, such injuries could only have been inflicted by a man.⁴⁰ "Not a woman" - full stop. Thus, the official vindication of Filipino protestations of Contemplacion's innocence hangs on this single signifier. Singapore contested the results of the Gancayo commission, particularly the forensic findings. Rebuttals of the findings of Filipino experts in *The Straits Times Weekly Edition* portray Filipino investigators as incompetent. The Commission process is presented as driven by nationalist political interests: "When certain statements were made, they were applauded by the gallery,

³⁸ "The fallout from Flor," *Asiaweek*, April 7, 1995, 30.

³⁹ The Gancayo Commission also made wide-ranging recommendations for improving the conditions of Filipina migrants. Discussion of these findings is beyond the scope of this chapter.

⁴⁰ "Savage blows," *Asiaweek*, April 14, 1995, 33.

others were booed and shouted down. It was a kind of show."⁴¹ The theatrical nature of the testimony at the Gancayo Commission made this 'Filipino academic' who attended the hearings doubt the veracity of the Commission's proceedings. The intensity of the public furor expressed in the hearings was apparently the reason for his/her anonymity when quoted in *The Straits Times Weekly*. That such dissenting opinions were not found in the Philippine media I monitored does not mean they were not held, but simply not expressed publicly.

Eventually, "neutral" American pathologists were called in to settle the dispute between Singapore and Manila forensics experts. In the end, in reports on the back pages of Philippine papers and trumpeted in the *Straits Times Weekly Edition*, the "neutral" panel found that Maga's remains could not be made to "speak" the identity of her killer. The gender of her assailant could not be established, only that she had been strangled.

4.3 Narrativizing the Filipina: discourse on feminine subjectivity

Who is this "woman" that the Philippine public wanted Flor to be? The films representing Flor's story show ethnic and class dimensions within the public anguish. The elites resent the growing image of the Filipina-as-maid because they perceive that the Filipina's (and thus the Philippines') international reputation is being shaped by their social and cultural inferiors. Differences in social status are often expressed in such quasi-racial terms as skin color and facial features, deriving their power directly from the colonial encounter.⁴² This is exemplified in media commentary highlighting the slippage between Helen Gamboa, a mestiza actress married to a senator, who represents Flor-the-martyr for the public and the woman whose life is narrativized: "She with the porcelain complexion and delicate features playing a brown-skinned, flat-nosed salt of the earth?!"⁴³ "Woman" denotes a very particular subject position here, one for which the real-life Contemplacion is inadequate. This gendering of "woman" is

⁴¹ An anonymous Filipino academic, quoted by Warren Fernandez, *op. cit.*

⁴² Pertierra, R., "Lured abroad: the case of Ilocano overseas workers," *Sojourn* 9(1), 1994: 54-80, 57.

⁴³ Ramos, G. "The other Flor Contemplacion", *Today*, May 31, 1995, C22.

manipulated not only by the State but also by other women who need to protect their own interests along distinctive class and ethnic lines.

Dead women do not tell tales, tales are told about them. Thus, Contemplacion disappears behind her state/cinematic representations. The media response to Contemplacion reinforces the discourse on femininity that enables the export of labor in the first place. Once created, exported and re-imported, this image of "woman" thus becomes caught up in the type of middle class fantasies of the mestiza Filipina enacted in the representations of Contemplacion. In the media proliferation of 'details', representations of Contemplacion referred to other familiar stories about Filipina women. As one Filipino commented on the case: "press people just write what they think would sell in the market, so much so that the news can turn out to be confusing."⁴⁴

The urge to make this case into a moral tale about the Filipina resisting (post)colonial economic relations erases Contemplacion's subjectivity. By writing over Contemplacion with the Filipina, the media close a circle of representation.⁴⁵ In attributing resistance to Contemplacion, the public response paradoxically supports the same problematic construction of femininity deployed by colonial discourses on gender, displacing its rage against her execution into a masculinist national guilt.

The press in Singapore, too, understood the Contemplacion case as a nationalist issue. In an analysis of the diplomatic chill between Manila and Singapore, one commentator dismissed the possibility of acceding to Ramos' request for a stay of execution in the following terms: "Would Contemplacion have still admitted her guilt if she knew her countrymen wanted her to be innocent?"⁴⁶ In this construction of Contemplacion, she becomes the puppet of Philippine nationalist sentiments. It is expected that she would speak whatever her "countrymen" desired her to say. In this refiguring of Contemplacion, we see a

⁴⁴ Lacson, M., (Filipino resident in Singapore), letter published in *The Straits Times Weekly Edition*, April 29, 1995, 23.

⁴⁵ Rafael, V., "'Your grief is our gossip': overseas Filipinos and other spectral presences." *Public Culture* 9, 1997: 267 – 291.

fundamental problem of identities - of nationalisms and femininities in which female migrant laborers become caught. Neither the nationalism nor the Filipina femininity expressed around Contemplacion will necessarily improve the lot of Philippine women. By juxtaposing this contemporary case with the following historical case from Ifugao, I demonstrate that the limits of the culturally intelligible are broader than this dominant discourse on femininity suggests.

4.4 Histories of power/knowledge in the local

Working in Ifugao in 1996, I asked people for their opinions on Contemplacion. One older man responded to my inquiries, having followed the case over the radio, by asserting, evenly, that she could have done it, killed her friend. It was, for him, unknowable what her motives might be or how she might have felt toward her friend. Instead, he focused on the practicalities: most women, in his opinion, could beat and strangle someone of a similar size. This same respondent had defined progress as 'bras and panties for women.' His comments seemed wonderfully ironic and replete with resistance. Since lingerie as a marker of civilization did not appear to specify a particular feminine subjectivity, progress was in the performance and 'wearing' of identity, and did not mean that all women suddenly had become knowable, predictable and manageable laborers. Here, in his view of the world, radical assertions of rights, of anger, of expressions not contained within a psychobiographical femininity remain possible. Is this 'tradition'? In this section I re-read colonial history as the renegotiations of gendering itself, arguing that 'tradition,' when it comes to gender, can only be retrieved in the sense of political interventions made in contemporary situations.

4.4.1 Retrieving resistance

Evidence that conflicts between gender ideologies have been critical in local resistances to colonial regimes is difficult to retrieve from the historical record. Much of the renegotiation of gender takes place tacitly, between individual actors, rather than between groups in the recorded public realm. Acts of resistance are frequently occluded by the benefits that accrue to individuals adopting a strategy of

⁴⁶ Tan, S. "Are Singaporeans really arrogant?" *The Straits Times Weekly Edition*, April 29, 1995, 11.

accommodation towards the norms of the colonizers. In the following section, I explore a conflict between two discourses of gender that could be named as "colonial" and "native" which exists in both text and oral history. My argument works through a murder case dating to the Spanish era in Kiangnan, Ifugao province.

4.4.2 The murderess of Kiangnan

I begin with a brief reference to this murder found in an article on the history of the Philippine Province of Ifugao, written by a Philippine historian, Josephine Lim.⁴⁷ According to the Spanish archival records, a Dominican Father, José Lorenzo, was killed while attempting to collect a debt of several pesos from an Ifugao man in 1866. The identity of the murderer is contested. Lim reports the Ifugao version as follows: the wife of the debtor, weaving at her backstrap loom under her granary, saw the Spaniard enter the granary, and when he began removing seed rice stored for the next planting, attempted to stop him. That failing, she hit him across the neck with the "sword" from her loom, thus killing him. However, the correspondence of the Spanish friars who investigated the case details "*que el Padre Lorenzo habia sido muerto por los igorotes de Tuplac*"⁴⁸ No mention is made, in the Spanish letters, of the woman and the seeds. The archival record thus ignores the story of the woman and the seed rice that circulates in Ifugao.

In her reinvestigation of the case, Lim maintains that this story is a fiction created by the Ifugaos to disguise the shameful facts: five or six men killed the priest with spears.⁴⁹ Lim reports that "(t)he natives of Tuplac imputed the murder to Bumidang's wife, and they thought their story would be more credible if they explained why her anger was aroused which is exactly what they did by inserting the

⁴⁷ Lim, J. "Spanish contacts with the Ifugaos 1736-1898", *Philippiniana Sacra*, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, 1978, 05-08 Vol. XIII, No. 38, pp. 193-249.

⁴⁸ The Spanish translates as "that Father Lorenzo was killed by the Igorots [masculine, plural] of Tuplac," from a letter from Fr. Bonifacio Corujedo to Fr. Provincial, retrieved from the Dominican archives courtesy of Fr. Wilfred Vermuelen.

⁴⁹ The source of this information is the two small boys who accompanied Father Lorenzo and whose testimony was taken by the Spanish investigator and recorded in *Relaciones Historicas Dominicas*, III, pp. 256-257, from typescript courtesy of Father Wilfred Vermuelen.

circumstance of the seeds.”⁵⁰ Though she interviewed Ifugao people who told her the Tuplac side of the story, Lim seems unable to accept that a “woman” could perform such an act and sides with the Spanish analysis: the debtor’s “accomplices” assassinated the priest. This is notwithstanding the fact that the only Spanish witness died in the course of the event. The story of the five or six men with spears was retrieved by the Spanish from the two teenaged Christian converts (*dos muchachos... bien catechizados*) who had accompanied Father Lorenzo from Kiangon to Tuplac and were unable(?) to defend him.⁵¹

Lim’s retelling leaves undisturbed the interpretation that “the Ifugaos,” meaning the non-Christian Tuplac people, were lying about the gender of the attacker. Her choice of terms suggests that they are covering their male cowardice and shame in murdering a priest by introducing the circumstances of the woman and the seeds. For the Spanish and for Lim, it seems that certain conclusions can be reached through the known attributes of “woman.” The ‘Ifugao’ version, now repeated for a century with some consistency, can thus be disregarded. While “the Ifugaos” may be subaltern in the historical text, individual interpretation is not silenced by its representation as a well-choreographed collective lie; the Spanish version of the tale remains openly contested in Ifugao Province.

4.4.3 Contemporary interpretations

In an interview with an older man, my respondent opposed the lowland and Spanish construction of these events, articulating a more egalitarian conception of gender rather than any special knowledge or proximity to the site of the conflict.⁵² The narrative I present in part below corresponds to Lim’s version

⁵⁰ Lim, *op. cit.*, 237.

⁵¹ *Relaciones Historicas Dominiccas*, III, p. 257, from typescript courtesy of Father Wilfred Vermuelen.

⁵² This use of “egalitarian” here is not to suggest that there was complete gender equality in the traditional Ifugao system, rather that the comparative status of women was higher than that under the colonizers and the gendered division of labor was more flexible, tasks being less rigidly regarded as masculine or feminine and gendered work considered as complementary, rather than seen within a hierarchy of relative value.

of the Ifugao account and was expressed to me in the context of Spanish "abuses" and misperceptions of gender in Ifugao farming systems and households.⁵³

Sometimes the Spaniards really stole some rice from the allong (rice granary). Such case is of the woman at Tuplac who killed a Spanish priest when he was removing her seed rice from the allong. She hit him in the neck with the bar from her loom. He thought to take the seed rice because it looked the best of all the bundles in the allong. Her husband was indebted to this priest, that is why he came to her home, to collect rice for his pesos. Her seed rice was not part of her husband's debt - a creditor of the husband could not collect against the wife's inheritance unless she too had agreed to the loan. But the Spanish refused to recognize this practice. Even today, to borrow money or land, both husband and wife should agree and both should be there when you give the money.

This response intrigued me; it surprised me to hear this kind of analysis from an older, male community member, particularly when my respondent finished by speaking to me in the present context. This moment of autoethnography addresses the slippage between Ifugao constructions of individual and collective identity and colonial representations of the inhabitants of the province. Such nativist or nationalist assertions of identity which challenge colonial modes of representation often do so in explicitly gendered terms which essentialize women by specifying a particular female subjectivity. Thus, I must ask if this is not another instance of patriarchal narrativization of the female subaltern. This comment on the continuity and efficacy of ongoing resistances, however, does not figure the Ifugao or the woman as a subject without a history. Instead, it delimits a mutable set of social relations in which they might constitute such identities. He suggests a collective opinion on the part of local people that the Spanish got the story wrong within the limits of local genderings of knowledge and labor.⁵⁴ What is lacking is the expected patriarchal speculation on female subjectivity - how this woman felt or whether she saw herself as engaged in an anti-colonial project when she picked up her loom-sword.

⁵³ Interview with Lakai B, Sitio Gulon, Haliap, Kiangnan, June 7, 1992.

⁵⁴ This story not only sent me back to the literature for further context and verification, it forced me to reflect on the way I had constructed my own position as interlocutor I am very much implicated in negotiating those same limits. They continue to be contested by the iterative colonial encounters, which I present through my person, recall and re-enact through the interview. My respondent addresses me with a reminder that as a Western feminist out of place, I must stop feeling privileged as a woman. I must stop presuming I know what "woman" signifies in all situations and somehow have sufficient evidence to assume the operation of an indigenous patriarchy. I am being addressed specifically. It is not that I, the "American" who will not understand now, but that the Spanish did not understand then.

My respondent's informed speculation on the likely social context of events outlines a subject position without reference to male subjects, the State, or the colonizer. *Pace* Spivak, no Western "we" is thus authorized to assume and then construct the consciousness of the native woman. Any representation I make here is a story of a story. It will not end the local discussion but form another in a series of challenges in the debate.

It is notable that my respondent justified the actions of the murderess by pointing to the seizure of the seed rice set aside for the next planting. Not only was the priest collecting a debt which should not have been recognized against the conjugal property of the harvest itself, he was also taking an inheritance of seed stock. This seed materialized a form of virtue, displaying knowledge in cultivation and skill in selection to the community. Likely given to the woman on marriage by her mother, selected for the specific conditions of her inherited fields, it represented her ability to provision both herself and her household. There is a sense of trajectory in this comment, rather than an attempt to revive a pristine pre-colonial culture that admits continuity in change: "Even now." Things have changed, but not so much that one cannot argue that the same gendered relations of property, division of labor and respect for knowledge should obtain. "Woman" as it appears here is not merely a site of representation but a process of becoming, challenging the patriarchal underpinnings of nationalist femininity.⁵⁵ There is more than one discourse of femininity and the conflict is spatialized, reflecting a resistance to the masculinism of the colonizers which is stronger in some locations, while obscured in others.

In Ifugao, gendered agricultural practices do not operate solely under the justificatory strategy of woman's reproductive responsibility to her family. While a woman's work expresses feminine virtue, it also represents the strength, intelligence and knowledge of a particular individual: a good woman is one

⁵⁵ Early colonialist literature on Ifugao reports a rather unusual understanding of identity. Becoming figures prominently in the problematic of Ifugao: an administrator under the American colonial regime reports with annoyance that the local linguistic play included substituting binabae "womaned" or "was-made-a-woman" for "babae" - "woman" - and making a similar joke with his surname - Barton became Binalton - "became-Barton." See Barton, R. *The halfway sun: life among the head-hunters in the Philippines* (New York: Brewer and Warren, 1930), p. 40. Note that this same usage is found in the contemporary Ifugao folksong that appears at the beginning of Chapter 6.

who knows how to manage her fields. Significantly, much like the inconsistent and disparate attempts to establish a Spanish colonial regime in the province, the Green Revolution has only recently entered the fields of Ifugao. Women have not yet been displaced from rice farming and, thus, retain locally important knowledges. The production of the feminine symbol that features in the Spanish records and Lim's later interpretation thus serves to limit the agency of individual women by precluding the recognition of their production and mastery of local knowledge. This knowledge is precisely the feature my respondent retrieved as justificatory strategy for resistance, for a murder committed by a woman, without making any claims as to her maternal or wifely status or relations to men or the State.

Female farmers in Ifugao are generally seen within the national discourse on Filipina femininity as lacking because they are ethnically marked and lower class women. While women from Ifugao have also joined the ranks of OCWs, this does not mean that they have re-identified completely as Filipinas and no longer have a stake in Ifugao understandings of becoming-woman. Understandings of femininity beyond the Filipina are still possible in Ifugao. This suggests their unmarked and subordinated persistence elsewhere in the nation.

This autoethnographic comment thus functions as effective resistance to colonialist discourses on gender because it lacks closure on the theme of resistance itself. No speculation is offered on the self-understanding or emotional state of the murderess. Was she a good wife, a devoted mother, angry with her irresponsible husband, a reluctant Christian convert, acting in self-defense, expressing anti-Spanish resistance, or feeling fear and despair? Her subject-position is given as such an open frame that several readings of her subjectivity might be possible, but none is offered. Certainly, it is not clear to me that she was acting with a specifically anti-Spanish motive but within the customary legal norms of the place. As this respondent suggests, it is all about knowledge and power, particularly on the ground in Ifugao where ethnic survival involves the rational adjudication of "truth-claims." The manner in which this story outlines a female subject position centered in production and specific knowledge, rather than reproduction and the interchangeable female body, brings into question the efficacy of the rule over and

regulation of the periphery which is, ethnicities aside, also the Philippines.

4.4.4 Domonyag of Tuplac

Searching further for someone who actually knew the details, I discovered that the “Ifugao” identity was, not surprisingly, fractured. Respondents in Kiangnan recapitulated the story from the Spanish records: six men with spears and the cowardly Tuplac people introducing the element of feminine agency and the seed rice to refuse the blame. In Tuplac, respondents confirmed the story and added elaboration.

Domonyag, the wife of Bumidang, killed the priest for taking seed rice from her granary. Domonyag was young and strong at the time. She had just married and come to Tuplac with her husband's family to farm there. She was kadangyan – a member of the elite group of local patrons, though still farmers themselves. As such, many poorer people approached her for help during the famine of that year. They offered their labor in exchange for rice, either at that time or as a debt in the future. She had much rice in her granary, and was known to be industrious.

When the priest arrived, Domonyag, not a Christian herself despite her husband's conversion, saw his request for rice as she would any other. But he did not offer her labor, goods, or money. Instead, he claimed, through two small boys from Kiangnan who accompanied him to Tuplac, that Domonyag had to pay the debt of Bumidang. Domonyag spoke no Spanish; the priest did not speak her dialect and perhaps only a little Ifugao. This was not intelligible under local rules where debts incurred separately are not enforceable against conjugal property, in this case, the harvested rice. The seed rice, however, was Domonyag's own property. It represented her 'industry' and knowledge in farming and her choices of what grew well, year after year. Thus, when Father Lorenzo, a hungry 29 year old, tired after walking many kilometers over footpaths in his cassock, took the seed rice, Domonyag understood his actions as theft. Since the priest had effectively removed next year's entire harvest, ensuring for her the loss of her kadangyan status and reputation, she took the heddle from her loom and struck him dead.⁵⁶

As the Spanish letters on Father Lorenzo's death observe, the Tuplac respondents confirmed that the murder was not a religious matter. Instead, it was a misunderstanding where conflicting norms of gender and property abutted each other in a particular confrontation. Domonyag won; there was no Spanish retribution after Father Lorenzo's death. The irony is that only a few Tuplac people remember her story as that of a local heroine who enforced local property and gender rights against the imperialist administration. Beyond the local and oral histories, in the official records and Christian memories, she is a shady character, somebody's wife, who appears only as an improbable excuse for the cowardly acts of non-Christians outside the Christian missions. The name “Ifugao,” of course, does not constitute a

⁵⁶ From respondents comments, Lakai C. and J., Tuplac, Kiangnan, February 2, 1997.

subaltern population but marks a fictionalized and contested terrain itself. Colonial histories were clearly shaped by local accommodation and resistance. From this story, it is clear that Christianity was not an overarching colonial imposition, but appropriated to strategic effect by particular groups within the indigenous population, creating distinction between 'tribal' groups and metropolitan Christians and with those 'tribal' areas themselves.

Interpretations of this story by those located at historical and geographical removes from Tuplac and Kiangnan were rich. Respondents made comments like: "I think she could have done it. Ifugao women are... strong. Not afraid to work, to do what they think." Others observed that there had always been conflict over water between Kiangnan and Tuplac, so it was not surprising that each side would claim that the other was misrepresenting the facts. Most interesting to me was the number of cases in which Ifugao people refused to come to any conclusion on whether or not the priest was killed by a man or a woman. As one older man put it, "Anybody could kill anybody, if she had a reason... You'd really have to see the body, ..., the weapon.... to think.... if it is a woman or man, but maybe it cannot be told." My respondent claims that anyone, a category that includes women, could kill and that their gender might not be revealed by the body or the murder weapon. Thus, motives for murder remain unknowable, in full, to others, but only partially and potentially reconstructable from the evidence and certainly not ascribable to gender. In the Tuplac version of this story, Domonyag supposedly acted against the Spanish friar to either preserve her elite status or defend the household food supply against colonial depredations. Neither motive is specifically feminine; both are anti-colonial. Thus, locally, the female subaltern is not silenced: female anti-colonial resistance remains one possible explanation, among several, in this case.

4.5 Subaltern revisited

The subaltern helps us develop theories about gender in colonial representations but does not help us discern potentially liberatory subject positions within speculations on native agency. Spivak sets up her speculation around Bhaduri's death in a binary frame that remains patriarchal: either she was part of an organized movement and had failed its male leadership, but still wanted to make a 'statement,' or

Bhaduri committed suicide due to her despair over an illicit love. These two options require more detail on the context and authorial speculation to move the subaltern woman out from under the aegis of indigenous patriarchy. While Spivak may call for geographical specificity in re-presenting the colonized, her own figuring of the subaltern restricts the space where the colonized could re-enter history through a masculinism - this assumption of indigenous patriarchy - which inheres in Spivak's figure.⁵⁷

The Philippines is heterogeneous, and, in the absence of a consolidated indigenous patriarchy, subject positions of female anti-colonial resistance are culturally intelligible, if not always liberatory. Where the Filipina and the Philippines fail as analytical wholes, it is impossible to apply Spivak's theorization of the silenced subaltern without bringing with it a self-fulfilling expectation of patriarchy. While Spivak argues that the ideological construction of gender in colonialism keeps the male dominant, the story of Domonyag fractures her assertions.⁵⁸ "The" construction of gender is clearly differentiated over space at a very local level and across time in this story. There is no consolidated local patriarchy in Ifugao that erases female agency from history. Instead, "Ifugao" marks a disparate set of gendered narratives that are strategies and tactics deployed against equally shifting representations of the local in colonialist discourse.

Gendering, as a performative, becomes caught up in the symbolism of progress in ways never quite completely over-determined by colonial categories. Thus "the male" which is "dominant" could only said to be so as a particular geographically and temporally located reworking of colonial discourses on gender. For instance, I could locate a dominant masculinity in the responses of male elders who refused and deferred my questions on head-taking and women, to tell me the story of the deer, with its focus on male action and leadership. This masculinity was deployed, clearly, to replace the usual story of 'primitive savages' with a narrative of local custom, control and peace-making. That female agency disappears here is perhaps an effect of colonial gender relations themselves and their reinscriptions

⁵⁷ Thanks to Derek Gregory for this observation.

⁵⁸ Spivak, G. 1988, 287.

within my interview encounters, rather than the express intention of my respondents. In contrast, when I arrived with questions on the story of Domonyag, the same male elders were willing to speculate at length about the interactions between a local *kadangyan* woman and a Spanish "father" -- in ways, of course, that asserted local norms and civilization, *vis a vis* the barbarities of the Spanish.

Indeed, I cannot say for sure that Imuc and Dominga Alandada have vanished from local oral histories as subalterns, only that those older male respondents who I thought might know did not (choose to) tell these stories to me. In a context structured through histories of colonial displacement and restructuring of gender itself, would that silence that is beyond ignorance be because of my gendering and ethnicity or theirs?

Thus, the aspect of the subaltern-as-textual effect, the utility made of "woman" as a ground of representation, is my interest. I want to reformulate the subaltern problematic through a series of questions on representation that never concede the erasure of women: who is the subaltern in a given text? How are they speaking or silenced? With what effects?⁵⁹

4.6 Resisting closure

Critical readings of Spivak suggest that she produces what she intends to forbid. By categorizing all retrievals of native resistance as either hegemonic nativist or reverse ethnocentric narrativization, Spivak renders colonialist discourse all-powerful.⁶⁰ This, then, would effectively endow the dominance of colonial concepts with hegemony.⁶¹ I do not think this is the case. Rather, my reading of Spivak is that she problematizes retrievals of native resistance in important ways, moving towards the theorization of a third term, beyond the binary, that of silence.

⁵⁹ Mani, L. "Cultural theory, colonial texts: reading eyewitness accounts of widow burning" in Grossberg, L., Nelson, C. and Treichler, P., eds. *Cultural studies* (New York: Routledge, 1992, 392-402), p. 403.

⁶⁰ Parry, B., "Problems in current theories of colonial discourse," *Oxford Literary Review* 9(1/2), 1987: 27-58, 35.

⁶¹ Parry, B., *op. cit.*, 35.

Silence on the part of the subaltern opens up new lines of inquiry and theory. Kamala Visweswaran asserts that much theorizing of resistance is limited by the conceptualization of resistance as speech and identifies a third term, a willful silence, positioning between Bourdieu's "what goes without saying" and "what cannot be said."⁶² We cannot always impute will to silence, as Visweswaran theorizes it. Without contextual detail, speculation on will and silence is the only recourse available.

I take silence, then, as the ground for strategic speculation. By attending to the gossip that swirls around these questions of details and dispositions, I suggest that we can map out the limits being negotiated for particular subject positions. In this, I follow the lead of Vincente Rafael, who, in writing on the *Contemplacion* case explores how "gossip suspends the conventions of referentiality... open(ing) up new realms of speculation." Rafael himself intervenes to disrupt the heterosexuality implicit in the narratives of the case, suggesting that the relationship between *Contemplacion* and Maga might, speculatively, have been one of lesbian love.⁶³ By deploying speculation against speculation, Rafael resists the dominant idea of gendered subjectivity at play in the *Contemplacion* narratives.

Using this strategy, I would ask, for example, if in *Contemplacion*'s silence in Singapore, was she refusing, by not speaking, to take on the mantle of nationalist femininity - the Filipina? Alternatively, was she denied a voice when she wanted to speak, thus becoming the silenced subaltern? The media reports, the films, the speculation: none of it provides enough contextual detail to answer these questions. That we cannot answer these questions is not a failure – we do not, as Spivak argues, need to make of each case a perfect example. What we do need to do is pay attention to the way in which our speculation on agency, or lack of it, delimits a female subject position.

Performances of identity and expressions of resistance are not unproblematic presentations of conscious and full-formed objectives: there is no necessary correspondence between intention and interpretation.

⁶² Bourdieu, P., 1977, p.170, in Visweswaran, K. *Fictions of feminist ethnography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), pp. 50-52.

⁶³ Rafael, V., *op. cit.*, 290.

Agency is negotiated within a "dynamic map of power in which identities are constituted and/or erased, deployed and/or paralyzed."⁶⁴ Clearly not all displacements in migration necessarily result in the erasure of identity. Yet, perhaps Contemplacion figures as an example of paralysis. Maybe she could not formulate anything to say that would adequately express, for her, her situation and feelings? Obviously all Filipina migrant workers across the globe are not interchangeable nor are they all silenced so effectively that they are unable to voice their positions and experiences. Their voices should be heard and attended to. Contemplacion, on the other hand, must be allowed to remain an enigma without the construction of moral tales that apply to other women. Perhaps this is what Contemplacion expressed in her death in Singapore? A silence that knowingly allowed representations to proliferate and, in so doing, drew attention to the variety of painful and exploitative situations in which Filipina OCWs labor.

I insist on acknowledging all these as unproven and contradictory possibilities because I want to resist closure on any particular interpretation of the tale. This strategy refuses to decide on a more appealing story based on the 'facts' on Flor Contemplacion. To do so would fix her within particular form of subjectivity. Resisting closure by speculating against it defers the application of this subjectivity to group of disparate individuals marked by the signifiers of 'woman' and 'Filipina.' Resisting closure on gender and ethnic identities anticipates the heterogeneity of the subjects these names will position.

⁶⁴ Butler, J., *Bodies that matter* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 117.

Gloria

Gloria was twenty-seven years old and had just returned from Singapore when she first saw me on a jeepney. Her Chicago Bull's ballcap and sunglasses marked her as a balikbayan to me, but we didn't actually speak then. She was curious about me, though, and appeared at the clinic door a day later, wanting information on Canada. I promised to answer her questions as best I could, if she would tell me about her work abroad for my research.

Gloria is a high school graduate, married, with three children. Her passport says she is single. She left for Singapore when her youngest child was one year, nine months old. Now her children are nine, seven and four. Her sister-in-law took care of the children while she was abroad, helping out her husband and mother. Apart from her remittances, the major source of household income is her husband's bean gardening. They got married when they were eighteen, because there was no money for college. Her husband liked the idea of her working abroad, because there was no work at home. And she's curious by nature: "When I hear of far places, I think 'I would also like to see that place!'"

Visiting family at home, the agent found her in the barangay. This agent was the sister of a highschool classmate and was recruiting for a placement agency with contracts in Singapore. She wanted overseas experience though she knew she wouldn't earn so much more money in Singapore – only P5000 per month for a new DH. After four to six years, some have 6000-7000 per month. She paid for a training session in Manila, learning how to vacuum, clean glassware and windows, wash plates and floors and iron shirts. That was required by the agency. She spent two and a half years on contract in Singapore. Her male employer was a carpet dealer and her female employer ran a beauty salon. She took care of the house, the two children and their grandmother – same thing every day. The six year old was mute and couldn't walk. The three year old was very active. On her days off, she met other DH and went shopping at Lucky Plaza. In her two and half years, she had five days off and she left at 10 am, returning at 4 p.m. because the employers wanted her around. She spoke English with her employer and learned Chinese quickly. "Why are you so clever?" they asked her. She only had two or three friends, all relatives from her municipality in Ifugao, who would phone and arrange to meet her.

From Singapore, she was able to send P 5000 every month for her family. After she went to Hong Kong, this rose to P 10,000 per month. She sent the money bank-to-bank by calling an agent who came to the employer's house in Singapore and Hong Kong to sign and process the papers. There was a service fee of \$13 - \$ 16 Singapore dollars. When she had time off, she went to Lucky Plaza and paid about the same amount to send the money. The money went to her family's account at the Philippine National Bank in Lagawe. Then she sent a letter, telling her mother to go to the bank in Lagawe with her ID and her tax declaration for their lands.

When she was in Singapore six months her brother borrowed P 10,000 from her to go into gardening. She got the money as an advance on her salary and sent the money through the bank. So she was having \$200 deducted from her \$270 per month salary. This was to pay back the money, P 10,000, her brother had loaned her to pay the fees for the Philippine recruiting agency and course. She didn't want to stay on, though the employers liked her. She found it boring, the salary was low, she had to stay inside and do the same work every day. So, when she ended her contract, she brought back P20,000-plus, only about four months salary, as her savings. She also bought some clothes and a tape deck, but there is no electricity in her house yet.

Now that she is back, she wants to go abroad again. When I ask why, she explains: "There is no improvement here. I send money, but it is scattered. Just for usual expenses: food, fare, school books... Nothing permanent, still just beans. This time, I will reserve some money for myself and then look for land to buy." Going abroad is the only option Gloria can see to earn money. She believes that she will fit in to a hierarchy of experience: "There, abroad, the first time your salary is very small – like me, only P 5000, but after five or six years, maybe you get P 7500 per month." She has already used her savings to pay the fees for an agency in Canada. The agency is called FDI – Fast Deployment International – and is located, in Toronto. She says that they have the employer set up already, a couple with two children who live, she thinks, in Vancouver. But she doesn't know the name of the place for sure. She has sent P25,000 (C\$ 1250) in fees saved from Singapore to their Toronto office, air mail. The recruiter was here, in the barangay, 1 April, and told her that, if she pays quickly, Gloria will go to Canada 2 May. According to Gloria, the recruiter's name was Grace Fuentes, a Filipina from the Manila area, now living in Canada. She was looking for some Filipina DH to go to Canada for an "auntie" there who works for this FDI agency.

This sounds like a scam to me, because the Canadian program requires two years of college education in midwifery, nursing or teaching, plus experience. This 'experience' requirement is often glossed as 'deploying cross-country'—moving from DH work in one country to a contract in another. That is what Gloria hopes to do, converting her Singapore experience into a better-paying job in Canada. Gloria's comment when I mention the education requirement is "I would also like to learn, but there is no money." I suggest she return with the papers.

Meanwhile, I retrieve an application from a legitimate Canadian agency from a friend in Baguio. She gives me a xeroxed form from Philippine-Canada Nannies, which reads:

Requirements of a Live-In Caregiver:

Successful completion of the equivalent of a Canadian grade twelve education. Grade twelve is equivalent to the completion of a second year college or the completion of a two-year course in the Philippines.

Your courses should be in Education, Nursing or Midwifery. You should have completed at least second year. These three courses are related to childcare so you do not have to take the required 'six-months caregiver training.' If your courses are other than stated above (like Engineering, Commerce, Liberal Arts, Secretarial etc.), then you should take the equivalent six-months caregiver training. These courses are now offered in Hong Kong and in the Philippines.

Ability to speak, read and understand English.

After a year of employment as a caregiver in Canada, you can still apply for permanent residence (immigrant status). When you get your immigrant status you can sponsor your family. If you wish you can also apply for Canadian citizenship.⁶⁵

Gloria and I read this together. The application form is long, requiring many details on employment history, education and personal experience. Questions ask if the applicant would be willing to work 'flexible hours,' care for elderly or handicapped individuals, and work for a single parent family. There is no mention of salary.

⁶⁵ From Philippine-Canada Nannies, 5503-186 St., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6M 1Z2.

This is nothing like what is contained in Gloria's "papers." They are truly amazing. They promise a salary of \$ 1450 per month, with \$ 50/mo. over two years as the agency fee (\$1200). There is no mention of education requirements or the Live-In Caregiver program, per se. Canada is constructed as "Heaven on Earth land." (see figures following). I explain that the salary is not realistic compared to what my Filipina friends in Vancouver earn and that the 'agency' is likely a scam. I recognize the face in the 'photo' of the 'employer' from ads in Luz's old issues of Canadian Living magazine. Gloria has already sent the money and she is despondent. I am embarrassed.

A few days later, Gloria sends me an invitation to her cousin's wedding. I meet her there and she hands me another envelope, postmarked Toronto, with a familiar Canadian stamp. Inside is a harassing letter, demanding more money and suggesting that she recruit other "girls." And there is also an application for a mail-order bride service. The whole package is accompanied by testimonials, apparently from satisfied clients, interspersed with biblical quotes. "It's a fake," declares Gloria, looking with disgust at the pictures of men. A group gathers to examine the papers, noting the spelling and grammatical errors: "It's Filipinos, the English is crooked..."

On my next trip to Baguio City, I take the papers with me and fax and mail copies to the Philippine Overseas Employment Authority, Migrante (a Philippine NGO for migrant workers), the Canadian Embassy in Manila, and my parents. The POEA has thousands of similar cases reported to them each year but has no jurisdiction over foreign recruiters or agencies. They promise, after follow-up from Migrante, to publish details of the FDI scam on their 'warning lists' of illegal operations. My parents forward their copies to the RCMP on the advice of Customs and Immigration. I cannot find the Manila address Gloria had for her recruiter. There is no 'Makati Consulate Building.' I E-mail my father who is travelling to Toronto. He checks out FDI's Toronto address for me and reports that it is Carleton, corner Haywood, with small offices on a upper floor, and a drugstore on the lower. He sees no sign of any agency. He does find Case 349F – it is a post office box in the main postal building. Nobody will answer his questions about who picks up mail from the box. Finally, once I am back in Canada, I speak with the RCMP. Constable Green understands my frustration, but explains that the crime has actually been committed in another jurisdiction, so there is not anything that can be done from Canada. "It happens all the time," he tells me. While this may be true, I know it won't offer any comfort to Gloria, who has lost her savings.

My last meeting with Gloria happened by chance as I walked down the road. She is, she tells me, applying for Taiwan and on the way to Manila to process her papers. "What about the money in Canada? Can you get it back for me?" she asks. I feel defensive and sad. "No," I tell her, "it's a post-office box and they can't trace the people who are making the papers and getting the money." This sounds like a lame justification, even as I say it. I avoid the temptation to point out that this scam falls under the 'illegal recruiter' practices outlined on the POEA posters plastered across sari-sari stores up and down the highway (see Figure 6-7). Did she read the POEA posters? Gloria clearly wasn't able to spot the English language mistakes that the rest of the group saw in the papers. I do not want to humiliate her further.

I wish her luck in Taiwan, pointing out that she already speaks some Cantonese, so she has an advantage. She smiles, turns, and turns back: "Could you give me one thousand only, for my papers? You keep them. Use them for your research. Me, I need the money for my expenses in going to Taiwan." I pay and we part

BIO - DATA

BIO-DATA

(PHOTO)

EXPRESS HIRING FOR NANNY/CAREGIVER: CANADA

NAME: _____ BIRTHDATE: _____

PRESENT

ADDRESS: _____

PARENT'S ADDRESS: _____

CIVIL STATUS: _____ Height: _____ ft/in _____ Weight: _____ lbs.

RELIGION: _____ Hobbies: _____

Parent's Names: _____ no. of Children: _____

Names and Age: _____

EDUCATION: Elementary _____ Secondary: _____ College: _____

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

REFERENCES: List Names, Addressess and Tel.No. of 2 References:

YES, I DO AGREE AND ACCEPT THE FOLOWING "EMPLOYMENT CONDITION

- Sallary \$1,400/month + Live In + Own Room + Tel., Color TV
- Work Hours Monday to Friday 8AM to 5PM + Saturdays and Sundays OFF
- All Holidays Paid + All Overtime Paid "Time and a Half"
- Yes, I will accept Airfare Loan _____ (No Interest!!!!)

(Other and additional Information Provided upon Request!!!!)

SIGNES AND AGREED UPON BY THE APPLICANT!!!!

@@ JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN CANADA ARE THE BEST IN THE WORLD!!!

CANADA!!! HEAVEN ON EARTH LAND FOR YOU!!!!

WE CAN DEPLOY YOU "CROSSCOUNTRY"
FASTER AND BETTER THEN ANY OTHER
301 IN THE WORLD! JOIN US TODAY!
LET US GUIDE YOU TILL YOU ARRIVE!!!

PLEASE SIGN: _____

1996

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Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2L8
Canada

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30-60 DAYS!!!

RECEIVE EMPLOYER IN

"EARN \$1,400/month in CANADA"

CANADIAN JOBS AWAIT 25,000 GIFTED NANNIES/CAREGIVERS

"F.D.I. INTERNATIONAL" IS A Government Licenced & Approved.

"F.D.I.-EXPRESS CANADA: REGISTRATION - "1996-1996-1996"

APPLICANT'S NAME: _____ TEL: _____

PRESENT ADDRESS: _____

(Parent's Address: _____)

Date of Birth: _____ Date Available: _____

(If you have any Relatives/Friends in Canada or USA: write address on the BACK

OUR TOTAL FEE: Our Total Processing/Service Fee is: 'ONLY US\$200!!!TOTAL!!!NO EXTRAS!!!
This US\$200 is Payable like this: 1) US\$100 Total Deposit is Payable Now with 'APPLICATION'
(Your Total Balance of US\$100 is Payable Later, Much Later...After You Receive Your Employer
and After You Receive Your Total Process.....Including "Airfare Loan and Interview Preparations
HOW TO APPLY: It is Very Simple: Just Reply to us with This Registration and US\$100 Deposit!!!
Mail us: Cash(US\$, or any other currency is O.K.), Or Draft....Payable to "F.D.I." + Biodata!!!!!!!
At This Time We Do Not Require Your Passport (We Require that Later)! For Now We Require:
Only Your Simple Biodata, Photo of any size, Your Deposit US\$100: Mail in Ordinary Mail Please!

HOW TO MAIL YOUR DEPOSIT: Just Seal Your Envelope Properly and Mail in Ordinary Mail!!!!!!
(We Guarantee It's Safety and safe Arrival. We Guarantee Safety of Your Deposit! ABSOLUTELY!
.....OUR ABSOLUTE GUARANTEE TO YOU.....

As soon as you Return this Registration, with Your deposit + Biodata, we will 'The Same day'
mail You your 'Precious Employer', Care Giver's Course-Diploma, Airfare Loan Forms, and
Interview Preparation Instructions + Addressess of Your Filipina Pen-Pals Who Are here Now!
Our Guarantee is The Best: We Guarantee The Safety of Your Deposit 100%(Even Your Cash in
Ordinary Mail is 100%-Fully Guaranteed!!!! We also guarantee to Secure You Your Precious Sponsor
Faster, much faster then any other Agency Ever COULD!!!! We Guarantee You \$1,400/ Salary!!!!
good employer, private room, live-in job, We will also Care about You and Guide You and Meet You
upon your Arrival!!!! Tell us The date "That You are Available—and we will Meet your 'Time-deadline'!!!!
Tell us Your Contract Expiration date: Tell us when do you wish to fly: WE WILL CO-ORDINATE YOU!
Your Salary will be \$1,400/mon. + private room, bath, tel., TV, good food, kind employer,
and short work hours 9am to 5 pm..only + Sat. + Sunday=Off!!! + all Holidays Off with Pay!!!
+ 2 weeks paid vacation + total medical insurance coverage + free to bring your girlfriends
to your private room...Even to sleep overnights, free to use your Phone Day and night: anytime.
PLEASE RETURN THIS REGISTRATION WITH YOUR DEPOSIT(US\$100)..CASH OR DRAFT!!!

DEPOSIT ENCLOSED=\$

SIGN HERE=

1996+ YOU

DATE:

THIS REGISTRATION IS VALID FOR ENTIRE YEAR 1996: GUARANTEED!!!

(P.S.: PLEASE xerox this Application and share It to your Girlfriends..)

....."SPONSORSHIP COMMITMENT.....TO YOU.....

APPLY NOW: FILIPINO NANNIES/CAREGIVERS NEEDED

"EARN \$1,400/month

"EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGE SPONSORSHIP REGISTRATION - 1996!!!!"



OUR PROCESS IS 100%

Guaranteed!

F.D.I. INTERNATIONAL
Case #394/F
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2L8
Canada

HOW TO COMPLETE APPLICATION

PAGE 1) THIS IS "GENERAL INFORMATION"

PLEASE GET A VALID PASSPORT + TWO 2x2 PHOTOS 'EXTRA'.

ASK ANY RELATIVE, FRIEND OR A NEIGHBOUR TO 'LAND' YOU THEIR GOOD BANK LETTER/STATEMENT OF THEIR FINANCIAL ABILITY TO SUPPORT YOU, BUT IN FACT....THEY WILL NEVER HAVE TO PAY A PENNY..SINCE YOUR TRIP IS FULLY PAID(THAT RELATIVE WILL GET P.5000 FINANCIAL REWARD).

-SINCE YOU DO NOT HAVE A RELATIVE IN CANADA(JUST A FRIENDS)=YOU DO NOT NEED "FINANCIAL STATEMENT" FROM CANADA!!!

- EMPLOYED(A LETTER), STUDENT(A LETTER), UNEMPLOYED(NOTHING).

-YOU DO NOT NEED 'BUS. REG. FORM'.

-IF YOU HAVE...THEN SHOW THEM 'OLD PASSPORT'.

-TRY TO GET 'WRITTEN PARENT CONSENT...LETTER...FROM MOM AND DAD!

-AS SOON AS YOU RECEIVE YOUR VISA P.1,000 WILL BE REIMBURSED TO YOU

-YOU WILL ALSO RECEIVE TRAVEL MONEY + FULLY PAID AIRFARE.

@@@ NOW LOCATE A GOOD 'TRAVEL AGENCY'...ASK THEM TO HELP YOU, AND MAIL ME THEIR ADDRESS, TEL, FAX NO.....SOONEST.

HOW TO COMPLETE APPLICATION 1 TO 23

1) IT IS SIMPLE 2) IT IS SIMPLE, TOO 3) PERMANENT ADDRESS
4) YOUR OCCUPATION 5) IT IS SIMPLE 6) SINGLE ENTRY !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
7) FILIPINO CITIZEN 8) TO VISIT A FRIEND, FEW CHURCHES AND TO
EXPERIENCE CANADIAN CULTURE!!!!!!!!!!!!

9).....INCLUDED.....(ATTACHED)

10) 3 MONTHS 11) INDICATE A DATE 12) CAN\$6,000

13).....ALL THESE MUST BE ANSWERED: "NO!!!!!! NO!!!!!!"

14)....."NO!!!!!!" NOW : SIGN IT AND DATE IT!!!!!!

FROM 15) TO 23) IS SO EASY...JUST DO IT!!!!!!!!!!!! JUST :

NO. 21) I WISH TO VISIT: TORONTO AND OTTAWA.

A VERY URGENT NOTICE

DEAR AND VERY RESPECTED CLIENT,
YOUR EXCELLENT APPLICATION HAS BEEN RECEIVED
AND PRESENTED TO A VERY NICE, KIND AND CARING
EMPLOYER WHO HAS DECIDED TO OFFER YOU FULL-
TIME, LIVE-IN POSITION.

1996



Today, We are so Pleased to Inform You : 'that we now have
Your Employers Job Offer Letter in Our Office'!

This Job Offer Letter will be mailed to you Immediately and
The Very Same Day.....That Your Reply Arrives to Us!!!!!!!!!!!!

Our Service is Absolutely 100% Guaranteed to You! All You
have to do now.....is Reply to us "As Soon As Possible"with
Your Simple Letter, US\$100 Deposit(We Accept any Currency).
Also Include Your Simple Biodata and Your Photo(any size).

AS SOON AS YOUR REPLY ARIVES...THE VERY SAME DAY
WE WILL MAIL YOU YOUR EMPLOYER'S "JOB OFFER",
AND YOUR EMPLOYER'S LETTER - DIRECTED TO YOU.
WE WILL ALSO MAIL YOU "INTERVIEW PREPARATION
INSTRUCTIONS", AIRFARE LOAN APPLICATION, AND
WE WILL GUIDE YOU...ALL THE WAY...TILL YOU
ARRIVE..HERE!!!! WE WILL EVEN MEET YOU AT THE
AIRPORT..UPON YOUR ARRIVAL.

NOW YOU KNOW WHO IS THE BEST AGENT TODAY!!!!!!

CONGRATULATIONS On Your Successful Process!!!!!!!!!!!!

We Remain Faithful to You, and Now we await your reply!!!!!!

Thank You and God Bless You!DIRECTOR, "F.D.I."

"THOSE WHO COMPLY are Processed First & Fast !!! "

"?Is It Harder to: SECURE YOUR SPONSOR, or For You
To Recruit One Girlfriend ??????????

THIS YEAR "1996" WILL BE VERY
PROSPEROUS FOR YOU= \$1,400/month

Application for Domestic/Housekeeper/Nanny Position: Not-A-Agency

Applicant's Resume:

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Birthdate _____

(Single, English Fluent)

"Please, please forgive me for mailing you this application 'uninvited': Please forgive me as my friends who gave me your address: I could only hope that some families will hire. How else could I apply. Thank you. I love you.

Dear Madam,

I am taking a great liberty to approach you with this application for a job. Since I am presently "thousands of a miles away": This is the only true way that I could apply for a job in your country: Simply by approaching some families "who might need a good domestic/housekeeper or a nanny: Now or in the future. To hire me "Now" for any date in the future: Just mail me a simple letter of your "job offer" - and I will be yours: As soon as my visa is ready. If you need me right now: You could still hire me for some later date, I could start even 6 or 8 or even 10 months from now. Remember I offer you my excellent service, long term commitment and I accept minimum wage pay so you will in fact save thousands of dollars by hiring me as your future helper. However if you absolutely do not plan to hire a new nanny. Do not worry. Just please let me know, and also try to help me by giving my resume to your close relatives or friends for their consideration. Thank you very much for that.

Dear Madam, I must inform you "that all my friends have obtained jobs in your beautiful country like this - by writing to their potential employers, I am very confident that you, like many other parents, are very fair and truly understand to poor and needy girls like me. And that you will hire me if you need a domestic now, or that you will recommend me to your friends soon. But most importantly that you will reply to me. With a simple letter of yours. If you or your friends "Do not need nanny" just let me know... and I will patiently continue presenting my application to many other families until hire. (All my friends already got hired this way. So, will I. I hope with you. today)

Please Note: "I am absolutely first class domestic / housekeeper / nanny" with proven experience. I can manage large household, look after children, including infants. I am a true "Mother's Helper". You will be absolutely happy with me. I offer you long term service: 1, 2 or 3 years if you wish, and I will be fully content with just the minimum wage pay. As you know, to hire me: first just mail me a simple letter and your personal "job offer", and hire me officially. And mail me "Official confirmation of employment" That's all you need to do. And I will do the rest, including keeping you informed on a regular basis of my visa process and my exact date of arrival. If you must have some additional information about me. Just call me or send me a telegram. "To call you back"... or just write to me & I will reply promptly. I do apologize to you "for approaching you uninvited, but I truly hope that you will be "forgiving" and "understanding to me". This is how all my friends already got hired and are happily working in your beautiful country. I am yours "if you need me"... but please let me know with your sweet reply to me. Do not worry "if you can't hire me" I will just apply to many others till hire. Do not worry. There are no fees to you, no costs to you, no obligations to you. I would truly be grateful and happy to receive your reply, soon. I love you.

Personal Letter from the Manager.

Dear Client, Dear Msister ☺
We have tried to provide you with all the information. However, I feel that it would be appropriate if I write you my personal letter.

Our company is very well established here in Canada, Toronto, as well as in Singapore. We also - faithfully - serve girls in Philippines. Presently we have a large number of faithful clients who are coming to Canada through - us. They have mailed us their biodata, photo, telephone No., and their deposit. Deposit is 100% safe in our hands. You can mail cash in registered mail, or certified cheque in ordinary mail. As soon as we receive your deposit - we mail you your official received, application confirmation, sample of your resumé and instructions. We assist married & single alike. As soon as your employer/sponsor is secured - we will mail you your sponsorship certificate which you will take to Canadian High Commission - and they will then process you - until you receive your visa. While you are waiting for your visa - you could try to introduce us to your girlfriends. We will pay you \$25 U.S. for each introduction. (Many of our clients average \$25 U.S. to \$500 U.S. just by introducing us to their girlfriends). After you receive your visa, your employer can give you air-plane - ticket loan: "FLY NOW - PAY LATER PLAN". Your pay here will be \$1,400 _____ + room, board, TV, telephone & Friday night to Monday 8AM - off. After 2 years - you can automatically apply to become Canadian. There is no country that can offer you better deal, and there is no more beautiful, cleaner & safer city than Toronto, and absolutely there is no better & safe agency than ours. And finally - you will never find a manager who cares as much about your good future.

Yours Truly

DEAREST SISTER! GREETINGS FROM "FDI".
LET "FDI" SECURE YOUR FUTURE (\$1,400)!
WE CAN DEPLOY YOU 'CROSSCOUNTRY'
FASTER AND BETTER THAN ANY OTHER
AGENT IN THE WORLD! JOIN US TODAY!
LET US GUIDE YOU TILL YOU ARRIVE!!!
WE TRULY CARE FOR YOU, AND WE KNOW
THAT YOU WILL CARE FOR 'US' WE LIKE
TO SHARE OUR FUTURE WITH YOU! FDI!!!!

P.S.: Dear Sister, let me conclude this letter

THE PRESIDENT

by assuring you that our entire staff will stand
by you and faithfully help you....in all your
process till the day you arrive: and then we
will meet you here at the Airport the day you
arrive!!! We are the most reputable agency in
North America, and we wellcome you to FDI.

Note: I personally meet all my clients at Toronto International Airport, and I will meet you too!

- "Why should I join your agency - When I have so many agencies to choose from right here?"
Because they are just "Middleman", and you are so much better - off dealing with your "Direct - Agency."
"Why?" Because this way it is only you, us & your new employer/sponsor. This way you get direct agent in Toronto and this way you do not have so many middleman - "Sharing" - your hard earned money.
And the most importantly - you do get your sponsor and you get it fast. Some girls have joined some agencies in Singapore, and are still waiting after 6 or 8 mon. or even 1 year.

"But Mark, they offer me a package deals????"
Sure... "Package deals" is the "best" sales pitch - I have ever heard of. No, you do not need it. You need: Sponsorship, interview preparation instruction and air-fare loan!!! That is all that you need - and you need it fast and in time to meet your contract date.

"But - give me the proof - that you are reliable?" That is easy, presently we have many of your Filipina - girls who are coming to Canada through our agency. All of them have already been sponsored - so I will let you ask them + they will tell you how excellent and fast service we are!!!
Lastly our sponsors are only + all the very best employers & the very best/highest pay that will make you to love your new job in Canada!!

A lady called luck is watching you.
For Luck Fortune Center Co. Ltd. 1114 977-2142

Thank you

Dear Sister, and Our Honourable Client!!!!!!

Yes, We do know How Hard it is for You to decide: You are surrounded by many 'Agencies'!!!! Just ask yourself:

"How can all those 'overseas' Agencies secure you a sponsor...when they are 'Thousands of a Miles' far, far away from Canada!!! But, Look: We are Here!! And We are The Largest and The Best..and We deploy "Crosscountry" and all accross Canada: We Deploy Fast! Just Tell Us 'When You Are Available': Let "F.D.I." Guide Your Future!

URGENT NOTICE!!!!

THIS IS VERY URGENT NOTICE:REPLY SOONEST!

DEAR AND VERY RESPECTED CLIENT,

WE ARE EXPERIENCING SO MUCH HARDSHIP BECAUSE WE ARE NOT RECEIVING 'A FAVOURABLE LETTER FROM YOU'.
HERE WE ARE WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK TO SUCCESSFULLY SECURE YOUR SPONSOR AND YOUR GOOD JOB AND SALLARY.
WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING IMMAGINABLE TO PRESENT YOU IN THE BEST POSSIBLE LIGHT TO YOUR SPONSOR.....AND.....
WE DO NOT "EVEN KNOW YOU": YOU ARE JUST OUR HONOURABLE CLIENT....BUT LET'S FACE IT: "WE DO NOT EVEN KNOW IF YOU CAN LOOK AFTER CHILDREN.....BUT STILL : WE ARE PRESENTING YOU TO YOUR SPONSOR BY SAYING:"ALL, ALL THE BEST ABOUT YOU!
WE TRULY WORK HARD...HARDER THEN 'MONEY CAN BUY'! WE DO!
- NOW, LOOK AT YOU!

YOU ARE SO SLOW IN CO-OPERATING...WE ASK YOU SO MANY TIMES: "PLEASE MAIL US ADDRESSESS OF ALL YOUR FRIENDS..
+ COLLECT SOME MORE ON YOUR DAY OFF! WE HAVE ASKED YOU TO "RECRUIT A GIRL OR TWO"!!!!!! ARE YOU READY TO DO IT?
LOOK DEAR,

OUR NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING IN HONG KONG, SINGAPORE AND ALL THOSE OTHER PLACES WHERE YOU ARE...IS BLODY COSTLY:
IMMAGINE: JUST FOR ONE DAY...ONE SMAL AD WE MUST PAY US\$200.....PER DAY...PER SMALL AD!!!!

***** AND WE ARE CHARGING YOU SO SMALL FEE!!!

SO LET ME ASK YOU FOR THE 'LAST TIME':

1) PLEASE MAIL PAYMENT FOR YOUR BALANCE!!!!!!

(IF YOU ALREADY PAID IN FULL=THANK YOU!!!!)

2) MAIL US 10-20 ADDRESSESS OF ALL YOUR GIRLFRIENDS!!

3) PLEASE..GO 'OUT OF YOUR WAY' AND RECRUIT "GIRL OR TWO"

*****THAT IS ALL THAT WE ASK YOU!!!!!! LET'S HELP EACH OTHER : "NOW, NOW, NOW!!!!

LET'S NOT WAIT.....COZ WE MIGHT RUN OUT OF TIME! (PLEASE, NO EXCUSES!OH LORD!)

PLEASE HELP US.....HELP US GROW...MAKE US STRONGER: WE WILL HELP YOU BETTER.

LOVE AND GREETINGS FROM ALL OF US! WE TRULY , TRULY CARE FOR YOU! REPLY FAST!



Personal Prayer to The Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit Thou make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me, I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You no matter how great the material desire may be, I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your perpetual glory, Amen.

Person must pray this 3 consecutive days without stating one's wish. After the 3rd day your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Promise to publish this

CANADA IS TRULY A VERY BEAUTIFUL.

DEAR STAFF OF F.D.I, There are many thousands Filipinas Living and Working here. Booming cities, excellent climate.

I CAN REALLY SAY THAT "GOD'S" ANSWERS ALL MY PRAYERS (MARK 12:24). THEREFORE I SAY UNTO YOU, WHAT THINGS SOEVER YOU DESIRE, WHEN YOU PRAY BELIEVE THAT YOU RECEIVE THEM, AND YOU SHALL HAVE THEM. I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR KINDNESS THANK YOU TO THE STAFF OF F.D.I. YOU ARE THE BEST AGENCY, AND MORE POWER GOD BLESS YOU ALL!!!

EDITION" FLIGHT TO FREEDOM -

The cost of this Fantastic Direct Hire Guide is so small...that You could even recover it Very Fast just by "copy-ing" it and re-selling IT to your girlfriends.

CATHERINE H. DATMIEL

W.A.E

You need Your "Flight To Freedom" More then as to help you speed-up Your Precious Process. It will bring You: "Airfare Loan Application", Interview, Preparation Instruction, Love Bonding Communication Instructions with Your Future Employer, XEROX/COPY IT and share IT to at your Friends...even re-sell IT to them, It's O.K. REGISTER NOW, DO NOT BE LATE JOIN US and Share Our History and Our Future, WE ARE FAST and SU... Your "Order Form":.....

Name: _____ Address: _____

Amount Enclosed=\$ _____ Please enclose us\$10(or any currency!!!

Remember what your mother always said:
"It's just as easy to love a rich one as it is
a poor one."

Dearest Sister,

Greetings, greetings to you and to your beloved family.

This letter is coming to you directly from the president of "R.T.S.", the largest matrimonial service in the world. My name is Susan Day, and I am so pleased to give you this "once in a life time" opportunity! so please: Hear me out. Hardships of life that you are presently experiencing. So, that is the reason I came into your life "To Help You" NOW. If you are still SINGLE, UNATTACHED and MARRIAGE MINDED then I have "A Rapid" plan for you. Come here come fast. As soon as you reply to me - I will have you "The Man of Your Life" - your perfect match. Age, Religion and Social Status will be "Just as per your requirements". "R.T.S." = "Rapid Transfer Service Inc." has many, many good, single men from USA, Canada of Catholic Religion, with own comfortable home and own business. Men that you choose will shower you with his loving letters, his "life video", his full body photos. And as soon as you approve of him - he will invite you to visit him, and "visit him" forever. The man you choose will rush you: Your fully paid airfare, your pocket & travel money and your visitor's visa: and all in 30 to 60 days... As soon as you have your "visitor's visa" you can fly (or you may fly .. later "Whenever you are ready")

-Dearest sister, we accept you and Guarantee you our plan. Our requirements are easy and simple:

Age 17 to 47, single and marriage minded! That's all. Our service is 100% safe, 100% reliable and faithful. Our service is so fast: 30 to 60 days. Upon your arrival "The welcoming party of Filipino girls will meet you at the airport and I will drive you to our "all girl residence": where you will meet all our staff (girls) and

THE PRESIDENT
55 Bloor St. W.
Box #19-507
Toronto, Ont.
M4W 1B0

Marry Rich
The Rich are Going to
Marry Someone...Why
Not You?

Do you laugh at the romantic notion that you will marry the person you love even if it means being poor and living off love? Finding a wealthy spouse is within your grasp - it's just a matter of approach.

many married girls who have already arrived. You will stay in our "All girls residence" until your boyfriend courts you and until you approve of him. Naturally and absolutely guaranteed is "that if you do not approve of him - we will immediately introduce you to a "New man of your choice". But our men are fully screened and 100% decided and committed to marry a Filipino. Presently you are jobless or earning low salary, but here you will easily get a job that will pay you minimum \$1,100/month. The man you choose will be good to you, and you will love him fast. All our arrivals have happy, safe and prosperous marriages. Here women are given the best social protection in the world.

- Oh God, yes, yes.... you can apply as a "Nanny-Visa", but that process takes up to "one year" to process.

Today, I have come into your life within true desire to help you. Be happy - choose and accept my offer!

APPLICATION - REGISTRATION - GUARANTEED ACCEPTANCE

DO NOT BE SHY: FLY FAST! 100% GUARANTEED!

NAME: _____ AGE: _____ TEL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

DESCRIBE ON THE BACK: AGE, RELIGION AND A TYPE (CATHOLIC, AGE) OF A PEN-PAL YOU WISH TO HAVE (FLY IN 30-60 days) + FREE AIRFARE!

Enclose: US\$20 Total Cost! US\$ (ANY CURRENCY)

RECEIVE: GOOD SPONSOR, GOOD JOB & HAPPY FUTURE EARN \$1,500/M (IF 2 (TWO) GIRLS REGISTER TOGETHER: MAIL \$15 EACH) TOTAL = \$30 (TWO)

LET US HELP YOU SUCCEED! WE CARE FOR YOU.



HI! THIS NICE MAN IS SINGLE,
SINCERE, NON SMOKER, NON
DRINKER AND WELL EMPLOYED.
IF YOU LIKE HIM TO BE YOUR
PEN-PAL JUST RETURN THIS
WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.
+ INCLUDE YOUR PHOTO!!!!!!



HI! THIS NICE MAN IS SINGLE,
SINCERE, NON SMOKER, NON
DRINKER AND WELL EMPLOYED.
IF YOU LIKE HIM TO BE YOUR
PEN-PAL JUST RETURN THIS
WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.
+ INCLUDE YOUR PHOTO!!!!!!

Chapter 5- Local femininities and landscapes

<i>Kanta Ti Ina</i>	<i>Mother's Song</i>
<i>Agrugi ti agsapa</i>	Beginning in the early morning
<i>Awan pulos inana</i>	No rest ever
<i>Tuloy-tuloy inggana</i>	Continuing until
<i>Ti init ket bumabab</i>	The sun descends
<i>Ti aldaw ko napunno</i>	My day is full
<i>Nadumaduma trabaho</i>	Of various tasks
<i>Agbirok sida, agluto</i>	Looking for viand, cooking
<i>Agsakdo ken agbayyo</i>	Fetching water and pounding rice
<i>Agsagana ti balon</i>	Preparing food to take
<i>Mapan ak iti talon</i>	I go to the ricefields
<i>Ituloy ti bunubon</i>	Continue transplanting
<i>Isimpa irigayson</i>	Fix the irrigation
<i>Tiempo panagkakape</i>	Coffee season
<i>Kwarta ti biroken mi</i>	Money is what we're looking for
<i>Para mantika, inti</i>	For cooking oil, sugar
<i>Asin, sabon, piliti</i>	Salt, soap and transportation money
<i>Anak dumakadakkelen</i>	The children are getting big
<i>Masapul panunoten</i>	I must think about
<i>Pag-alaan kwarta manen</i>	Where to get money again
<i>Pag-iskwela palpasen</i>	So that they may finish school
<i>Uray anya ikasta</i>	No matter what I do
<i>Agkurang-kuran latta</i>	Things are still lacking
<i>Daytoy ti gasat ngata?</i>	Is this fate?
<i>Kastoy kadi ingga-inggana?</i>	Will it be this way forever?

Planting season starts in February and only the womenfolks do the planting job while menfolks work on the stone walls, rice paddies, irrigation and hauling of harvested grains from the fields. This division of labor is still strictly observed as thousands of years ago by their forefathers.¹

In the farming communities of Ifugao, as the lyrics of the song suggest, women's 'domestic' labor spreads beyond the house and into the agricultural landscape. Female labor and feminine agricultural knowledge are intimately involved in the major subsistence crops of rice and vegetables and have a prominent role in the production of coffee and vegetables for cash. While men have traditionally hunted and traveled beyond the boundaries of the community, women have tended the fields and gardens. Women's work in cultivating the crops and maintaining the fields, glossed in English-language as "cleaning" is what creates 'home,' inscribing evidence of inhabitation in the landscape and, thus, locality.

¹ From a description of Ifugao rice farming found at <http://www.philippine.org/01prov/ifugao.htm>

Yet, the work has always been gendered on a fairly contingent and flexible basis, with only a small percentage of agricultural tasks strictly marked for one gender, *per se*.² Arguments about 'tradition' posit planting rice as women's work and hauling the harvest, men's. The lyrics of the song contradict the quote from an Ifugao web-site that follows it. Women, like men, can work on the ricefields' earth or stone walls and – *isimpa irigayson* - repair irrigation canals. Given that the oldest terraces on the Cordillera date only to 500 BC and that the majority of terraces appear to have been built only at the end of the 1800s, claims to "thousands of years" of a static gendered division of labor cannot be substantiated.³ Why, then, would an Ifugao author, on the web, want to invoke the rhetoric of timeless tribalism to fix a particular gendered division of labor in the "traditional" agricultural landscape?

How, then, to understand a claim to a 'tradition' of gendering that fails? Ifugao identity is negotiated in a conversation of many voices, all with specific positions and interests. From this debate, an "Ifugao" culture emerges as a stream of events and representations shaped by power relations between the individual actors involved. Some voices are heard and legitimated, others drift off into silence. Discourses, such as those on gender, are reproduced through these exercises of capillary power. People use these discourses to exercise control over the terms and direction of the conversation and the acceptability of practice. To defend their interests, people try to limit what can be said or done and still have meaning or set precedent. Local people bring their own understandings and interpretations of globalized representations to the discussion. When recognized as 'culture', the norms or 'traditions' that emerge may seem invulnerable to questions of legitimacy. Nonetheless, they are produced through struggle and do not preclude active, alternate viewpoints. Embedded in the people and practices of the dialogue, dissent and difference are equally part of local 'culture'. The process of dialogue, constantly

² See Bacdayan, A. "Mechanistic cooperation and sexual equality among the Western Bontoc" in A. Schlegel, ed. *Sexual stratification* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974; pp. 270-291.) This is a description of the gendered division of labor in an Igorot community written by a mission-school educated, male member of the local elite.

³ See Scott, W. *A Sagada Reader*, for details on terracing's history on the Cordillera.

changing and contested, creates openings where these local ideas may displace and defer globalized norms.

I argue here that local understandings of gender are not, and have never been, bounded by time or place in some sort of strict periodization of traditional/modern or capitalist/subsistence organization. Instead, local genderings have discursive flexibility where the fluid, contingent character of gendered identities reflects and is embedded within local histories of innovation, change and accommodation. Thus local conceptions of femininity, masculinity, androgyny and men's, women's and "just anybody's" work are constituted across multiple and conflicting discourses on ethnicity, gender, religion and development. As my opening folksong suggests, the local construction of feminine knowledge is that of a woman who "knows what to do" to provide for her household and herself. Both male and female respondents across Haliap and Panubtuban cited this as the most desirable trait in a female partner and the definition of Ifugao femininity. This demonstrated a discursive continuity with the reports of American colonial administrators that women were valued locally not so much for beauty or pleasing nature or child-bearing and rearing skills but for their industry in tending to their hillside shifting cultivation gardens.⁴ I demonstrate here that this flexible and adaptable construction of local femininity as "knowing what to do" persists into the contemporary agricultural landscape and beyond, into overseas migration.

5.1 Survey research and ambivalence

This chapter is largely based on the results of surveys and questionnaires completed by myself and my research assistants in 1996 – 1997. To provide a diachronic perspective, I also draw on similar questionnaires I completed for my 1991 – 1992 masters' project. My feelings about these survey results and this chapter are ambivalent. On the one hand, my descriptions here reflect two years of participant observations and hundreds of interviews, allowing me to locate more general claims about customs and community life in my fieldsite within particular information-retrieval techniques and my respondents' comments. On the other, writing about this information in summary form and maintaining respondents'

⁴ Barton, R. *The halfway sun* (New York: Brewer and Warren, 1930.)

confidentiality is a challenge. With almost each short quote I typed from my stack of forms, I could attach a face and a situation for myself, but not one I can convey to the reader.

This chapter is written in an impersonal tone to mark report on general trends from much more diverse interviews, individuals and opinions, not to imply that my two years of visiting provided a panoptical perspective on this locality. I anticipate both that the situations I have described have changed and that my descriptions may be shown to be partial and incomplete.

Some of my ambivalence about my survey data comes from the community's received knowledge that this was what "research" was, and ought to be. This was understandable. The CIDA project, the Health Workers, local NGOs and government agencies all sent "researchers" into the community with clipboards, checklists and surveys to be administered to local households. Administering these forms was source income for unemployed college graduates living in the community. By employing these people to "do" my surveys, I contributed to the community as a benefactor. Many people asked me for contract work, suggesting I extend my research to other topics or even another area of the valley. Hiring people to do surveys was thus the critical demonstration of my agreement to provide jobs locally and to support community 'development.' When my assistants started swapping forms amongst each other, making extra copies on the nearest xerox, and sub-contracting their administration to needy relatives and neighbors, I felt my surveys were spiraling out of my control.

I had some difficulty explaining that I also did research that was not carried out by survey, too, and was often more interested in that kind of information. Several of my female research assistants spent short stints living with me in the Clinic and accompanying me to act as chaperone, guide and translator, if necessary, during semi-structured interviews.⁵ They also accompanied me on other social occasions where, I assured them, I both enjoyed myself and collected a great deal of information, requiring cross-

⁵ They also taught me how to do laundry, prepare local foods, light a kerosene lamp and butcher a chicken, so their job description would have more aptly read: "surveys, interviews, advice on public comportment, assistance with domestic work and general survival training."

checking with their own, local perspectives. One morning, after two days of attending local festivities and 'hanging out' with farming women and Health Workers, I was writing up my observations and further questions in my notebook at the table in the clinic kitchen. My current companion asked me, "So, are you going to do any research today? We've had two days off already..." My reply, "Not yet..., not this morning, because I want to know why you think Mrs. X said....," made her pause. Then she offered, "Yes, it's good for you to think on that... but I am thinking that the neighbors will say I am lazy and don't do my work for you if we do not go out [with the forms – DM]. They will wonder why you don't get another to help you." Working for me was clearly a privilege that had to be justified, not just in terms of my satisfaction, but in terms of a broader, community evaluation of "research," its purposes and techniques. This to some extent, overdetermined my research assistants actions and, thus, my own. Survey research, I discovered, showed my hosts that I was a 'real' a researcher who 'knew what to do' in terms of 'good research' and 'good development assistance.'

5.2 Mothering nature

Development is an exercise of power (with its inherent resistance) which constitutes individuals as subjects of new forms of discipline. Development paradigms, operating with an unmarked masculinity, have represented women as a particular locus of labor power, and as sites of 'backward' attitudes, indiscipline, and lack of organization. Initially, women were left out of the development loop completely, constituted as 'not-actors.' Under the identities of "housewives," "dependents" and "spouses of," their interests were presumably represented by and subsumed within those of men, their husbands or fathers. Initial attempts to integrate women into development led to the instrumental incorporation of women into programs, projects and bureaucratic ordering. This framework reinscribed a superficial notion of 'developed' (i.e. Euro-American) gender roles onto so-called 'developing societies,' resulting in continued "housewifization."

Rather than merely adding women to modernization, a gender and development approach attempts to examine the actual impacts of development activities on gender roles and identities. Distinctions are

drawn between women's needs to function within their social roles as "woman" and women's interests in revising the subject position itself – the social meaning of "woman."⁶ Social roles are more easily by addressed by development activities such as projects and programs. Subject positions are more difficult to change, not least because discourses on progress and modernity have inscribed within them a Euro-American gendering, locating gendered subjects in very specific ways.

There is a dominant conception of gender and agriculture in the development literature that predicts that women's land-based production produces resistance to urban-based capitalist consumption.⁷ This resistance to development is theorized as originating in women's dual roles as mothers of human children and metaphorical mothers of the landscape.⁸ However, this theorization ignores the ways in which motherhood as a construct cannot account for the diversity of social positions occupied by women. It was evident that this theorization of women-as-mothers had impacted on local understandings of gender, resistance and progress from the lyrics of an Ilocano folksong sung by female community development activists:

babaket, baballasang adu ti maibingay iti tignayan...
adda kami nga babae
saan a nawayway no di sumabsabay
(old women, young women have much to share with the movement
we are here together as women
not lagging behind but keeping up [with progress])⁹

⁶ The same arguments could be made for men and masculinities, but have not yet become explicit or common within the development literature.

⁷ Kettel, B. Women and environments: challenging the myths. Women in Development Directorate, Canadian International Development Agency, Hull, P.Q., Canada, 1990; Kettel, B. "Women, nature and development" *Redirections* (Spring), newsletter of the Centre for Sustainable Regional Development, University of Victoria, Victoria, B.C., Canada, 1993; Harcourt, W., ed. *Feminist perspectives on sustainable development* (London: Zed Books and Rome: Society for International Development, 1994); van den Hombergh, H., ed. *Gender, environment and development: a guide to the literature* (Utrecht: International Books for the Institute for Development Research, Amsterdam, 1993); Mies, M. and V. Shiva *Ecofeminism* (London: Zed Books, 1993.)

⁸ Jackson, C. 1993 "Woman/nature or gender/history? A critique of ecofeminist 'development'" *Journal of Peasant Studies* 20(3): 389-419; Shiva, V. *Staying alive: women, ecology, development* (London: Zed Books, 1989.)

⁹ Recorded by Salidummay on their 1992 album *Dongdong-ay*, translation mine.

This song reinserts those women who are not-yet-married (“ladies” or *baballasang*) and those who are aged and no longer, if ever, mothers (*babaket*) in to the narrative of community development and progress. Similarly, this chapter challenges the identification of women as naturally concerned with unpaid, subsistence production and family relations under the mothering nature rubric. By valuing subsistence production over market participation for indigenous and local women, this idea of ‘mothering the landscape’ imposes a Euro-American nostalgia for a world apparently lost. ‘Mothering the landscape’ posits gender roles defined by biological sex, sexuality and “natural” capacity.¹⁰ There are then two subject positions for women that appear to correspond to social classes. A ‘woman’ is either a Euro-American or elite subject with concerns and interests well beyond her household or a ‘Third World woman’, who is ‘naturally’ a stay-at-home mother.

This dynamic was visible within a UNICEF “Mother and Child” nutrition program active in several local communities. When female project officials came to visit during the May swidden planting season, they were upset to find that the ‘mothers,’ their beneficiaries, were almost all out in their fields. These fields were usually some considerable distance from the houses, too far for the urban-based “professional” women to hike. In the beneficiaries’ homes, childcare was being undertaken by the men but a “Father and Child” nutrition program was not suggested. According to one male respondent who received a visit from a project officer, men were not approached as being either knowledgeable or interested in child nutrition: “She only liked to talk with the mother, and was dismayed that she was gone to the *kaingin*. This project did not like to talk with me, even if I am the one cooking then.”

These ideas about gender and agriculture posit an essentially timeless identity for indigenous women. At the community level, this brings into conflict what many outsiders and some locals think women are supposed to be doing – upholding what “traditional” gender specifies –with the pragmatics of daily life. More resources, material and discursive, appear to be available for narratives of development that coincide with metropolitan images of the periphery - development that portrays economically active,

¹⁰ Stabile, C. “A garden inclosed is my sister’: ecofeminism and ecovalences” *Cultural Studies* 8(1), 1994: 56-73.

innovative men and 'traditional,' home-based, mothering women.¹¹ Thus there are no clear distinctions between what outside observers theorize for local gender and what local people, as individuals negotiating social space within localities, expect for themselves.

In interviews on the themes of gender and agricultural practices, people sometimes expressed globalized ideas of gender as community norms. For instance, several people, men and women, told me that "men should collect firewood, because it is heavy work and that is the work of a man." Yet, many women I spoke with told me they collected firewood and did other 'heavy work' without censure and without wanting any assistance, but taking pride in their abilities. They would be offended if someone implied they were less than competent farmers who did not "know what to do" or were "hard up to manage the work." It would mean they were less than competent local women. Similarly, while other respondents commented that "mothers should be at home, looking after the children," men were very involved in nurturing children. Men of all ages performed childcare around the homes, in stores, cafes and bars and on public transportation. Children who needed adult attention – soothing for injuries, emotional comfort – were just as likely, in my observations, to turn to a male extended family member as a female one. Seeing men in a nurturing role occasioned no comments from other people on virtue in taking on a 'feminized' task, nor criticisms of their gendered shortcomings as parents. This was simply the way parents and children related. Thus, the interpellation of globalized discourses on gender with local norms was uneven and contradictory at times.

Globalized discourses could just as easily be used locally to naturalize gender differences alleviated by economic and social change as those created or intensified by the agricultural transition. Because local ideas on gender are embedded in a dense discursive network of global cultural politics, local use of the English-language terms "traditional" and "modern" to express implicit values conceals struggles to

¹¹ For examples, see the UNICEF story above, and the representations of development and agriculture in Banaue, Chapter 3.

control their meaning. This discursive strategy obscures the social meanings of change for those caught up in it.¹²

Below, I examine the changing gendered division of labor across the agricultural landscape of Haliap/Panubtuban. In this discussion, I use the terms set by local people themselves, “knowing what to do.” For my purposes, it is not enough to suggest the historical changes in the crops and divisions of labor. Beyond that, I wish to report on the contradictory understandings of femininities constructed around the division of labor and the knowledges required to perform the tasks required. Gender is not merely an object of a trajectory of social change called development, but a process of identity constitution. Thus, according to Butler’s notion of performativity, gender is actually a dynamic gendering. Gender is implicated in all social structurings, whether they occur under the rubric of tradition/primitive/periphery or change/modern/metropolitan. Gender is a moving target with the roles people perform and their interpretations of the identities so produced constantly shifting.

5.3 Knowing what to do in an agricultural landscape

The people of Haliap/Panubtuban have created an agricultural landscape composed of several different types of land use (see Figure 5-1) The upslope recharge area is called *fontok* (mountain) and usually covered with forest, *ala*. These forested slopes are comprised of open access communal areas (*ala*), privately owned woodlots (*pinusu*) and privately owned areas underplanted with coffee (*nakopihan*). On the margins of the forest, people open shifting cultivation fields, *habal*, (English-language, swidden and Tagalog, *kaingin*) and these are found in various stages of succession. People may plant fallow areas in later succession with fruit trees or coffee. Further downslope is a zone ofouselots, *fobloy*, with small clusters of houses making up hamlets or *sitios*. Depending on the contour, people have created *sitios* above, below and within the *pajaw* or terraced rice paddies. Depending on the rains, some ricefield owners may plant their paddies with green beans. Local people name these fields “garden.”

¹² Ong, A. “Colonialism and modernity: feminist re-presentations of women in non-Western societies” *Inscriptions* 3/4, 1988: 79-104.

Most local people describe the entire agricultural system as dependent on the flow of water from springs located in the upslope recharge zone. These springs are channeled into their irrigation canals in order to flood the successive rice paddies of a particular 'stack.' The outflow for the water is the river – *guangguang*. Pictures of rice terraces, swidden, forest, garden and river are found in Plate 5-1 and Plate 5-2 (following). These plates help the reader to visualize the land-use diagram that appears in Figure 5-1. Estimates for the various locally-defined categories of land use in Haliap/Panubtuban are presented in Table 5-1 and Table 5-2. Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 express the proportions of the various landuse classifications graphically.

Map 5-1, 196, shows the river valley occupied by the community in terms of the landforms present. It locates the landuse categories of forest, swidden, rice fields and mixed use areas in relation to the river, streams and contour lines. Most of the upper slopes in both *barangays* are forested while rice fields have been made along the river. The majority of rice paddies are found in Panubtuban, to the southeast of the municipal road that runs through Haliap. Map 5-2 is a political map of the community that corresponds to the landforms map. It presents the water drainage system, elevation and road and *sitio* locations. This map represents with dots what is actually a much more dispersed distribution of houses. It shows, however, that houselots – *sitios* – are located in proximity to the fields, rather than to the road for the vast majority of peoples.¹³

¹³ This scattered distribution was a determining factor in writing up this project. Since some *sitios* have only one or two houses, giving more specific information, such as the populations of *sitios*, or locating people's comments to any *sitio* would enable the identification of respondents.

Plate 5-1 Rice fields, swidden and forest



Plate 5-2 Rice fields, "garden," and river



Figure 5-1 The representational landscape of Haliap/Panubtuban

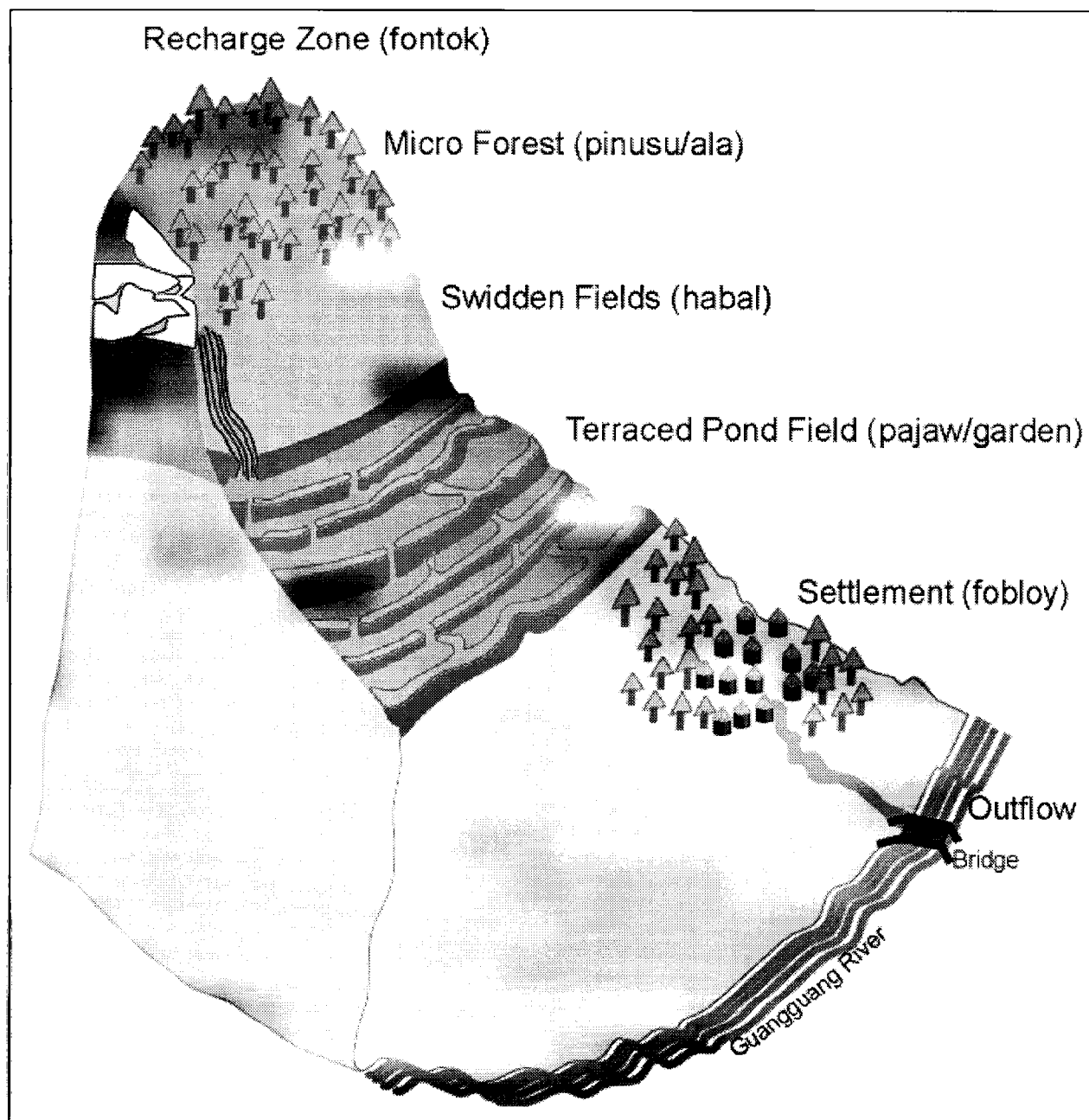


Table 5-1 Estimates of Landuse in Haliap

Land use	Area (ha.)	% of total
Houselot <i>fobloy</i>	31	4
Ricefield <i>payoh</i>	182	23
Cultivated	140	18
Converted to garden	42	5
Swidden <i>habal</i>	120	15
Forest <i>ala</i>	392	49
Private forest <i>nakopihan/pinusu</i>	347	44
Communal forest	45	5
"Wasteland"	75	9
Total	800	100

Figure 5-2 Estimates of Landuse in Haliap

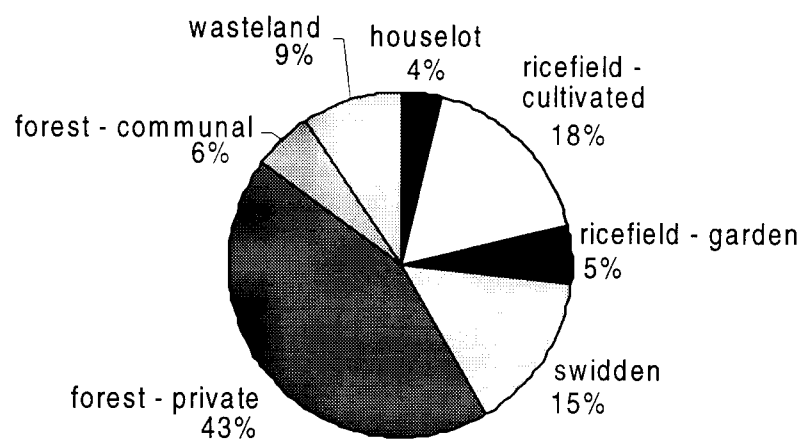
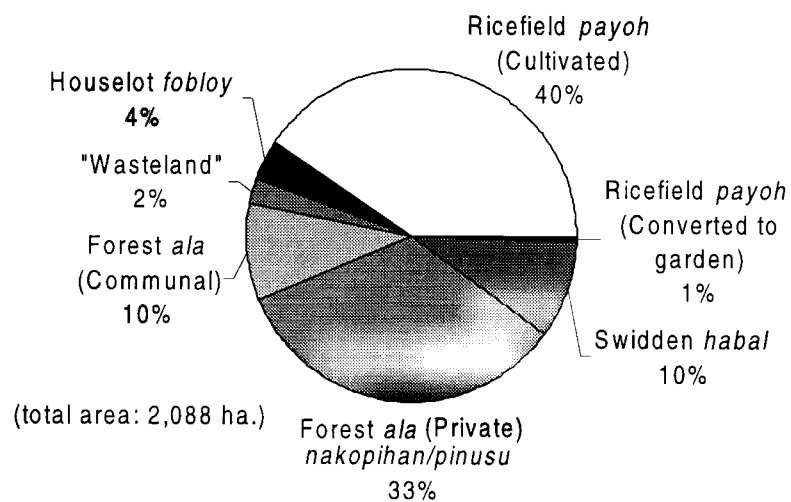


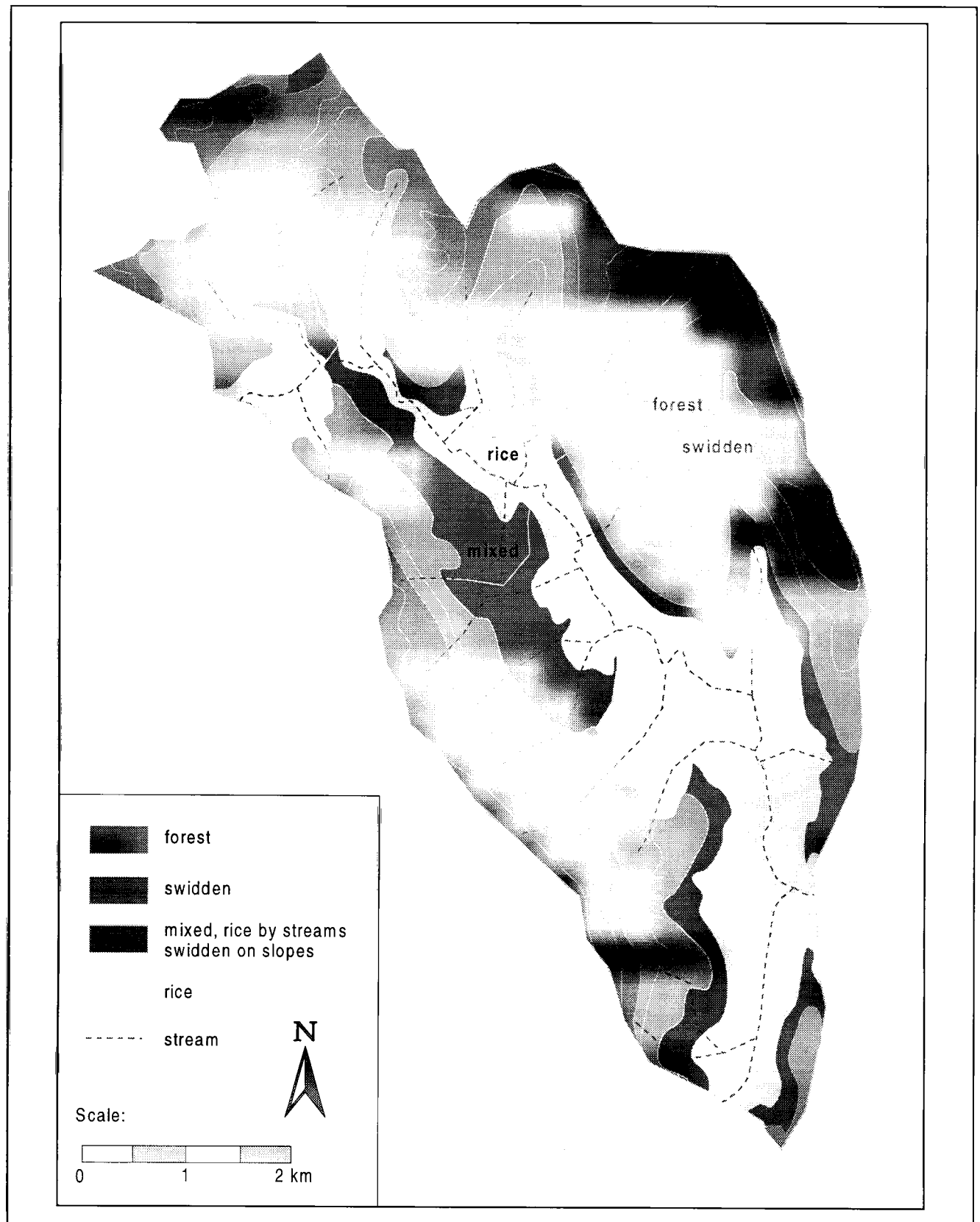
Table 5-2 Estimates of Landuse in Panubtuban

Land use	Area (ha.)	% of total
Houselot <i>fobloy</i>	80	4
Ricefield <i>payoh</i>	858	41
Cultivated	846	41
Converted to garden	12	1
Swidden <i>habal</i>	200	10
Forest <i>ala</i>	900	43
Private forest <i>nakopihan/pinusu</i>	700	34
Communal forest	200	10
"Wasteland"	50	2
Total	2088	100

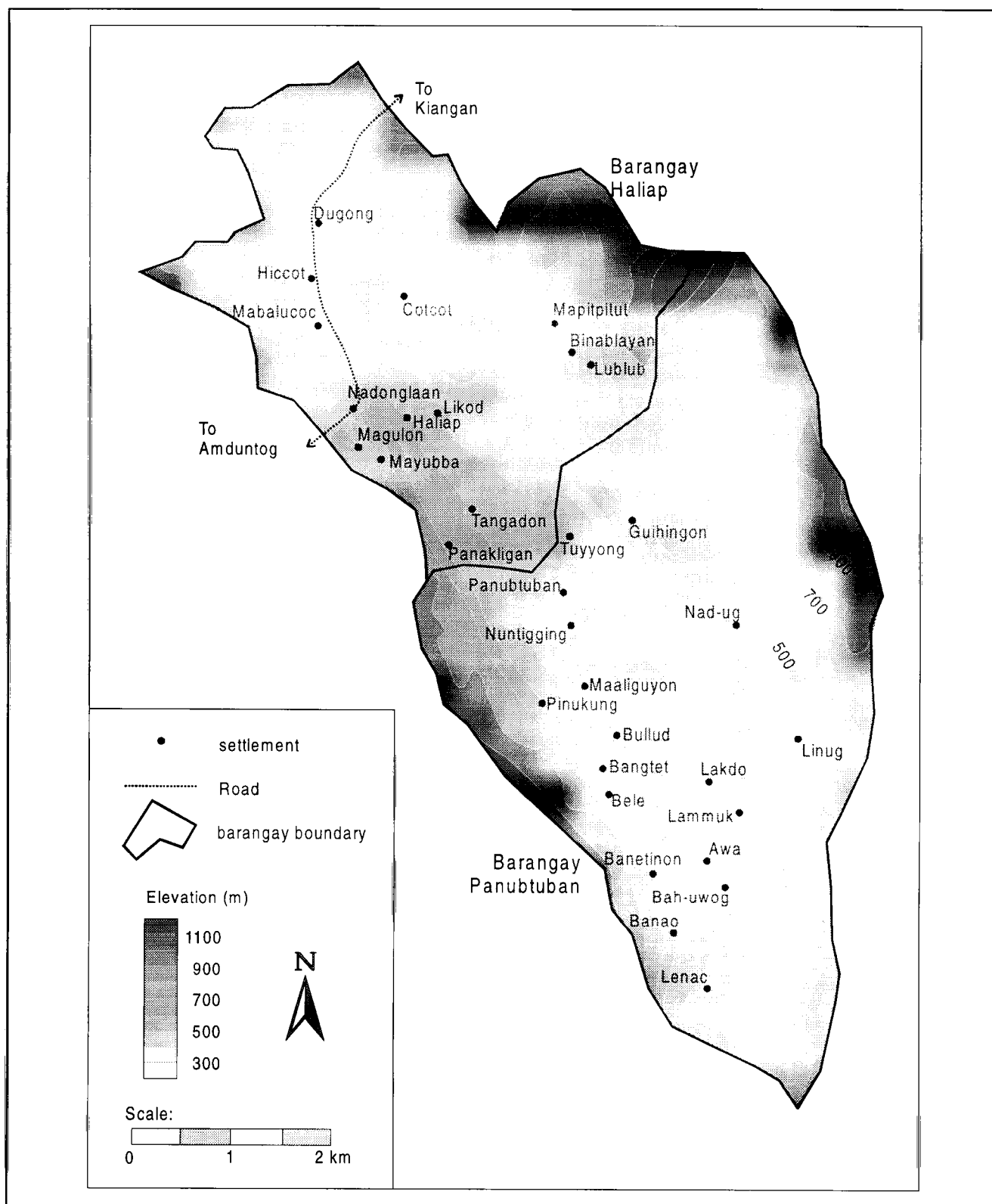
Figure 5-3 Estimates of Landuse in Panubtuban



Map 5-1 Landforms, Haliap and Panubtuban



Map 5-2 Political map, Haliap and Panubtuban, showing elevation

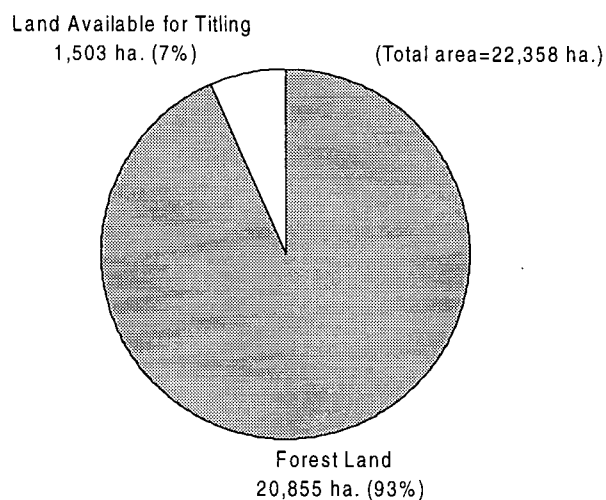


5.3.1 Making land-use decisions

The production of landscape is ongoing. In their comments on land use, my respondents told me that most of the desirable areas have been terraced and the community is currently depleting the forest in the upslope recharge area, reducing the water supply available for wet rice farming. This interpretation is confirmed by the map. In response to the water shortage for rice farming, local people are bringing more and more land into production as “garden” in order to produce cash crops that can be sold to purchase rice on the national market.

Forest depletion is not simply a concern for local debates over community resource management. Under Philippine law, areas over eighteen degrees in slope are classified as ‘forest reserve’ and are part of the public domain. Only seven percent of the entire (former) municipality of Kiangnan is certified as below eighteen degrees in slope and thus available for titling (see Figure 5-5).¹⁴ Thus, though the community has occupied the valley since the late nineteenth century, people here do not have clear title, either individually or as a group, to the land they cultivate.

Figure 5-5 Land use classification for municipality, 1990



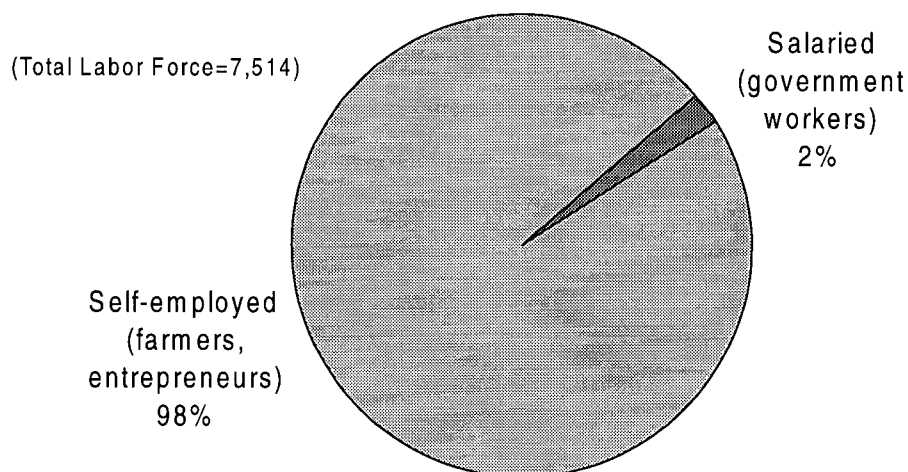
In my 1996 survey, the population of Haliap/Panubtuban was 1451 individuals. These people were grouped in 267 households, with an average household size of 5.4 persons (see Table 5-4).

Approximately fifty-one percent of the household population was between the ages of 17 and 59 and therefore classified, by the National Statistics Office, as part of the labor force (see Figure 5-6).¹⁵ Half this labor force, 471 out of 943 people, was female. Local statistics for monthly household income across the municipality of Asipulo, where Haliap and Panubtuban are located, are reported in Table 5-4.

Table 5-4 Population and households by barangay, Asipulo(1996)

Barangay	Population	No. of Households
Amduntog	1,787	301
Antipolo	1,052	172
Camandag	2,891	504
Cawayan	1,205	223
Haliap	817	147
Namal	1,444	243
Nungawa	515	87
Panubtuban	634	120
Pula	1,265	197
Total	11,610	1994

Figure 5-6 Labor and employment, Asipulo (1996)



¹⁴ In 1995, the Municipality of Kiangnan was divided in 2, creating a new Municipality of Asipulo. Asipulo is a political and administrative unit comprised of the *barangays* listed in Figure 5.3 but, as yet, has not been assigned any land area or defined borders.

¹⁵ Data on dependency ratio extrapolated from Central Cordillera Agricultural Program surveys.

Table 5-5 Distribution of families by household income, Asipulo (1996)

Monthly income range in Philippine pesos	Est. yearly income in (1996) Canadian dollars	No. of families	% total
100-3500.00	C\$60-\$2100	1,848	92.7
3,500-9333.00	C\$2100-\$5600	132	6.6
10,000+	C\$6,000+	14	0.7
Total		1,994	100.0

When I showed these figures to my respondents, they expressed some amusement. Results from our household surveys suggested that this income was seriously under-reported. Amounts between P5000 and P35,000 regularly changed hands over local transactions in ricefields, vehicles, livestock, lumber, chainsaws and marijuana. People living in the community reported that their non-agricultural sources of cash income were often in small industries located in nearby towns such as beauty parlors, tailoring shops, and auto shops, as well as government salaries and pensions. Across the province of Ifugao, income sources are estimated as wages (10%), entrepreneurial activities including agriculture (43.2%) and other activities, including remittances received from outside the province (47.8%).¹⁶ Data I collected from local respondents indicate that that household income comes from a more diverse set of strategies in upper-income families. These were defined as households whose agricultural and wage-earning activities suggested average earnings of more than P3500 per month. People in this loosely-defined upper-income group made up approximately twenty two percent of my sample of one hundred sixty-seven households. Women own proportionately half of the lands, the crops and the houselots of Haliap/Panubtuban.

5.4 Gender equality

In Ifugao indigenous communities, like much of upland Southeast Asia, women access and control resources as farmers and landowners through inheritance in their own right, inheriting land on par with men through a system of bilateral primogeniture. These bilateral kinship systems assure women of a

¹⁶ Republic of the Philippines, Ifugao Socioeconomic Profile, 1990.

significant measure of economic autonomy and familial support.¹⁷ In the households I surveyed in 1996, virtually all married couples reported that the wife had brought one or more parcels of agricultural land to the new household on marriage.¹⁸ People described parcels of land acquired after marriage as conjugal - belonging to “both” the husband and the wife, and alienable only with the consent of both co-owners. Thus, in terms of the structural relations in local households, men and women have equality in rights to land. This is not the only evidence of gender equality offered by local commentators. Local academics have documented what they identify as indigenous gender egalitarianism in both the region’s gendered division of agricultural labor and Ifugao mythologies.¹⁹

Based on these descriptions of land distribution, cooperative labor and myth, it can be argued that gender in Ifugao is egalitarian. This follows the definition of gender egalitarian society established by Ortner: “it is not that these societies lack traces of ‘male dominance,’ but the elements of ‘male dominance’ are fragmentary – they are not woven into a hegemonic order, are not central to some larger and coherent discourse of male superiority, and are not central to some larger network of male-only or male-superior practices.”²⁰ In the anthropology of gender in upland Southeast Asia, gender is described as being constituted within patterns of equivalence and equality. In the absence of any formal rhetoric of male superiority, gender is described as being less important, in most contexts, than the social categories of age and class.²¹ This was supported by my respondents’ comments on gender. In my research, I found ideas of gender were expressed in terms of complementarity and the balance of masculine and feminine

¹⁷ Wolf, D, *Factory daughters: gender, household dynamics and rural industrialization in Java* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 27.

¹⁸ In several cases, the husband had not brought any land and was thus, in the local understanding, depending on his wife while having to prove his industry.

¹⁹ For arguments for equality in the division of labor see Bacdayan, A. “Mechanistic cooperation and sexual equality among the Western Bontoc” in A. Schlegel, ed. *Sexual stratification* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974, 270-291.) The egalitarian character of local mythology is explored in Orendain, M. “Woman in Ifugao traditional stories.” *St. Louis University Research Journal* 25(2), 1994: 375 – 384.

²⁰ Ortner, S. “So, is female to male as nature is to culture,” in her *Making gender: the politics and erotics of culture*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996, 173 - 180), p. 174.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 175.

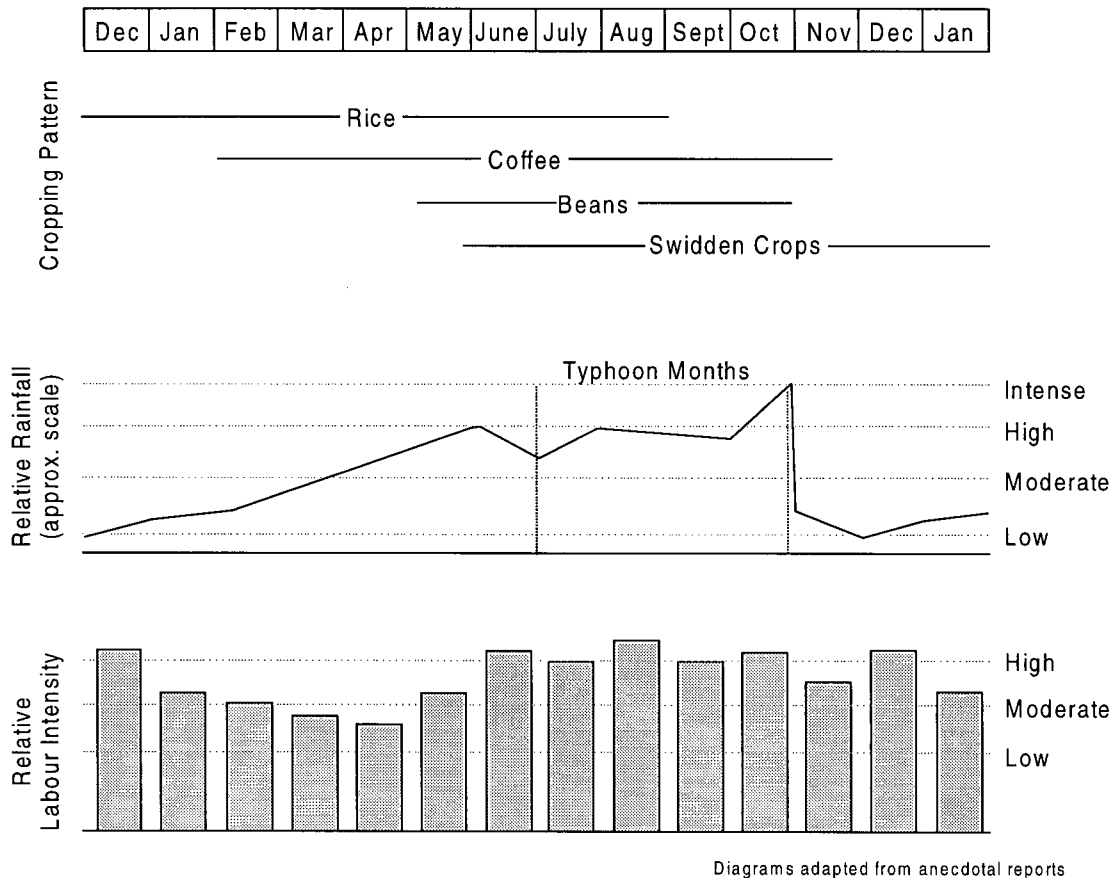
principles within individuals and social formations.²² As one male respondent remarked: “since both women and men are necessary, one is not more important than the other – like shoes.” Local discourse on gender complementarity reflects both local agricultural economics and distinct local ideas of spiritual power and the body. Within these local understandings of gender, women have comparatively greater access to economic independence, power and possible public authority. Thus, contemporary women can mobilize arguments based in this local 'tradition' to access opportunities, potentially countering or accepting globalized gender norms as they adapt their performances of gender to the ends required.²³

People living in Haliap/Panubtuban combine subsistence cultivation of wet rice and swidden crops with the commercial production of coffee and beans over a year long agricultural cycle (see Figure 5-7). Farmers make their decisions on the availability of water and the arrival of the rainy season, typically May through November. Between the specific requirements of each crop and the vagaries of climate, there are particular bottlenecks in the supply of agricultural labor each year. March through May are pre-harvest “slack” months where both men and women look for contract work out-of-province – road paving, fruit picking and the like. May is the month for planting swiddens and women spend their days in the fields, while their husbands typically stay at home, caring for the children. Respondents reported that peak labor demand for both women and men occurred during the August harvest through December field preparation and again, in the February planting season.

²² Errington, S. "Recasting sex, gender and power: a theoretical and regional overview." In Atkinson, J. and Errington, S. eds. *Power and difference: gender in island Southeast Asia*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990; pp. 1-58.)

²³ Tsing, A., *In the realm of the Diamond Queen: marginality in an out-of-the-way place* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Ong, A. and M. Peletz, *Bewitching women, pious men: gender and body politics in Southeast Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.)

Figure 5-7 Ifugao agricultural cycle, mixing commercial and subsistence crops



Both men and women noted that, although tasks such as repairing the rice paddies may be ideally masculine, women often shared in the labor. For instance, in January, many of the younger men were busy with bean gardening and women took part in the repair of the rice terraces. The following sections elaborate on the gendering of knowledge and labor across this agricultural landscape in more detail, beginning with the cultivation of rice.

5.5 Rice

“Ifugao culture is rice culture” is a truism repeated to visitors to the province. It goes without saying that if you are asking an Ifugao person about “land,” you are discussing rice paddies, the only kind of land worth having. Terraced rice fields are the most secure form of real property in the local land tenure system. Held in trust by individual households for family lineages, traditional protocols for sales, rental, mortgages and sharecropping overdetermine their management. Historically, the possession and

proper cultivation of rice fields determines social status in a system that divides people into two groups. People in the wealthy *kadangyan* group achieve this status through inheritance or through the staging of elaborate prestige feasts which redistribute their accumulated wealth. Poor people, *nawotwot*, are their clients, exchanging labor in planting and harvesting rice for a share of the crop and providing political support as required.

Terraced rice production across the Cordillera is dependent on spring-fed irrigation systems. The productivity of the system relies on adequate water flowing from the forested recharge area up the slope down through the terrace system. Though archaeological records indicate that the technology has been practiced since approximately 500 BC, most of the terraces of the Cordillera date to a much more recent period, late in the Spanish era.²⁴ The ripple effects caused by Spanish rearrangements of lowland populations forced even uncontacted peoples up into the mountains. They withdrew to the heights in front of waves of migrants fleeing Spanish-dominated zones on the Ilocos coast, the lower Cagayan, and in Central Luzon. Many of these peoples began planting rice in terraced pondfields relatively recently and Haliap/Panubtuban is one such community.

Neighboring communities stereotype people in Haliap as not having many rice terraces. The neighboring Tuwali and Kalanguya ethnic groups describe Ayangans as migrant swiddeners. Respondents in Haliap/Panubtuban Ayangan oral history interviews reported that their ancestors arrived as migrant swiddeners in the 1870s. These respondents were quick to note that the first settlers soon built rice terraces, borrowing the terracing knowledge, at least initially, from other communities. When I asked about customary legal restrictions on cutting trees in the recharge zone, Ayangan respondents did not report the same restrictions as their Tuwali neighbors.²⁵ Instead, community elders told me of growing

²⁴ See Scott, W., *A Sagada reader* (Manila: New Day, 1988.)

²⁵ Ifugao Research and Development Center, "The Muyong System: Land Ownership and Forest Management System Among the Tuali of Ifugao" in Bennagen, P. and Lucas-Fernan, M., eds., *Consulting the spirits, working with nature, sharing with others: indigenous resource management in the Philippines* (Manila: Sentro para sa ganap na Pamayan, Inc, 1996; pp. 83 – 87.)

conflicts between managing the recharge area for water supply, local investments in logging, coffee plantations, and the necessity of a land base for *habal* or swidden farming.²⁶

In 1992, the CIDA project with which I was working approached the community as rice terrace-less migrants, rather than indigenous to the area. Households were surveyed as to how much compensation they would require to relocate out of their present settlement, classified as a forest reserve, and into the lowlands. Constructing the local people as swiddeners, the project offered environmental education to encourage alternatives to making destructive slash-and-burn plots. Some local people pointed out that it was a lack of water, not of knowledge, that limited the extensively terraced area to places in Panubtuban, well away from the road. They suggested it would be nice if the project staff would get out of the Jeep and go and see their terraces, rather than haranguing them in the Barangay Hall on their “backward practices.”

Local people used the discourse of being eternally careful indigenous stewards to justify their interests in managing local water and forest resources to the project: “we improved the land; we made the ricefields,” “this place was empty when we came here.” In this case, a legitimate concern over the exhaustion of land resources became completely conflated with ethnic stereotypes and the historical politics of ownership surrounding the land base. The problem of water disappeared beneath the discursive appropriation of the discourse of local knowledge to defend against what was perceived as an attempt to dispossess people of their land. Clearly, to have a claim to occupy the land, people needed to claim indigenous knowledge. This discourse on indigenous knowledge is a Western desire for the primitive expert embodied in ventriloqual manipulation of local actors. Local actors mobilized this discourse to defend entitlements to their land, constructing a local “we” with defined “traditions.” This is the context in which the quote that begins this chapter is put into play as a political tactic – ‘proper’

²⁶*Habal* is the Ayangan term for a shifting cultivation field. It is used interchangeably with the Tuvuli *inuman* or *uma*, and the Tagalog, *kaingin*. The corresponding English-language term is swidden. Shifting cultivation is “any agricultural system in which fields are cleared by firing and are cropped discontinuously, implying periods of fallowing which are longer than periods of cropping.” Conklin, H. “Hanunoo agriculture: a report on an integral system of shifting cultivation in the Philippines” (Rome: FAO Forestry Development Paper No. 12, 1957), p. 1.

indigenes have a distinct division of labor. Apparently, the knowledge and expertise that a local community might have in managing resources can only be found within a gendered tradition that fixes men and women into particular roles.

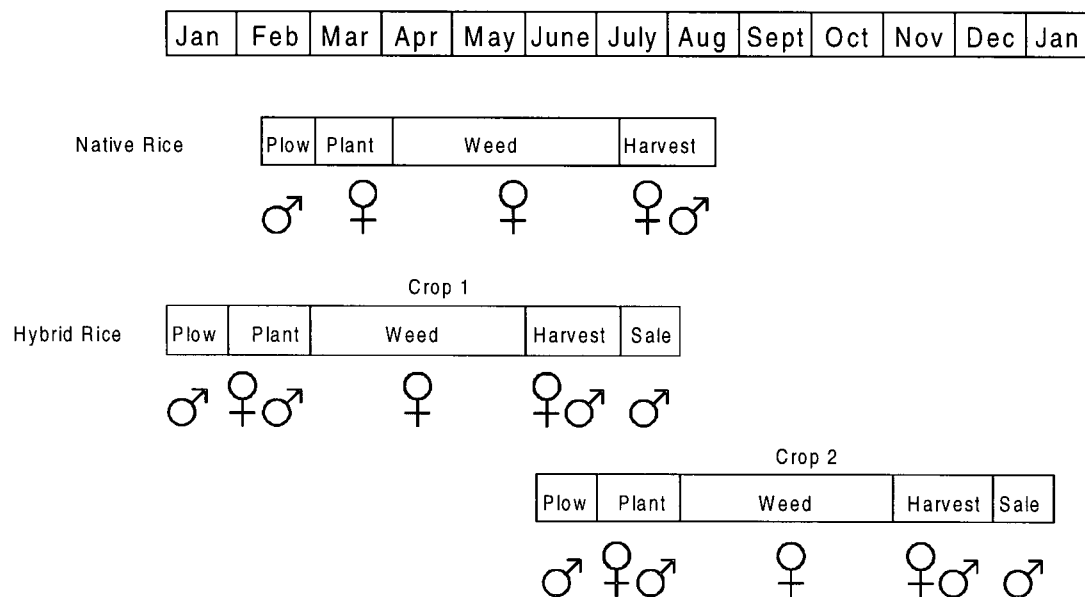
As I reported in Chapter 4, respondents told me that women had always planted the native varieties of rice. Whether this “always” was a ‘were ideally supposed to’ or an ‘actually did’ remains obscure. What I can report is that, by and large, this no longer holds: men also plant rice. Now that the community plants both native rice varieties and hybrid cultivars, introduced during the Green Revolution, male labor is engaged in the planting process. According to respondents, men did not plant rice until they saw the men in the lowlands planting the hybrid varieties. Then they were “challenged” to join their wives and female relatives in work groups planting native varieties in Ifugao. In discussions with me, several women, in particular, seemed to think this a good thing, “more help in the work , it passes faster” while some men made comments such as, “it’s a... women’s work, but with the new rice... necessary.”

People plant native rice in February and harvest it in August. Local fields produce one crop per year, on average, without the use of chemical fertilizers or insecticides. Farmers use techniques of green mulching and turning the rice straw back into the soil to maintain its fertility. Female harvesters cut each individual panicle with a special knife, setting the heaviest panicles aside. Women expert in judging productivity are asked to select the panicles that will be used by the field owner to produce next year’s seed crop for transplanting. Men and women bundle the harvest and men carry the bundles to a granary for drying and storage. People actually process the rice when bundles are removed from storage and brought to the house for pounding – removing the husk and bran for cooking. Women predominantly pound the rice, though sometimes men assist. Though the labor and knowledge are gendered, nobody described native rice as a woman’s crop, but they did point out that only that women’s work and knowledge are terribly important in its cultivation.

Hybrid rice is cultivated from seed bought in the market and planted twice in the year, in roughly

January and July. Hybrid varieties require “medicines” – chemical fertilizers and pesticides – for proper cultivation. People purchase these outright or on credit against the sale of the harvest. Both men and women plant and harvest the rice. During the harvest because the panicles are cut in swaths with a scythe and threshed in the field. This being “heavy work,” the labor group is often predominantly male. People then place the threshed rice in *cavan* bags (50 kg each) and men carry it to the road where it will be transported to a commercial rice mill. The field owner burns the rice straw on the field to return some nutrients to the soil. Post-milling, the owner either sells the harvest or stores it for family consumption. Since the varieties are standardized, a harvest of hybrid rice can be sold at the prevailing market price like any commercial crop. The gendered labor patterns for each type of rice are depicted in Figure 5-8.

Figure 5-8 Gendered labor patterns in rice cultivation for varieties grown in paddy fields – native and hybrid



5.5.1 Rice and resistance to research

Based on my respondents’ generalizations and my observations as reported above, it is clear that the knowledge of the fit and performance of the local varieties in specific field conditions is a feminine one. Initially, I wanted to retrieve this knowledge as a way of grounding women in the local community as producers of local landscapes. I thought that this might work as a technique of writing women in to histories of development, colonialism and resistance. My attempts to retrieve a women’s knowledge of

rice varieties met with several problems. To begin, this knowledge applies only to varieties cultivated locally – ‘native’ rice. Only approximately 1 in 10 of the farming households were growing these strains, the bulk of the community having switched to the commercially available ‘high-yielding’ hybrid varieties. These farmers explained to me that commercial rice could, unlike native varieties, be sold into the national market. Switching from one kind of cultivar to the other allowed households to channel more of their subsistence production through the market economy. Instead of planting enough rice to meet their needs for a year, households planted hybrid rice, stored some, sold some and reinvested the proceeds in cutting lumber or growing vegetables that might bring in a better price.

When people changed their crops from native to hybrid rice, they reworked the local gendered division of labor (see Figure 5-8 above). Women were no longer the prime laborers in planting and hybrid seed required no selection. Likewise, women could be replaced by male labor in the harvesting and threshing, as opposed to bundling, of the rice crop. I asked my research assistants to find some of the remaining households who were still cultivating native rice. They reported that only elderly women who had farmed for their entire lifetimes still cultivated the old strains and held a working knowledge of local varieties. The information was conveyed from woman to woman across work groups and down descent lines through participation in ritual chants and planting songs that are part of ‘paganism.’

Accessing this information presented a problem for my research assistants because their religious affiliation specifically forbade dealings with “pagan” practices such as women’s planting rituals. My assistants, hired to translate household surveys between Ifugao and English, were college graduates. They had never actually planted native varieties in their own family fields, so they were not sure they would be comfortable explaining to me what it was these older women knew. However, they did know of someone who had done research on precisely this topic – local knowledge of native varieties – for a researcher from the University of the Philippines.

I checked the publications of this investigator and found nothing on women’s knowledge of rice varieties

in Haliap, so I asked my assistants to find out who, locally, had worked on that project. This former research assistant was, in fact, someone I knew well from my stay in the community clinic. I found it strange that we had never discussed the research and, when I raised the topic, it was met with prevarication. Finally, after several days of avoiding the issue, the truth emerged: the data, carefully collected, had been burned. After a disagreement over working conditions, instead of handing over the beginnings of the study, this former research assistant had thrown the lot in a garbage pit and set it alight. When I asked why, there were several reasons, ranging from the political to the pragmatic.

Those questionnaires, all those stories, it was all for them at the University, not for us here. It is over. It is gone now, the old rice and the customs of planting it. It is only good for research but no more for us. Why do I want to help the research? The researcher got angry to me and I think, 'I am also human.' So, I quit. And I burned it all. Do you think someone like me has anywhere to put all that paper? It would just become destroyed... Even me, I don't like my wife to plant the old rice. It is better that she finish her college and find her profession. That needs money and there is no money for the old rice.

At this point, the question that prompted me to ask about women's knowledges of rice varieties had been displaced. It was "knowing what to do" on a much broader scale that made women "good women."

Women were feminine because of their performances in particular contexts, not because they possessed a particular form of knowledge localized to agricultural production.

People have moved through the transition from local to commercial rice varieties while simultaneously experiencing much broader changes in the way they understand themselves. By choosing to try to access the benefits available from certain religious practices, formal education and different roles within a gendered division of labor, many women have moved away from what might be recognized as a 'traditional' knowledge. This change is felt at time, as shown in the quote above, as a loss. This movement means that, for women, "knowing what to do" involves accessing cultural capital through education, through affiliation with non-local churches and by re-allocating time freed up from rice cultivation. Hence the resistance on the part of my research assistants and other community members to have me 'mine' what, for them, was a somewhat painful and ambivalent aspect of recent community history.

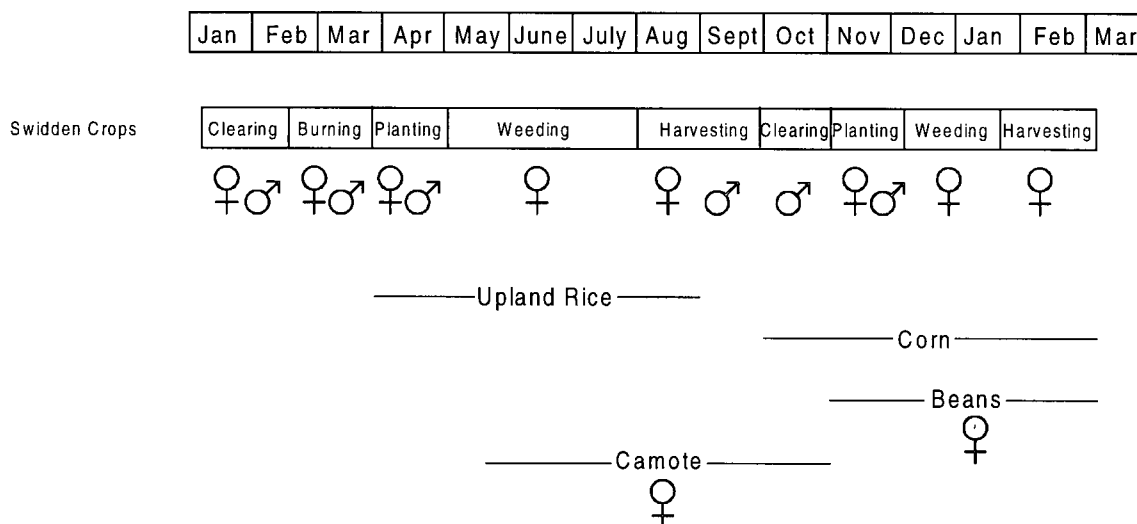
5.6 Swidden

Respondents from upper-income families reported that, with increasing integration into commercial agricultural production in vegetables and rice, they had largely stopped cultivating *habal* or swidden fields. People only reported actively cultivating *habal* in sixty eight percent of the households that we surveyed. Both groups of respondents told us that *habal* was a practice of people with lower household income, fields farther from the road, and little involvement in large-scale cash-cropping or the sale of lumber. Most of the female *habal* cultivators interviewed reported that they had sold some small portion of their vegetable harvest into the market “to meet their needs.”

People made most of their swiddens on the forest margins. Men cleared swiddens from primary forest and burnt the slash with female help. Women then planted, cultivated, weeded, harvested, selected seeds and distributed the harvest using techniques passed from mother to daughter and friend to friend.

Gendered labor patterns in the swidden are detailed in Figure 5-9.

Figure 5-9 Gendered labor patterns in swidden cultivation



On the relatively rare occasions when men came to the swidden after clearing and burning, they followed women's directions in cultivating the crops. Elite women tittered at the mention of men in the *habal* but female farmers expressed relief at having men's help with the work. These poorer women made comments such as: “it's just good that now, my husband comes to the *habal*, and then I go to the garden.

There's much work for both of us." Another woman expressed anxiety at the idea of having a husband underfoot in the *habal*:

I do not like him to know what I will sell. What if he likes to get that money? Where will I find again the money for school fees and for fare?

Women reported to me that they used many strategies to ensure long term swidden productivity: intercropping, green mulching, crop rotation, positioning the swidden below primary forest, and shunning commercial fertilizers. Typically, women plant their first year swidden with upland rice as a supplement to the pondfield harvest. They plant second and successive year plots with corn, sweet potatoes and vegetables. Figure 5-10 and Figure 5-11 diagram the cropping patterns in "typical" first and second year swidden plots. According to our respondents, they cultivate their fields for about five to seven years and then fallowed, ideally for ten to twenty years. Land-poor people commented that they found good swiddens hard to borrow due to the privatization of the forest and timber extraction. In response, these women tended to shift plots more frequently, observing shorter fallow periods.

While respondents described the majority of their crops as being "for family consumption only" reports of sales indicated that produce from the *habal* forms an important source of female-controlled sideline income. Women from these poorer households reported planting a smaller selection of crops for subsistence, choosing to concentrate more easily stored and marketed products like garlic, ginger, corn, mongo beans and vegetables. This was evidence of the rearticulation of women's *habal* farming within their household strategies to focus on small-scale commodity production. The poorer farmers' responses to surveys on nutrition indicated that they were not as concerned with nutrients and dietary variety as they were with having something in the pot and something to sell.

Figure 5-10 First year *habal* near sitio Likod, Barangay Haliap

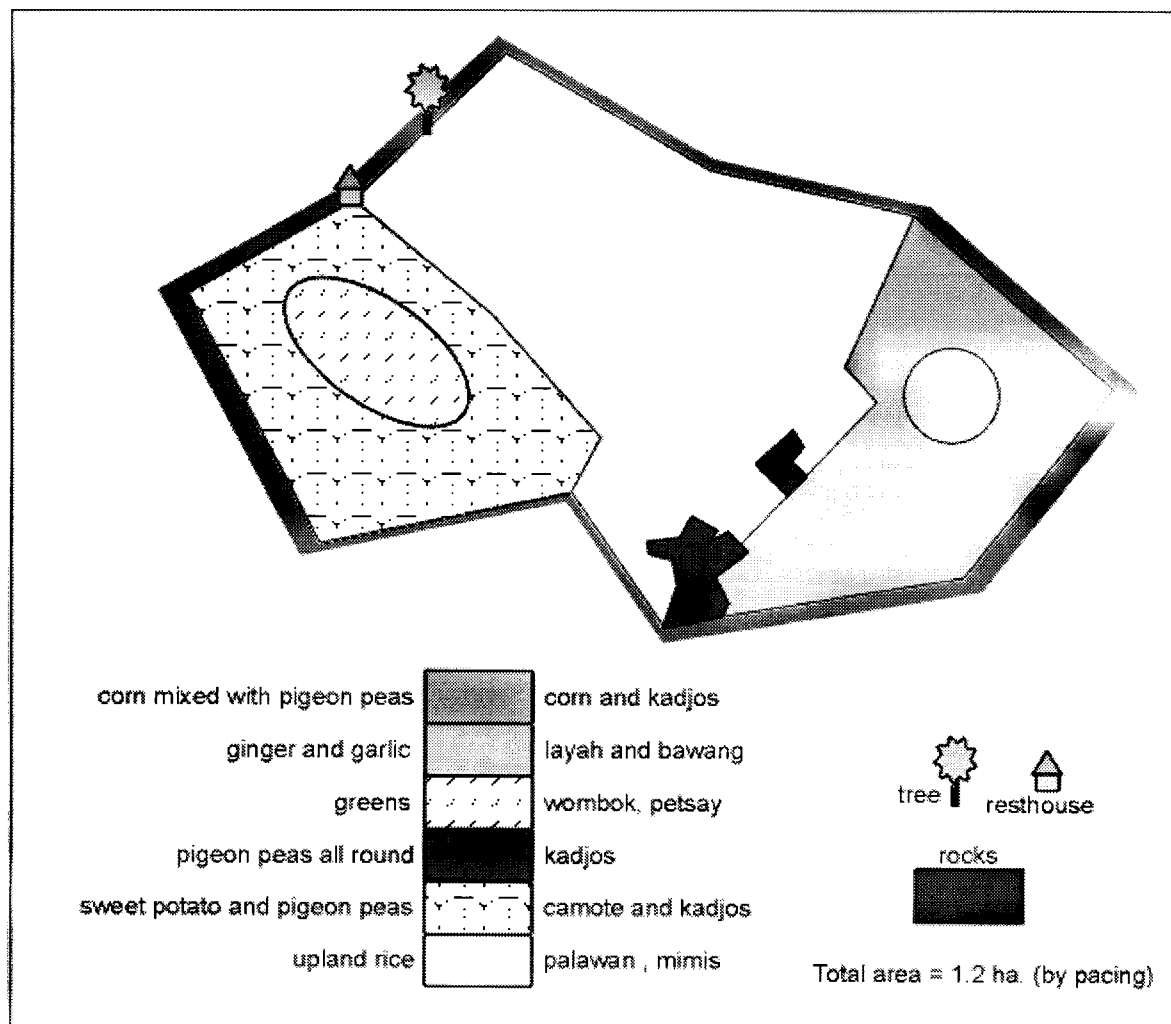
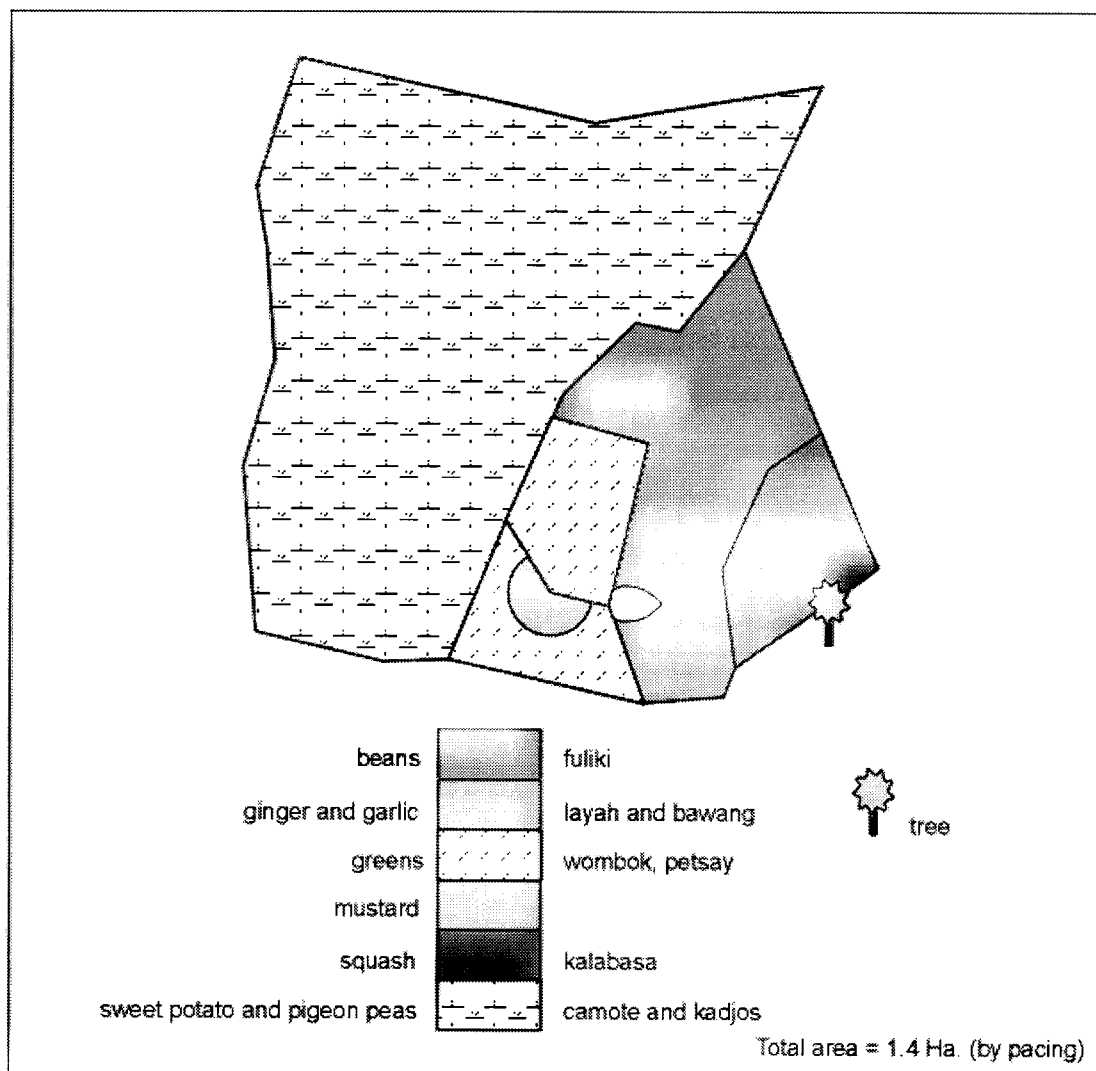


Figure 5-11 Second year *habal* near sitio Nuntigging, Barangay Panubtuban



People practicing swidden are quite aware that “lowlanders” and the national media despise the practice as “primitive” and “destructive.” Community members themselves tended to identify swidden with the past. Elderly women who swiddened were called *faket*, a term connoting “traditional” culture - style of dress, religion, farming techniques. When applied to younger women, *faket* was derogatory, suggesting they were ‘not progressive’ in their outlook and would become ‘old maids’.

Development interventions, like the introduction of Sloping Agricultural Land Technology by the local Department of Agriculture office, attempted to encourage male heads of households to improve the sustainability of swidden practice. These ‘improvements’ included planting trees as permanent crops,

'introducing' mixed cropping, and utilizing microenvironments across several sites. Since most swidden land was "borrowed" for the two year duration of the cropping cycle from a lineage plot or a neighbor's inheritance, any permanent improvements such as tree crops, would be problematic. In the customary tenure system of the community, planting trees constitutes a permanent claim to the land. Multiple plot strategies are limited by access to appropriate land in an increasingly stratified community, combined with shortages of labor at important points in the swidden cycle. The female farmers we interviewed reported that mixed cropping is already widespread, but noted that it is less effective and more labor intensive for farmers who intended to produce commercial crops.

A small group of women from upper-income households reported maintaining large swiddens planted with a diverse array of crops. This group of women had more than average economic security, each reporting a salaried husband and defining herself as "housewife" under "occupation." Several were wives of elected officials, and others were Barangay Health Workers trained by a Manila-based religious organization. Their agricultural work produced a broader selection of foods. These women told me that their intention in diversifying their crops was to meet the suggestions of government health and non-governmental organization programs to enhance family nutrition. Their husbands, too, were the recipients of training on planting tree crops.

The swiddens of these upper-income women were created with different goals and using different practices than those of the poorer women who farm the vast majority of swiddens. In group interviews, brochures describing "homegardens for family nutrition" available through the community clinic were the sources the elite women cited as their inspiration. They expressed a political interest in maintaining/redefining an Ifugao farming femininity as "housewives." They defined themselves as "housewives" against overseas workers who had left the community to seek employment abroad: "instead of looking everywhere for money, we stay here and care for our children." Their farming gained them respect from other community members as they were "not lazy to work," even though their

household livelihoods were more or less secure without the supplement of selling swidden crops.

During the period of my interviews on swidden, the Health Workers were conducting a survey of community conditions. This was a requirement of their work with the Manila head office and a necessary condition for the extension of further medical aid to the community. The Health Workers visited and evaluated each house in the community according to six indicators: nutrition, immunization, drinking water, sanitary installations, maternal health and family planning. For each category, they assigned the house one of four colors: red (for dangerous), yellow (for some problems), green (for ok), and blue (for excellent). They recorded their evaluation on a palm-sized card that they stapled to the house in question. Another colored card was stapled to a large-scale map of the community that hung on the wall of the clinic. I used the map in the clinic to check my tallies of houses in each *sitio*. The other information, particularly the cards on the houses, created strong feelings of intrusion. These applications of disciplinary techniques exercised power, objectifying women and fragmenting female experiences into data on their domestic work and fertility. This objectification had the end of supporting community development in terms set by a Manila office. It created a great deal of local discomfort but, when I asked one of the Health Workers how she felt when people were upset with their categorizations, she sighed and said: "How else will we progress? No clinic... means no nurse visiting, no medicines... nothing."

Approaching a house to interview a female farmer on her *habal* practices on the heels of the Barangay Health team was awkward. As my research assistants and I asked women for interviews about their *habal* practices, we could already see how their domestic work and their fertility (acceptance and use of birth control from the clinic) had been evaluated by the Health Workers. The presence of a red or yellow mark in the nutrition category sometimes provided the backdrop for our interview requests. Although my questions about choices of crops to plant, the reasons for planting them, and the land available were designed to elicit women's understandings of gender roles and their economic choices, it is not surprising that almost ten percent of those we approached turned us down. They were tired of "being researched" and tired of having it pointed out to them that they were not "pure housewives" who had the leisure and

salary to categorize their neighbors. I did, however, field a large number of questions from them about the possibilities of OCW work and “going abroad.”

Considering the gendering of the agricultural landscape, at first it appeared that swidden, a largely feminine domain, was threatened by logging and commercial crops dominated by male interests. Shifting my focus from landscapes to actors producing their localities, it became clear that the individuals who stood to benefit or lose were positioned across a variety of social axes other than gender. Religious affiliations, marriages into other ethnic groups, kin relations, class trajectories, age and social alliances all influenced individual opportunities. Deforestation and declining access to land had different impacts on women and men across the community. There was no single female set of interests in the landscape, nor uniquely gendered understanding of ecology shared by women across the community. I met women who resented the logging, and others who had their own *pinusu* plots and had invested in and rented out chainsaws. Some women were searching for better *habal* land and were annoyed with their selfish neighbors who would not share. Others were leaving the swidden, and subsistence production, to take up gardening or find work outside agriculture.

5.7 Bean gardening

In Haliap/Panubtuban, the major commercial crop is the common bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*), known as the “Baguio bean.”²⁷ People have converted dry rice terraces, formerly irrigated year 'round, to monocrop fields of beans called “garden.” Local people used this English-language term to emphasize the relative novelty of the large-scale commercial vegetable production and the sophistication of local links to national markets. The expansion of land area and labor time dedicated to this crop has created major adjustments in the local agricultural system and landscape over the last decade.

Gardening practices highlighted community stratification along lines of class, age and gender. During my master’s research, Respondents told me that young male gardeners, sick of the chemical fertilizers

²⁷ English-language terms in quotations are presented as used by respondents; Ifugao words, and words from other Philippine languages used by people in Ifugao are italicised and defined.

and pesticides and frustrated by their mounting debts, wanted to learn about organic farming.²⁸ In 1992, they approached the CIDA project where I was a research associate in much the same way as they had looked to the Department of Agriculture for the initial bean "package" of seed and "medicines" (herbicides and pesticides). The development project responded with a training session in ecologically-friendly farming techniques for interested gardeners. The training was 'naturally' structured around the identification of men with the market and women with the domestic realm. This stereotype was presented to and by the project and community leaders as the community norm but it did not truly reflect the diversity of community practices.²⁹

Project staff and elite male community leaders shared the assumptions that "the farmers" were men and women were only housewives (Tagalog, *maybahay, lang*) - wives and mothers whose interests lay in subsistence. Thus, men were the heads of households interviewed during preparatory research and consulted during community meetings, though women were also contacted by project researchers. Women have gendered interests and labor participation remained invisible because stereotypes and seemingly shared understandings went unquestioned. Project researchers, myself included, misunderstood the significance of the vocabulary they apparently shared with Ifugao respondents. Women who described their occupation as "housewife" were speaking in a local context where "housewife" meant something quite different from middle-class, urban understandings. This was quite different, again, from the way that those non-local constructions of housewife were interpreted by local elites as "pure" or "true housewife," meaning non-farmer.

Initially, at least, I shared this mistaken sense of understanding. I came to a fuller appreciation in my 1996 – 1997 doctoral fieldwork where I saw that different, locally specific roles and attitudes were covered by the term "housewife" as respondents used it in my interviews. Figure 5-12 indicates the way

²⁸ See McKay, D., "Transformations of gender, tenure and forest in Ifugao" unpublished masters' thesis, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S., Canada, 1993, for details.

²⁹ See Li, T., "Gender issues in community-based resource management: theories, applications and Philippine case studies," ERMP Report 9, Halifax: Dalhousie University, 1992, for discussion.

in which garden activities are inserted into the agricultural cycle. When it came to growing beans, "housewives" were definitely involved in contributing labor to male gardeners' crops, as detailed in Figure 5-13, which outlines the labor time allocated to the various garden activities by gender for married couples.

Figure 5-12 Labor patterns in garden activities over the agricultural year

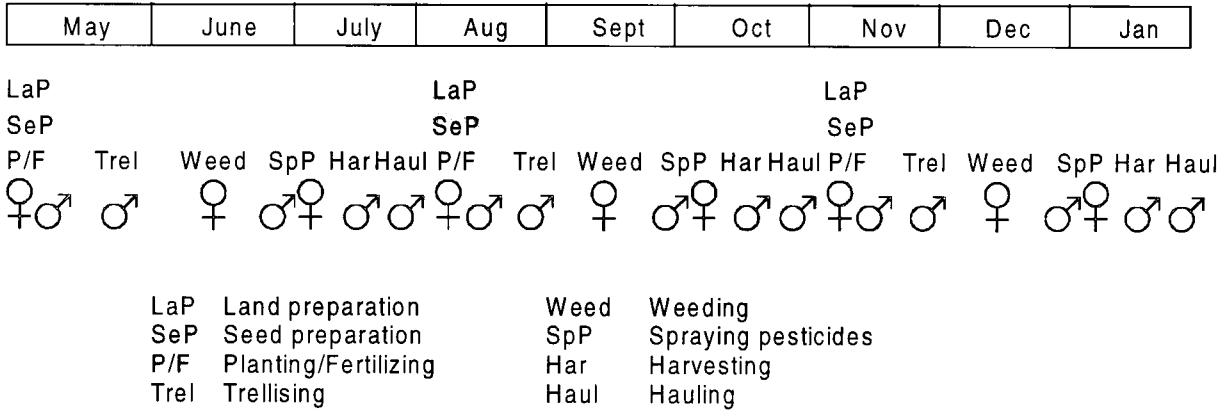
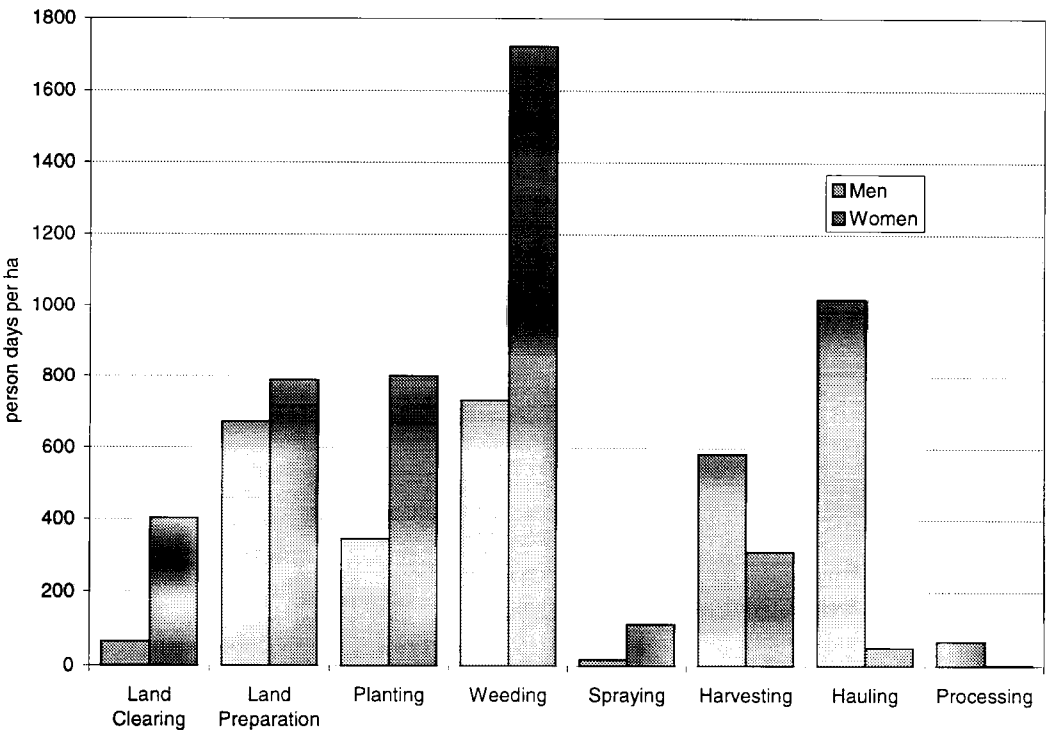


Figure 5-13 Labor distribution in garden activities by gender, for married couples farming as a household unit



5.7.1 men's gardens /women's swiddens

Women who were not "pure housewives" but farmers had *habal* where they often grew local varieties of beans. I noted, during my field visits, that they were using some of the techniques that male gardeners had apparently wanted to learn from the project. Women's experiential knowledge with these beans appeared to me to be circulating in completely different circles from the practices of gardening that had been understood by the project. Those people who planted beans were largely not the same people working the swiddens; predominantly male gardeners did not access the feminized experiential knowledge that could modify the "package."

These differences between gardeners and swiddeners were partly attributable to gender, but female gardeners, too, used the "package" for beans without modification. Many women saw individual advantage and possibilities for economic change with the new crop. These women did not frame any community-wide women's resistance to the crop in terms of the environment or their gendered interests. Instead, within the community individuals reworked their performance of identities as they contested gender norms.

Few young men found places in the formal workforce. Youths often left school to pursue casual labor, lumbering and gardening. In 1992, the typical gardener was young and single, still partially dependent on either his parents or married siblings. In exchange for subsistence, gardeners offered help with household expenses when, and if, they took a profit. Most wanted to buy consumer goods that established their status as potential husbands. Other producers of beans fell into two categories: those affluent enough to afford the risk and those desperate enough to brave the odds. Most of the fairly secure, married households did not engage in gardening as a major part of their economic strategy. They tended to be indirectly involved through the rental of fields, provision of some wage or exchange labor or the support of a younger sibling. Married men observed that the economic risk seemed too much to impose on their families. Several spoke of bad experiences with pesticides and indebtedness. One gardener I interviewed in 1992 compared gardening, unfavorably, to gambling because it involves a large capital expenditure or

sizeable debt incurred against an uncertain return.

Those gardeners who inherited or negotiated access to a good field and had capital had the advantage. They sold their harvest at the best price. Others got their inputs on credit from vegetable dealers, often at usurious rates. They contracted to sell to the same dealer below the market price. When supply exceeded demand, buyers would refuse beans produced outside an input-credit arrangement. Debts to the dealer were paid regardless and often compounded by attempts at a second crop. Capital was required to produce independently and independent producers were more likely to make money. The only time a contract gardener was virtually guaranteed a profit from beans was the typhoon season - if, of course, the storm destroyed his neighbors' crops.

Gardeners needed money to invest in the inputs and fields, and to pay off debts. Many accessed it through illegal logging, either as customary owners of forest land or as loggers. Although this timber extraction was illegal, the law was rarely applied in the ancestral domain of indigenous groups. People disputed the ownership of trees in previously communal forest lands. Along with gardening came a growing demand for timber for the national market. Beginning in the late 1980s, wealthy households began to claim parts of the community's forests as private property. Deforestation led to more dry fields appropriate for beans. This allowed those with relative security in the cash economy to rent out their dried fields for the bean crops of the more marginal households. Thus, the connections between privatization, deforestation and market participation were charged with class tension.

5.7.2 gardening and gender relations

Within the households of the few married gardeners, the bean crop illuminated contrasts between "traditional" and "modern" gendering. According to respondents, gardening was introduced to a group of male farmers and professionals in the area by the Department of Agriculture. The first "successful" gardeners were two male school teachers. In 1992, Most people agreed that "gardening is for men" although women were clearly involved in this "modern" crop through family and exchange labor.

However, wives had little control over the proceeds. Where wives' work in the garden was "just cleaning," male labor in hauling beans decided control over their sale. Gardeners considered negotiation for the sale of beans a male activity because the fifty kilo sacks of inputs and beans were carried some distance. Wives rarely accompanied their husbands because it was considered undignified for "modern women" to carry such heavy loads. Several buyers from outside the community were women. Because they had access to the gravel road, they could hire transportation and male help. Thus, they were not involved in heavy labor; they were "modern businesswomen" rather than farmers.

When I heard these comments in interviews, I wondered if my outsider status and project affiliation elicited an overemphasis on the "modern" and globally accepted ideas of gender. As I listened further and in different contexts, I realized that these terms were not merely used to address project staff and describe development activities. This English-language vocabulary was part of a wider community discourse on social change. Some people contested this view of the "modern" with arguments drawn from local "tradition." They invoked an Ifugao discourse on gender that emphasized complementarity and equity. These themes were expressed in the comments of one unmarried man: "Men work in spurts but very hard, while women are always doing something lighter, but steadily, so they really work equally . . . women just more, men just harder." He noted that all work contributes to the same goal of supporting individuals and households. Drawing on the oppositional social currency of these observations, one young woman, who I will call Jane, was renegotiating the local understanding of "modern" femininity.

5.7.3 Reworking "modern" femininity

Jane was in an unusual position for a younger daughter. Single and the same age as the young male gardeners, Jane was acting as caretaker for her eldest brother's lands. She lived alone, making her own decisions on what crops to grow, when to plant and what and when to sell. In previous years, she had sold coffee, bananas and pomelo (grapefruit). In 1992, she switched to beans and they provided the largest part of her income. Jane did much of the work herself. When she could arrange it, she participated in exchange labor. She hired laborers to help with harvesting and hauling beans to the buying station. Asked about the weight of the beans, Jane explained that a sack weighs between 40 and 50 kg and she could carry such loads quite easily. Although she found gardening hard, she planned to keep planting beans and experiment with different cropping strategies. Asked about marriage, she replied she could find the help she needed; she had no plan to marry yet. If she married, she would be expected to maintain a swidden. Jane had planted upland rice, mongo beans and sitting beans in her swidden in previous years. After she tried gardening, she concluded that the work involved was easier and gave up the swidden. However, in our interview she expressed the intention to incorporate some swidden techniques like green mulching and intercropping into her gardening.

Although other young women lived on their own, Jane was the only female gardener I met in my 1992 research stint. Her anomalous position was supported by her family's economic diversification - her brother held a rare salaried job in the lowlands. After talking with Jane, I asked other respondents about women's independent farming. Both women and men considered it unusual for a young woman to live alone and farm on her own.

Jane's explanations of her preference for gardening to swidden differed from the norms expressed in these discussions. Jane's atypical work was not mentioned by other respondents when I asked them what women could and could not do in the garden. Gardeners often explained to me that women could not carry the sacks of beans. When I mentioned Jane, they suggested she was not living up to their expectations for feminine behavior. Several people commented she might be might be a "tomboy" (lesbian).

Jane's practice pointed out that "women could not" was actually a "should not." People ignored Jane's practice because it challenged the feminine norm of the "modern" woman. Instead, they speculatively linked her farming practices to her sexuality. Their critique was mobilized in this fashion for my benefit, since "tomboy" is an anglicism. Women who repaired the rice terraces were also described as "maybe tomboys?" but male respondents clarified that "it was good that they share in the work." Apparently Jane,

who was farming for herself and by herself, constituted more of a threat to local perceptions of what I must think were gender norms.

In 1992, the "modern" woman was associated with images of women and practices of consumption emerging from metropolitan media sources. Within the discourses on gender in the national mainstream, the heavy labor involved in hauling beans was neither appropriate for women nor a task they had the strength to perform. Manual labor was considered a necessary indignity endured by poorer women. To display their status, middle-class women rarely exerted themselves in public and this performance of femininity was cultivated by the local elite. Though these images and practices are associated with a mainstream culture distinct from the indigenous context, the definitions and practices of femininity were negotiated in these terms.

Contesting this interpretation of "modern," Jane asserted her ability to haul heavy loads proved her to be "industrious," as opposed to masculine. Her labor was of the kind recognized historically as the embodiment of an Ifugao feminine virtue of "industry." Linking "traditional" gender with "modern" farming, Jane created a social space in her fields that opened up a renegotiation of gender in gardening. Her assertion that gardening was "easy" in comparison to swidden suggested new channels for experimentation and exchange of techniques. Jane presented herself as a woman who 'knew what to do.'

When I returned to Haliap in 1996, I met with Jane again. She was now married and a mother of two, living in a newly constructed house. Was she still gardening? "Not at all," she laughed. She no longer gardened herself but stayed at home with her toddlers as a "true housewife." Her husband, one of the young male gardeners I had interviewed in 1992, was now the family gardener. They had invested the money from their wedding gifts in a hand-tractor that he rented out to till the fields of other gardeners. This tractor rental was now their major source of income. Other younger women were, however, gardening on their own, having taken up the hoe where Jane had left it.

Interviews with these women provided a corrective on my initial thinking. In my 1992 field research, I

had completely conflated questions about 'women' with biological sex, rather than a local age hierarchy in which one was first a "lady" until married as a "woman" and then became an elder. Women, locally, are referred to as *binabae* (Tuwali), meaning "became woman."³⁰ In the Tagalog-speaking lowlands, the term *binabae* is used as a pejorative, meaning "effeminate" with a subtext of homosexuality.³¹ However, in Ifugao, the term is not a pejorative, but specifies a particular, acquired status, suggesting that, somehow, one could always have become something else. Thus, the name "woman" in Ifugao is a marker of life process, rather than a biological category. Respondents had thus redirected my questions about 'women' to give answers appropriate to my own age status as young(ish) and unmarried. Ging was the first to set me straight:

Ging began gardening in 1988 when she was in her second year of high school. She explained to me that she was so young that she would not have been thought of as more than a girl when I was interviewing on gender and gardening back in 1992. My question about "women" was apparently translated as a question about baballasang or young, unmarried women – glossed in English-language as "ladies." While Ging said it was true that "ladies," other than Jane, very rarely gardened in 1992, things had changed now. Most definitely a "lady" and a college graduate, she was considering an offer of marriage from a college classmate and looking for work in nearby towns. To support herself since quitting her first job as a sales clerk in a Nueva Viscaya department store, she had returned to Haliap to garden again. Her most recent bean crop had been grown in co-operation with her brother, on land borrowed (rent-free) from her parents. She invested P900 for fertilizer, seed and pesticides and paid another P600 in labor to help her with field preparation. After she harvested the beans, her brother would carry the full 50 kg sack to the road, while she would take 35 kg sacks to combine later. She sold five harvests ranging from 100 kg to 30 kg, each at about P16 per kilo, calculating that she made about P3000 profit from the P4500 she received from the buyer. Her plan for the profits was to reinvest in one more cycle of gardening while she helped her parents plant their ricefields. Then, in January, she would use her savings to visit an aunt in Manila and look for a factory job there.

In 1996, now that gardening was generally recognized as an option for women, other women were engaging in it with greater frequency. They did not all experience Ging's success.

³⁰ Note that this term is used for women in the Ifugao folksong that appears at the beginning of the following chapter.

³¹ It appears, for instance, in the press when politicians discuss legislation they find weak or ineffectual, for example, "this *binabae* legislation."

Feli, a single mother of two, was new to gardening. She had been born to Haliap parents in Manila and raised there while her mother ran a buy-and-sell business dealing in Igorot crafts. When the business failed, the family returned to Haliap and she graduated from high school and enrolled in college. While studying in the lowlands, she met her husband and conceived her first child, dropping out of school. After her second child was born, she separated from her husband and returned to Haliap to live with her parents. Never having farmed before, she started in 1995 with a swidden plot where she grew corn to sell for chicken feed. The profits from that were small compared to the labor expended, so she decided to try gardening. Her first garden was made in 1996 on one of her mother's fields that had recently dried up too much to grow rice. Like Sally, she bought the P900 "package" from a local bean dealer – seed, pesticide, fertilizer. However, after she had planted the crop, she did not water the seedlings frequently enough and they died in the sun. "I was really hard up with the work," she explained. Discouraged, she is looking into the possibility of applying to work as a maid in "saudi" where a college friend has a job. Her concern is raising the money necessary to pay the fees required. "Gardening is no more for me, I'll just lose more money."

While discourses on femininities, housewives and sexualities were deployed in the community as tactics to constitute a local reality, women's economic opportunities were never seen as limited to the subsistence realm or the local. The knowledge that women have – their "knowing what to do" – includes a variety of options, from farming, to community development work, to education, to jobs in Manila, to work abroad. Local people struggle to make ends meet on an agricultural landbase that is inadequate to the needs of the population and to which they do not have secure tenure. In this situation, the flexibility and mobility of local women is an important element within household strategies for secure livelihoods. Thus, in my research, female outmigration was becoming more important, as an option to consider, an actual material practice and a discursive construction. As suggested by the ethnic parade in Hungduan, sending people "out" (to Baguio or Manila) or "abroad" (overseas) are essential elements of the local discursive versions of 'development' and 'progress.' Both Ging and Feli were planning a move from gardening to find salaried work outside the community.

Efforts at development that work by pouring resources, either monetary or discursive, into the community and region have an impact on these local interpretations of gender. Thus, the Health Workers understood 'going abroad' to be "wrong" for women, based on the discourse on femininity and motherhood used by the Manila-based religious NGO that employs them. This discursive relation between the local and metropolitan religious sponsors does not preclude other local women from making

their own interpretations and organizing themselves on different strategic grounds. Many younger women, Ging and Feli included, wanted to work outside the community, despite the opinions of the Health Workers. The resources of development limit the ways in which local interpretations and organization can be made intelligible to outside observers and managers. This is partly because local people understand that they have to meet the requirements and expectations of outside development agents, tacit or explicit, in order to receive resources. Thus, the Health Workers completed their community assessment with a determination to do what was in the community's best interest: keep the funding for the Health Clinic flowing. Local people speak about their choices for "progress" within this sort of situation. This is the type of process through which development discourse comes to discipline the performing female body in the local context.

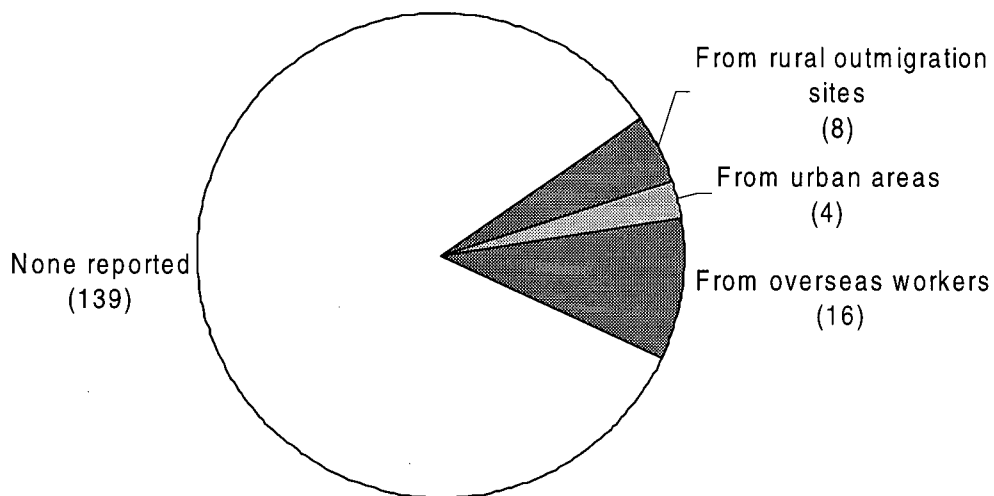
5.8 outmigration

Local people respond to economic transformations, reworked divisions of labor, and shortages of land with outmigration. Local women now labor overseas and their households open up agricultural land in nearby provinces. These new settlements on the agricultural frontier are shown in the context of the historical movements of the Ayangan ethnic group in Map 5-3. These dispersed sites are important for flows of resources, people, production and knowledge and the organization of household labor, and these processes, in turn, are creating new forms of social stratification within the community. People in fifty-three percent of the households I surveyed reported that first degree relatives (parents, children or siblings) had "transferred" to nearby rural areas. The most frequently mentioned sites were on the agricultural frontier in the municipalities of Kasibu, Nueva Viscaya, Cordon and San Mariano, Isabela, and Maddela, Quirino. Another eighteen percent of respondents reported relatives in urban areas including the provincial capital of Lagawe, Bayombong and Solano in Nueva Viscaya, Baguio City, and the greater Manila area.

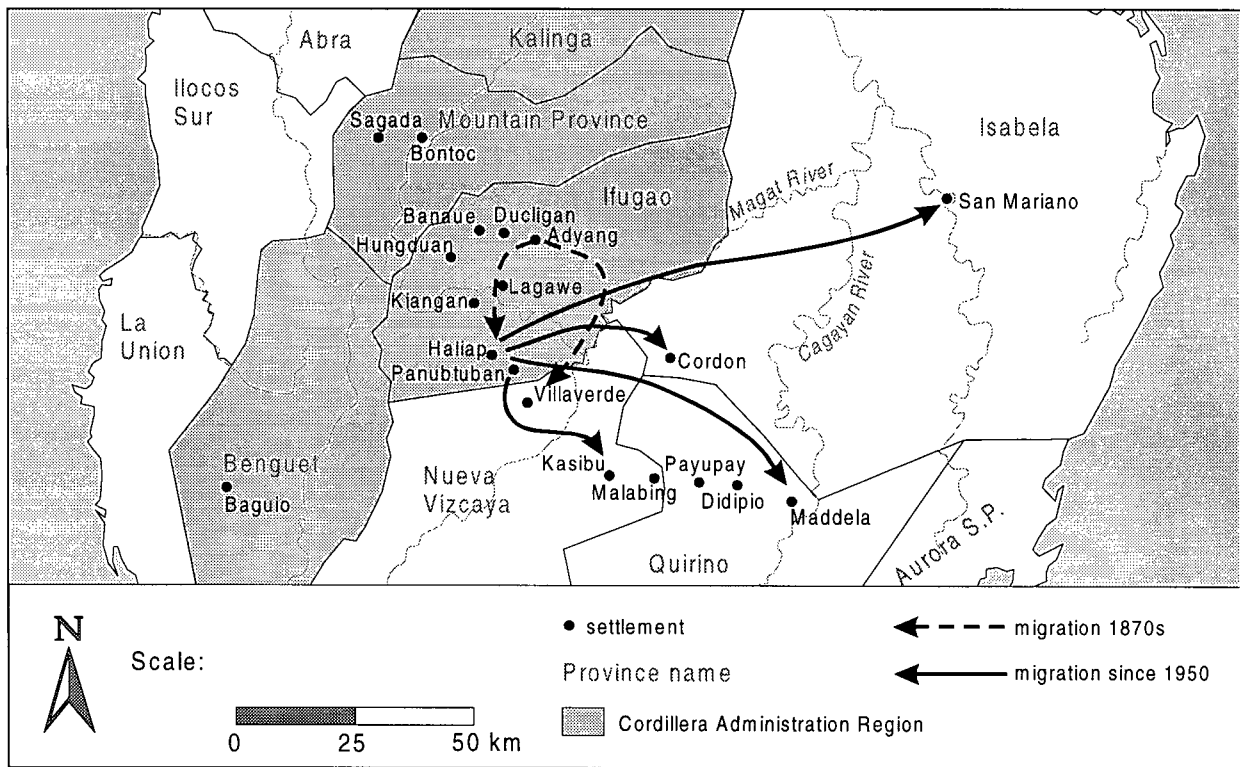
Figure 5-14 details the prevalence of remittances to Haliap/Panubtuban households from areas outside

the municipality. Of the households surveyed, people in seventeen percent of the sample reported income remitted to Haliap in cash or kind by kin who had migrated. Five percent of the households had income from outmigration sites, ten percent from family members working overseas and two percent from professionals working in urban areas.

Figure 5-14 Households reporting income from out-of-province, by source of income, Haliap/Panubtuban (1996) (n=167)



Map 5-3 Inter-regional migration from Haliap/Panubtuban and Adyang



Rural-rural outmigration was the predominant strategy reported within the community. Most respondents told me that when their children inherited their lands, on marriage, they would ‘transfer’ to another place. These respondents often mentioned Kasibu or Maddela, places where they planned to join relatives. These rural outmigration areas are found along the lowland ‘agricultural frontier’ where commercial logging interests have opened roads into previously inaccessible and forested areas. These places tend to be ethnically mixed and politically ‘critical’, with active NPA cadres and militarization. People see opening lands for commercial agriculture here as a high risk, high return venture but necessary because of a shortage of irrigated rice land (i.e. water) in Ifugao. Cordon, Isabela, is an exception to this, being a government-sponsored resettlement site for Ifugao communities displaced during the construction of a hydroelectric dam along the Magat River.

Resources and people flow back and forth between households farming in both sending and outmigration areas. People noted that out-migrants frequently send their children back to relatives in Haliap for high

school education. They also reported that unemployed Haliap high school graduates could find room and board for their labor in outmigration sites. According to respondents and survey forms, the flows of labor between sending community and migration sites tended to be made up of young men, while their female counterparts were more likely to be in urban areas.

Respondents interviewed during my site visits told me that migrants from Haliap settle with other Ifugao speakers in outmigration areas, preferably Ayangan speakers and likely kin. Tenure in outmigration areas is usually even more insecure than it is in Ifugao Province proper; with all but the commercial rice area of Cordon being described as “squatted” or “pioneered.” Outmigrants begin by making swidden fields, but integrate swidden into the production of fruit and vegetable cash crops or commercial rice for the national market, rather than combine it with subsistence rice cultivation as in Ifugao. In outmigration sites, swidden is seen as a temporary backstop - a step in supporting the ‘real work’ of commercial farming and a recognized way of “claiming” land.

Community tenure over forest areas, a feature of Ifugao customary law, does not hold in ethnically mixed outmigration areas where individual private property is the norm. Respondents cited making swidden fields, outside of Ifugao Province, as primarily a way of “improving” and establishing permanent claims to parcels of land intended for the eventual commercial production of vegetables or fruit crops - small-scale monocrop agriculture. Migrants generalized the “usual” strategy for “pioneering” as entering an area that has previously been selectively logged as a timber concession and searching for suitable soils and plots with access to a logging road. Here, the Ifugao farmers are not integrating swidden into their indigenous rice-cropping system, but acting as “peasant migrants,” attempting to create small-scale vegetable and fruit farms linked directly to national markets.

Respondents suggested that men in outmigration areas were more likely to participate in all aspects of swidden cultivation and to grow bananas and tree crops like citrus, mango or papaya on the fields. In my outmigration site interviews, I observed this to be the case. However, male outmigrants described their

involvement in swidden as temporary, rather than a permanent change in the gendering of labor. This was because their swidden would not revert to fallow but become a citrus or banana plantation or a field of squash and they were thus participating in commercial, rather than subsistence agriculture. Outmigrant farming incorporates swidden fields managed for different ends, with different practices and by different people, than fields at 'home.' The characteristics of swidden production appear to depend on local economic conditions and tenurial relations, rather than the indigenous knowledge available to swidden farmers. Thus, the peasant migrants and indigenous integral swiddeners can identify as members of one and the same ethnic community, farming in different sites under different sets of 'rules.'³²

Not all Haliap/Panubtuban migrants make swidden. Respondents classified, loosely, as upper income households (approximately twenty-two percent of those surveyed) with lands outside the province (four percent of that sample) almost all own parcels of commercial rice fields. They reported that swidden production is no longer one of their strategies in Ifugao nor is it directly incorporated into their outside investments. Not only did these wealthier families describe their relationship to their lands outside the province as "owned" rather than "squatted," many of them had tenants. Their tenants tended to be poorer relatives or clients from the same Ifugao sending community and they tended to open swiddens as a supplement to their share of the rice harvest. Tenant families reported frequent moves between their Ifugao home *barangay* and outmigration areas as they scraped together marginal livelihoods.

In contrast, wealthier households often reported members living and working in urban areas, usually as professionals in Baguio City and Manila. Urban, and in many cases, overseas remittances added to the capital available to invest in these tenant-operated lands. In each case, the twelve percent of sample households reporting regular cash remittances from urban areas belonged to the upper-income group. The Overseas Contract Workers deployed from Haliap/Panubtuban who provided most of these

³² As described by Warner, K. in her *Shifting cultivation: local technical knowledge and natural resource management in the humid tropics* (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation, 1991), pp. 9-11.)

remittances were all female and deployed as described in Table 5-6³³ They are part of much larger flows of female workers from the Cordillera Administrative Region (the provinces whose inhabitants are named as “Igorots” – people from the mountains) into the global market for feminized labor (see Map 5-5).

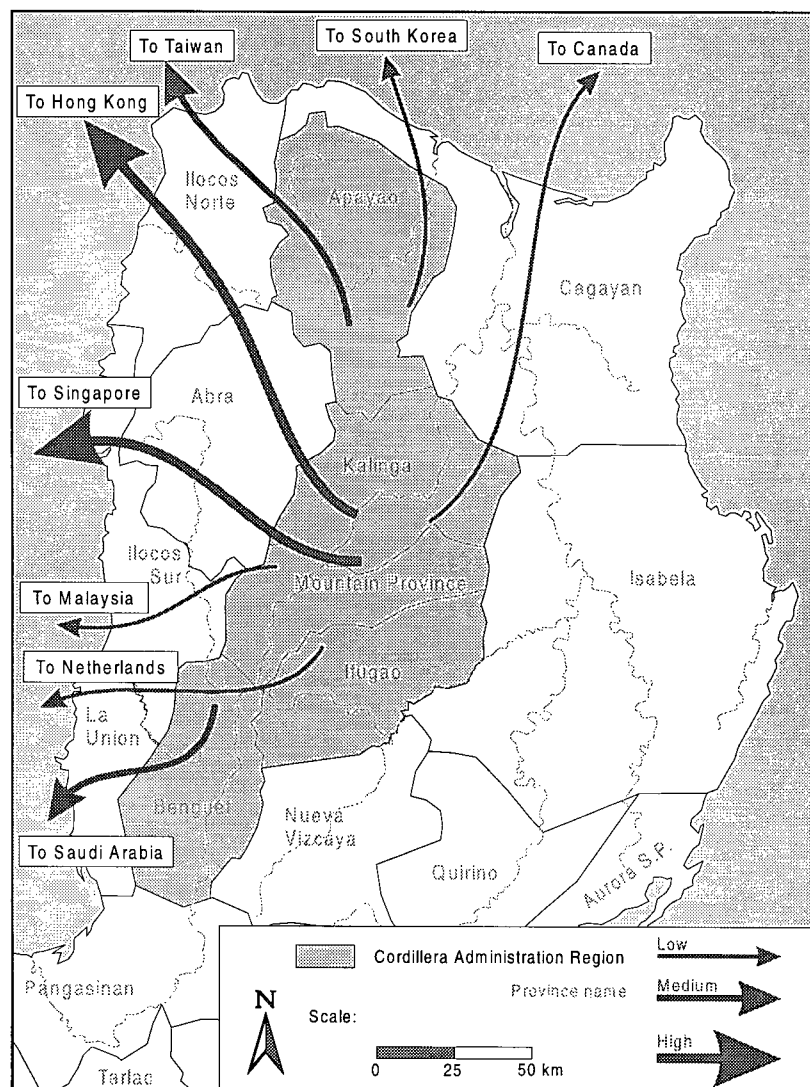
Table 5-6 Deployment of female OCWs from Haliap/Panubtuban (1996)

Location of Employment	No. of Individuals
Hong Kong	8
Singapore	3
"Saudi"	2
Taiwan	2
Malaysia	1

In this context of land scarcity and outmigration, under “knowing what to do” comes the feminine responsibility of making ends meet. As one female respondent put it: “if the pot is empty, I’m the one to fill it.” People did not construct this feminine knowledge around notions of a feminine ethnoscience, nor any specific responsibility to the local landscape, but a set of skills and abilities to take advantage of available opportunities. Since the 1930s, the community reported a transition from purely subsistence to simple commodity production and greater political integration into the apparatus of government. “Knowing what to do” now involves skills and opportunities within a hierarchy based on security of income and social status: government employees and overseas workers are at the apex, followed by local entrepreneurs, cash-crop farmers and, finally, subsistence farming. “Knowing what to do” is a contingent and fluid position for women that means placing oneself as high as possible on this ladder.

³³ These flows were categorized subjectively as low (fewer than 10 individuals), medium (10 - 30) and high (above 30) on the basis of the number of women I met who had been to those receiving nations as contracted domestic workers.

Map 5-5 Flows of OCWs from the Cordillera Administrative Region



5.9 Knowing what to do and how to perform

I began my analysis of local gendering with an investigation of agricultural production, as opposed to female outmigration. Because of this, it took me several months to see that the context of fields and farming I was trying to delimit was, in fact, not appropriate for my interests. Agriculture was not a separate local, economic realm or domain of representation but intimately linked, through household economics and individual performances, with local interests in global flows of meaning and bodies. Local ideas developed in explicit dialogue with these globalized representations of gender and ideas of progress, so the same “knowing what to do” that produced local agricultural landscapes also often meant

positioning oneself advantageously within these discourses.³⁴

For example, the Barangay Health Workers, defining themselves as responsible wives and good mothers, conducted their census and labeling activities as they engaged in community development. The discourse of development in which their activities are embedded disciplines performing bodies within norms of gender. Now that these metropolitan discursive resources are available to local communities, they cannot be recalled. One of the effects of development discourses is that the desires for authenticity – understood as authentic progress or development and evaluated by the (imagined) metropolitan gaze -works on a centre/periphery fractal, deferring true difference onto the next, more remote group or area. Thus the Health Workers categorize, measure and report on the status of their fellow community members, creating them as objects of a ‘development’ that is lacking in the community. They fault both poor women who cannot perform their domestic duties to the ‘development’ standard and OCWs who have ‘abandoned’ the domestic realm at home.

This process of deferring difference to the periphery delimits the options for individuals and they, in turn, reroute, resist, and recolonize these desires, contesting the definitions of key terms and suborning images to their own ends. People reinterpreted globalized feminine identities such as woman-housewife or OCW even as they adapted to them, as I will show in the following chapter, where, surprisingly, the Health Workers take on the OCW role in a public performance.

³⁴ Tsing, A., *op. cit.* and Ong, A. and M. Peletz, eds., *op. cit.*

Ruth and Marilyn

Childhood friends, Ruth and Marilyn both worked overseas in their twenties and thirties. Now in their late thirties, they chose to be interviewed together. The excerpts I have chosen here come from our taped discussions and focus on Ruth's experiences in Rome and the United States and her eventual return home. Ruth's story begins with her arrival in Italy and first job as a housemaid.

R- Her son would bring me along into class... And they would teach me Italian, but after two months, I was getting very frustrated. I'm going. I do not know where I'm going, but I'm going! My friend Ida called me from Rome and I said, "how 'bout my off day?"

They were nice people, protective and stuff like that, but I was just feeling that I was in jail. ...So I didn't go back for a week... and then I realized 'what would I be doing for a job?' So I stayed with Filipinos, women and men, in a pensione – and boy, was there a lot of misdirected stuff, stealing, sex (laughs) going on in there. 'Oh my gosh, this is worse than what I left, I'm going back!' I called my employer: 'I'm coming back!!' And after a few weeks, confusion again. My pride was lame – you do not have your pride anymore, you know, you're working as a helper and then all this other stuff... and feeling so deprived of everything, you know? And I left again and went back to Rome...

I was really desperate for companionship and, umm, my friends and I were just on the loose. Whoever speaks English, here we are – we want to speak English with you guys. We met these Nigerian guys. They speak English, right? 'Wow, they really speak English, let's go for it!' And then we ended up kind of staying with them in hotels and stuff like that... Another whole mess, you know. It's another whole mess. Gosh, it was devastating...

M - Was it for your rent?

R – Yeah... Well, this guy had a salary (trails) And so, what else do you want to know?

D – Wow, that sounds really familiar, like my own time – when I was out in Africa. I went there with my boyfriend and then I split up with him... I was working, as a barmaid in this hotel bar and some of the girls who were working in the bar,... and we went out for drinks... One of the guys asked me out the next day... And then, no money, only tips and it was kind of hard to get away from him...

[CUT – details of relationships while in hospitality sector jobs, while travelling - Deirdre and while working around U.S. military bases - Marilyn]

R – It's when your like, illegal, you know? When you're desperate, you do the worst you can even do...

M - Yeah,

D – Yeah

R - At least I had a hotel – these Nigerians were training in the airport in Rome...But, for me, later on, I felt like I was, used, you know? Finally, we found out how you could go to an agency and find employers for yourself. You do not need anybody there to find work for you. Because we learned the language... And we also found jobs through other Filipina girls and the employers – they had friends who were looking for girls and so it went, like that... And I was able to get rid of this guy. I was like, nevermind, I also speak Italian, I speak English... These guys were married. It was the lowest kind of life I have ever experienced...

But I tried several employers... I stayed depending how I was treated... if I was paid on time, like that. And I finally found this family and stayed a year with them. I worked so hard with them. They gave me all the benefits and stuff like that. They wanted me. So they processed all my documents and stuff. So, you know, social security and health insurance... they processed it and they were being honest about it. The group [of Filipinas – DM] I was with, I was the first to have my legal papers worked out!

After a year, I met my husband and got pregnant, so I left, but I had to make sure there was another Filipina to take my place, you know?

And after that I never worked. My husband was working with a shipping company... There was a lot of money but I didn't know where it was coming from. Drugs, you know? I worked with him in the ship. I boarded the ship with him and worked as a cook. That's another job I had.... Then we moved to Rome and he had money, it just came.

Finally, the police came... They took me as a witness and, not knowing what was going on in court, it was awful. My husband, he didn't understand that they had to take my testimony too — and we left the house in Rome before I testified. And then the police came and took me to jail...I didn't understand why. My kid, was about three years old at the time. So I was in prison.

T – For how long?

R – About two months. And I was in isolation for two weeks before they got my testimony. ...

God was looking at my circumstances... One of the guards, she had a coffee shop and she said "you look familiar" and she lets me out at night... She'd seen me around, as a customer. She'd let me out and I had fresh air for three hours. And the other miracle was that they let my son come and stay with me. For me, this was a safe place -- my husband can't come home and hit me anymore.

And we were the only foreigners in that place, the jail. And I had really, really dark long hair. And Italians are attracted to dark , dark hair. 'Oh, there's a Chinese lady!' I'd say, no, I was Filipino but they do not know: 'There's a Chinese lady!' and it was like, attracting. They would touch our eyes because we are different.

My husband came and took me out and a few months later we went to the States. That was another experience because we didn't have a visa, we went through Mexico. He hired coyotes – these Mexicans who bring illegals into the States. I went to apply for a visa but I couldn't get it, only Mexico. My husband hired coyotes and we walked the borders...

M- Were there barbed wires?

D –What year was this?

R – 1984. They cut the barbed wire for us. What happened was that they took my son away from me... What they did with the kids was to let them sleep and send them across the border with people shopping across the border. The people would say 'oh, they're our kids, they're just sleeping...' The adults, we hid under bushes, the helicopters came, we ran the freeway, climbed the mountain, hiked up and down and I do not know where we are going... They packed us in trunks of cars, in a van... we were all packed in there

[CUT – details of Ruth's relationship in Los Angeles]

R - I knew that if I went back he was going to kill me. I just took a bus, to cool out and think of what to do. I saw the Salvation Army. I went to the Thrift Shop and I said: 'I need a job.' Thank God I speak English... I could communicate, you know. Not like Italy where you run away and you do not know how to explain what's wrong... So, I went to the Salvation Army and said, 'I need a job – no, not really, I need help.' They sent me to Social Services... And this guy, he was a missionary to Baguio. He knew my place. I told him what I was going through and he sent us to a shelter for battered women. I went to Church and the wife of the pastor was Filipino. And that's how I developed friendships within my faith. A year later I had my life in order. I took care of an Italian lady with a pacemaker... Italian, I speak it now!

D – So you became a geriatric care worker?

R – Yeah! And a year later, I get a phone call from the police. My husband had reported us missing, but then he died a week later, walking across a freeway exit... He was a [cut]... He would kill me, you know, for running away. Being very violent, tribal people like that.

D- Were you still illegal at that point?

R – Yeah, I was illegal the whole time! Actually, I met a lot of friends. The leader of my Bible study group was an attorney. He wanted to process my papers... but you have to lie a lot. And look where that got me... So I didn't. And later, after the old Italian lady left, I worked for an agency, cleaning lady. And this lady, the owner, totally just took off to Europe and said 'here, take care of all my clients' and I had 50 clients. And that's how I worked. I managed the company and I'd got the trust of the people and they never really asked where's your documents and stuff... I learned to love them and protect them because they were really good to me, you know? We developed relationships as kinda like friends... They were close, some of them called me for parties so, if I would make it legal, you have to put every employer in there, and there was a lot of threats then, anyone employing someone illegal would be prosecuted and fined. It's not me, it's the employer!

D – So you were trying to protect these people who were your friends, who didn't know you weren't legal?

R- Yeah, and if I process my papers, I would expose them. And also, one thing, I never felt like I needed the paper after, you know, being a Christian I felt that this piece of paper is not so important. After all, I have a job, you know? And I finally realized it was completed for me. I was more confident coming home and facing the people here. I wasn't so scared. Coming home with a kind of reputation, they would throw you out... but I have to face my fears and insecurities and the pride that I have and go home, knowing God is with me.

I never told any problems – it was so shameful. They're so proud of their little girl, she's out there, abroad, you know? She's gonna send a lot of money. We're going to be rich. Because that's what anybody who goes out of the country does – they're supposed to be sending money home. You think that you can manage it, you're from the centre of town, not the far barrios, you speak English, you're educated... you know? But for me, that's not the case, the choices that I made – I was not able to send the money that they were expecting. And that's shameful, you know, not to come home then, and so I didn't have the money to come home and they died.

D – That's a really common thing for people who go abroad from here, is not it? Not being able to talk about how hard the circumstances...

M – Yeah, especially during that time, the 1980s, when I was in Singapore...

R – I realize there is freedom in the relationship with God. How dare you judge me! You know where you stand and who you are. That's enough security to keep you going on with life. Now, my heart is heavy. At least, now, I am able to talk to people going outside of the country, working abroad. At least they have to get a glimpse, you know, of what they're going to find out there. What people expect. What employers expect and stuff like that, you know? Because we came out there and we weren't instructed on what we were going to do, they threw us in to a totally different environment. And I was like: What's this? I'm going to have to do it on my own, nobody told me. It was a total shock. That's my goal: to be able to help. To help people prepare and inform them on what they're going to expect, going out of the country.

D – What would you tell them?

R – Well, it's always agency, agency to agency like that, when you can do it on your own. Well, if you speak English, like most Filipinos, English is spoken world-wide and you can do it, you do not have to throw a large amount of money to agencies. I'm really really mad because of my experience with agencies. If I could get one lady out of the devastation that's going on out there, running from agency to agency, I would feel better. What's the worst is the Filipinos ripping off Filipinos. Ummm. You know, it's just ridiculous. We all need money but you do not have to live off your fellow Filipino and lead a luxurious life...

When you know the law, you have to be educated with the law, you can do anything if you have it in your hands. A lot of the employers do not do what they should for the helpers. It's the same all over the world...

But it's hard, especially for Filipinos to speak out. We have been so suppressed through our culture. Mabain³⁵ -- who's going to speak out? You know? We cannot speak up for our own rights because of the way we grew up...

D - I wouldn't fault Filipino culture too much... Your isolated, you're in a different place and you do not go out, you do not know what your rights are, I think it's anybody – you need to have the contact, the support, the education...

M- But being mabain makes it worse...

R – Yeah, but then why cause problems... It's the colonial thing for us Filipinos – if they're white, they must be right. That's how we were taught. That's how we grew up here, you know!

³⁵ A Tagalog virtue corresponding roughly to a sense of humility or shyness, often expressed in English as "ashamed," in the sense of embarrassed, rather than guilty.

D – That' s true in Vancouver, too, there's a racial thing. One thing the research found is that the expectations of people at home weigh much more heavily on the Filipinas and the employers know this. The women who come from Europe, from Britain, they're seen more as tourists – having a working holiday.³⁶

M- Because they're white!!

D – Yes, and because they're there for the experience, to improve their English, not to send home one third of their salary. So they're not as vulnerable..

R – They have got their money, their families, the girls are just earning for themselves... They do not get a phone call saying that your sister needs an operation, send money right away...

D – If you look back on it, would you still go abroad?

R – I would still go to Rome. But I wouldn't do some of those things again. Going there, it's a very lonely place, a very vulnerable place to be, in a strange country, but it made me strong...

³⁶ Reference is to Geraldine Pratt's work with the Vancouver NGO, the Philippine Women Center, drafts of which were sitting on the floor and scanned, pre-interview, by both respondents.

Chapter 6- Celebrity outmigrants – female Overseas Contract Workers

*Hitun algo*¹

On This Day

<i>Hitun algo an e madatngan</i> <i>An e tako punhi-anan</i> <i>Tun adul way naminhudan</i> <i>Tun adul an e uumyong</i>	On this day that will come The day that we part This one who has fallen in love This one who is pitiful
<i>Hi bigbigat ume kami</i> <i>Adim ut anhan kal-iwan</i> <i>Hantun mamhok an tagu</i> <i>An e midadawi kedakayo</i>	Come morning we leave Do not forget This poor being Who will be far from you
<i>Dakul da di binabi</i> <i>An mestisa'y ang-ang da</i> <i>Mo maid di pinhod kon dida</i> <i>Te heh-ay impuhawan</i>	Women are many Whose looks are fair ¹ But I desire none of them You are the one my heart has fallen for
<i>Nomnomnomom adim kal-iwan</i> <i>Handin kinalik ken heh-a</i> <i>Te maid odom an pinhod ko</i> <i>Ten bokon heh-a ya abu</i>	Think about it, do not forget What I have said to you For none other do I desire None but you

With the integration of the rural and upland Philippines – the “provinces” – in to the global labor market, the “contact zone” has moved from a recognizable frontier of imperial expansion into metropolitan domestic space.² Workers recruited from the rural Philippines are deployed across a variety of receiving nations, usually into domestic and service sector environments. As the contemporary folksong *Hitun algo* suggests, women are frequently the ones who leave Ifugao. Reversing a historical trend of male outmigration for the Philippines as a whole, since the mid-1980s slightly more migrant workers have been female (see figure 6-1).³ This chapter discusses the movement of women out of rural communities and in to transnational space through their participation in overseas contract labor.

¹ “On this day,” a contemporary Ifugao folksong in the Tuwali dialect, recorded by Salidummay on their 1995 album, *Elaylay*. Translation by Lulu Gimenez taken from the liner notes.

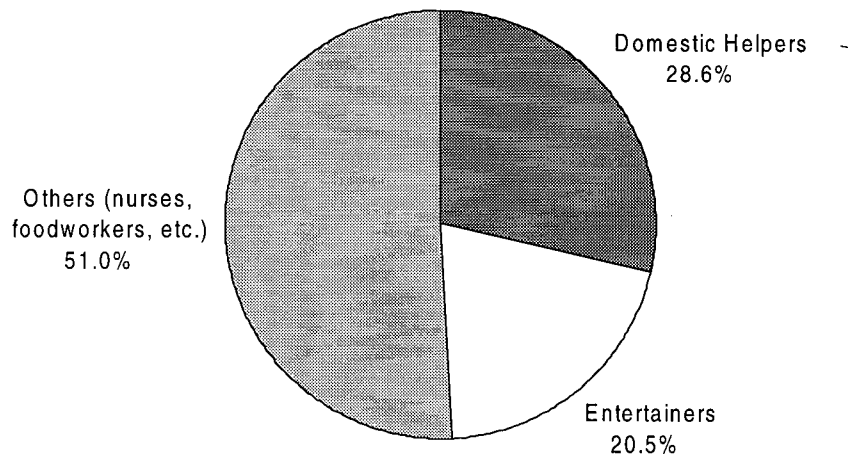
² See Mary-Louise Pratt, *Imperial eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 6-7.

³ Official Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) figures report that approximately fifty-five percent of deployed OCWs are female. Unofficial tallies suggest that the real figure is likely around sixty percent female workers.

Figure 6-1 Percentage of female and male OCWs 1987 versus 1994



Figure 6-2 Distribution of OCWs in vulnerable occupations (new hires, 1994)



The majority of female migrants from the Philippines work in service occupations broadly classified as nursing, entertainment and domestic service, classified by the Philippine government as “vulnerable occupations” (see Figure 6-2). Here, I focus on a group of women from the Cordillera who has taken contracts overseas under titles such as domestic, nanny, housekeeper, and geriatric care worker. Regardless of the official job description, local people gloss these jobs as *DH*, short for domestic helper. Many of the women deployed as *DH* have training and professional qualifications in teaching, nursing

and midwifery. Since these skills are not in demand, or not officially recognized, in their host country labor markets, the identity of Overseas Contract Worker (OCW), is, for a woman, is almost coterminous with that of *DH*.

Interleaved between my chapters I have presented aspects of the life stories of five such women who have now returned to the Cordillera. These narratives have been constructed from transcripts and notes to illustrate the problems of femininity and ethnicity in transnational circuits. The women I interviewed solved the problems of performing identity in travel and on return in ways that differ according to their destinations, religious affiliations and family background. The differences among them show both the ways in which context and commodification shape gender globally, and demonstrate more localized, structural differences between women. Their comments also reflect some ambivalence, among both the migrant women and their sending communities, about the value of migration and the process of personal and community-level accommodations and transformations it entails. Before discussing the background for female migration, I wish to highlight the ways in which this ambivalence is displayed in the community context.

6.1 OCW identities - ambivalence and performance

Contests over the local meaning of femininities and local class and life-course differences among women mean that female OCWs are treated with ambivalence, sometimes welcomed as heroines, while, at other moments, reviled as mothers who have abandoned their duties.

Just as OCWs brought up the rear of the ethnic parade at Hungduan, I observed people performing as OCWs in another Municipal Fiesta. This time, the performers were not men with briefcases playing 'professionals' but women performing globalized gender by parading new clothes from "abroad" in a "fashion show" on the stage of the Asipulo Municipal Hall. It was not incidental that the money for the construction of the stage and basketball court had been sent by the Asipulo-Hong Kong Benevolent Association – a group of Hong Kong-based female overseas workers from the municipality.

In this event, several female Health Workers were dressed in satiny evening wear and sunglasses. Another appeared on the stage in a men's tennis outfit, accessorized with a racket and a heavy (shoepolish?) beard. For counterbalance, they were accompanied by another two women in 'new' versions of the "native uniform" – the *tapis* and blouse that Tess was so reluctant to wear in Hungduan. Clearly, this performance of femininities and masculinity was intended to communicate local familiarity with broader discourses on gender found in the media, acquired through interactions with the political centre of Manila, and located in representations or experiences of "abroad." These enterprising local women were eroticizing their own bodies in two registers. Through both the prestigious native *tapis* and the beautiful foreign dresses, they were desirable women, in both 'traditional' and 'modern' terms. Simultaneously, they offered the audience a humorous pastiche of a global masculinity through a displaced drag performance, far away from the nearest tennis court.⁴ By performing themselves as 'the best of the local' in conjunction with the global referents of fashion and sport, these women interpellated local traditions and performances into these globalized discourses on gender. Their performance was greeted with cheers and riotous laughter by the assembled audience, apparently the performers' intended reception.

Moreover, where did they get the clothes? From *balikbayan* overseas workers! Though several Health Workers had been critical of OCW women in the context of comments on mothering, as reported in the preceding chapter, they seemed to contradict their opinions of female OCWs here. In this situation several of the same women were engaged in this fashion show performance, showing both envy in OCWs high-status clothing and pride in the sophistication 'their' OCWs' international travel had brought to the community. On stage, in this liminal space of public theatre, the Health Workers borrowed the subject positions of OCWs (and foreign men) for themselves. This suggested to me that, somehow, the discursive contribution of OCWs to local understandings and performances of ethnicity and gender far outstripped the actual economic contribution of migrant women to local households. It was also

⁴ Tennis is not commonly played on the Cordillera and Ifugao men do not often have beards.

interesting to see that it was now within this glamorous OCW realm, rather than through warfare or local economic development, that foreign masculinities were represented as being met and accommodated by local actors. OCWs as performed here, it seemed, were glamorous, wealthy and in control of flows of foreign money and, perhaps, foreign sexualities. Reading this performance of OCW identity against the life experiences described by my respondents reveals how the 'real' experiences of migrant women do not match up with this hyped-up performance on the local stage. In talking with me, returned OCWs did not assess themselves, on the whole, as rich, beautiful and well-dressed or in control of their sexualization and interactions with foreigners while abroad. This slippage between the real and the represented woman recalls the representations of Flor Contemplacion in the Philippine media, discussed in Chapter 4. The next section locates the history of this slippage in the colonial relations that structure education and economics on the Cordillera.

6.2 Educating "dutiful daughters"

Like the community of Haliap/Panubtuban described in the previous chapter, most rural Philippine communities engage in petty commodity production, combining elements of a market economy – sales of coffee, vegetables and lumber – within an otherwise subsistence base. With their further integration into the market economy, rural livelihoods are becoming increasingly dependent on cash income, particularly remittances from household members located in urban labor markets.⁵ Female outmigration from rural areas in developing nations correlates with a weak commercial agricultural sector, a history of male out-migration, Western-style education and Christianity – all factors that obtain on the Cordillera.⁶ In the Philippines, there is a recent history (1960s onward) of such rural-urban migration by teenage and young adult cohorts of women which reflects a transformation of women's economic roles.⁷ Statistics for

⁵ For an exploration of this phenomenon in Indonesia, see Firman, T., "Labor allocation, mobility and remittances in rural households: a case from central Java, Indonesia" *Sojourn* 9(1), 1994: 81 – 101.

⁶ Wright, C., "Gender awareness in migration theory: synthesizing actor and structure." *Southern Africa Development and Change* 26, 1995: 771-91, 776.

⁷ Eviota, E. and P. Smith, "The migration of women in the Philippines" in Fawcett, J., Khoo, S. and P. Smith, eds., *Women in the cities of Asia: migration and urban adaptation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984; pp. 165 –190.)

the Cordillera region show a small flux of women in the 15 – 39 age cohorts out of rural areas (see Figure 6-3 and Figure 6-4). These women are usually single and migrating in a fairly autonomous fashion, though they are expected to remit money to their rural households. A variety of factors has contributed to this flow of young women away from rural areas.

Figure 6-3 Population by age and sex, Cordillera Administrative Region (1996)

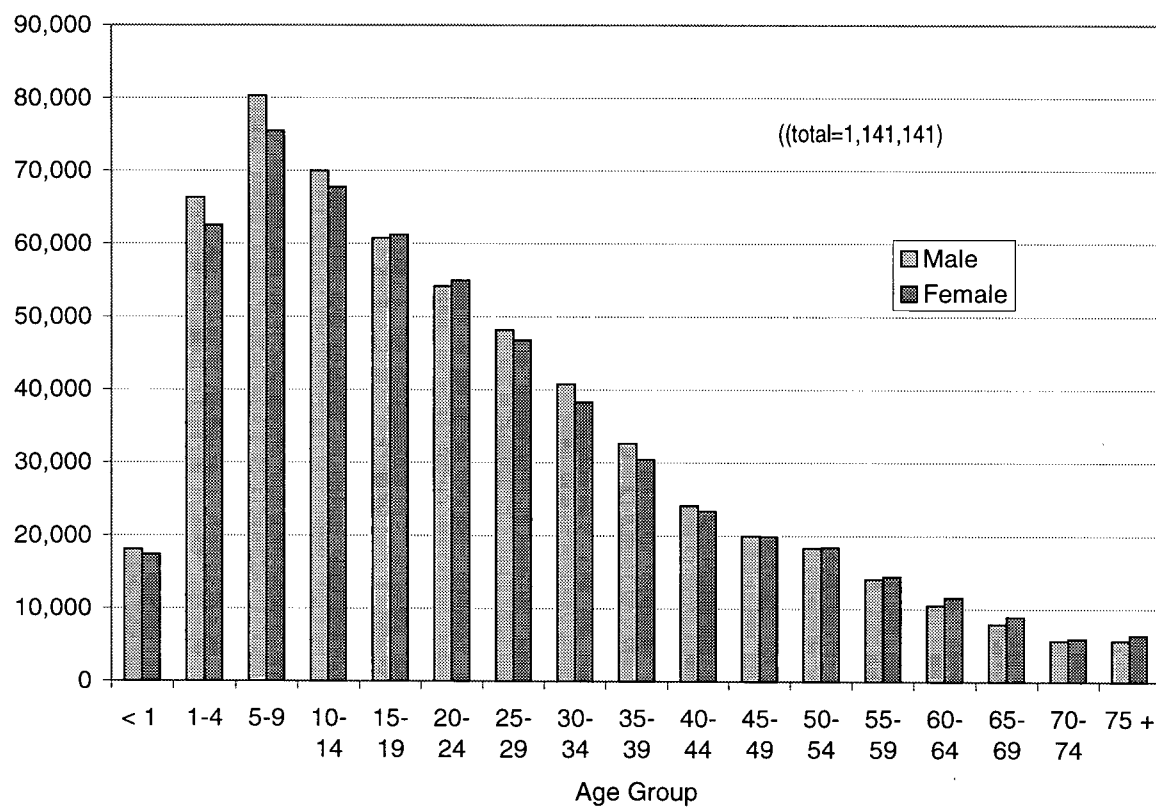
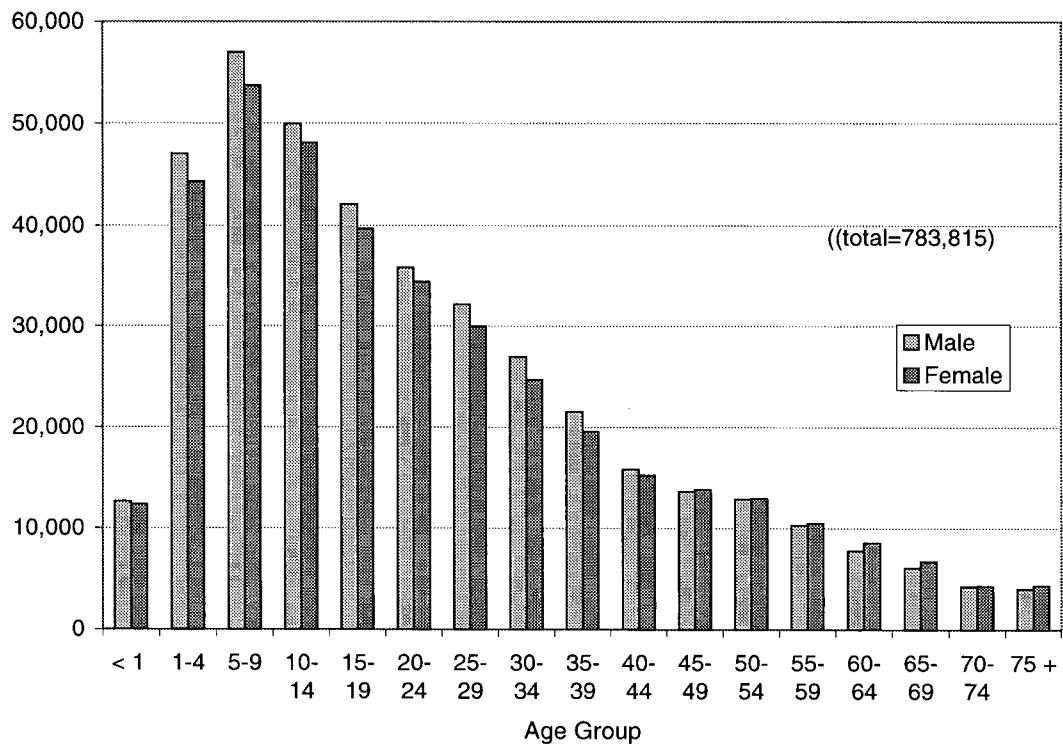


Figure 6-4 Population by age and sex, rural areas, Cordillera Administrative Region (1996)



Since the late 1960s, female labor has been liberated from rice farming systems by the reworking of the division of labor inherent in the introduction of high-yielding varieties, as indicated in Chapter 5.

Meanwhile, a larger cadre of younger women in rural areas has received secondary, post-secondary and tertiary training, which fits them for urban job markets. Migrant women are generally better educated than their male counterparts. Rural women, like women across the Philippines, have generally higher scholastic attainment and are now more likely to migrate than men, there being a direct correlation between level of education and migration.⁸

The Philippine educational system raises peoples' expectations in ways most easily met by migration from their home communities. It does so by encouraging rural students to leave for further study without providing skills to use on their return, by devaluing local knowledges and by providing a universal

⁸ Education is highly valued in Philippine society for both women and men. Degree-holders have high status, often being named and addressed by their professional qualifications, e.g. "Nurse X," "Engineer Y," and "Doctora Z."

metropolitan curriculum.⁹ Lacking a strong nationalist tradition and emerging from a recent colonial past, the Philippine curriculum is decidedly American in its orientation. The curriculum is designed to implant a set of civic values and morality associated with urban living. Rural society itself is presented unfavorably in the classroom – as disorderly, undisciplined and backward. The goal of educating people is popularly understood to be the reproduction of the ‘good life’ as defined by images of American-style consumption, and values of discipline and obedience that will lead to progress.¹⁰

While the curriculum produces workers prepared to participate in modern production systems, local job opportunities in the modern sector are few. Outmigration becomes the only viable option for those who feel they must “use” the education for which their households made so many sacrifices. Dutiful daughters, no longer needed as farm labor, feel this pressure intently. As single women, they are both less necessary to household reproduction and more likely to be “responsible” and remit money than their brothers.¹¹

Simultaneously, urban labor markets have expanded, particularly in the service sectors that are organized around the lifestyles of the urban middle and upper classes. These service sector jobs are feminized and, since the 1960s, there has been a movement of women into the formal labor force across the nation. Access to these positions is structured by educational attainment and by cultural capital, including community of origin. Jobs in professional, clerical and sales categories tend to be occupied by urban-born women, while rural migrants, even those with a college education, are disproportionately found in factory and domestic labor. Though these urban jobs for young female migrants initially may have emerged as an element in adolescent experimentation and rebellion, these jobs are now an essential part of a reconfigured domestic economy in rural areas. Holding such a job both satisfies the expectation that

⁹ Pertierra, R., “Lured abroad: the case of Ilocano overseas workers” *Sojourn* 9(1), 1994: 54-80, 57.

¹⁰ Margold, J., “Egalitarian ideals and exclusionary practices: U.S. pedagogy in the colonial Philippines.” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 8(4), 1995: 375-394.

¹¹ See Lauby, J. and O. Stark “Individual migration as a family strategy: young women in the Philippines.” *Population Studies* 42, 1988: 473 – 486, for further discussion.

daughters contribute to their natal households and provides new forms of freedom and influence for young women.¹² Contrary to much feminist theory of the household, this improved status is not always achieved by daughters turning over cash remittances to their parents. In fact, working daughters sometimes withdraw resources from their households in order to pursue urban life. Thus, Wolf finds that rationally conceived "household strategies" do not exist, rather young women use their factory work to position themselves in a struggle to withdraw their labor, pay, and life-decisions from parental control, yet to do so in a way that gives them cultural capital by positioning them, as women, within the 'modern' sector.

Since most domestics and factory workers are migrants who differ in linguistic background, customs and province of origin from their employers and managers, ethnicity becomes an essential feature in legitimating this exploitative situation. Low wages and long working hours for local domestics (*kattulong*), usually young women recruited from the provinces, are an accepted facet of middle-class urban lifestyles.¹³ Members of the elite often described their local domestic workers of different social status as possessing different physical traits, thus transforming hierarchical relations of class into quasi-racial attributes.¹⁴ Likewise, women from the Cordillera are portrayed in the mass media as so physically different and ugly as to be virtually unsuitable for office work. Here is the text of "letter" to a beauty advisor that appeared in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*:

Dear Madam, Greetings!

I am 25 years old and my height is only 4'11". Worst, I have an unproportioned body. My torso and my arms are too thin while my thighs and legs are big, typical of a highlander like me.

This is one reason why I am reluctant to work in agencies that require uniforms. Cut and designs do not suit me. I try to wear a pencil skirt with a matching blazer and I look funny.

¹² Wolf, D., *op.cit.*, 249.

¹³ Pertierra, R., *op. cit.*, 56.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 56 - 57.

What kind of clothes make me look taller and my thighs and legs look thinner? Are there any exercises that could reduce the size of my thighs?

Please help me as I do not want to be unemployed all my life.

Thank you,

Cali Anne, Benguet, Mountain Province¹⁵

Since Mountain Province and Benguet are both provinces, it is unlikely that this is a real letter and more likely that the author is simply reworking common stereotypes of women from the mountains for “beauty advice.” It is interesting to note that her build and her consciousness of her ‘difference’ renders the indigenous woman not merely unsightly, but virtually unemployable. With these ideas as received knowledge, broader Philippine society can use ethnic backgrounds and ‘body types’ to map women onto jobs away from the public eye such as in-house domestic work and other forms of menial labor. Given the widespread circulation of these ideas, it may be more appealing for ethnically marked women, such as those from the Cordillera, to work outside the country rather than confronting these stereotypes.

Although education may seem to be a promising ticket away from farming for rural women and a guarantee of remittance income for their families, the inability to find economic opportunities in Philippine cities is a reality many must face. Since urban employment opportunities within the country are limited not only by widespread unemployment but by community of origin or ethnicity, the global labor market is the obvious choice for rural women. High status can be validated by income, as much as by education or ethnic background, so the comparatively high salaries of overseas work attract rural women as often as other Filipinos. Many Filipinos/Filipinas are thus seriously considering or actively seeking work abroad.

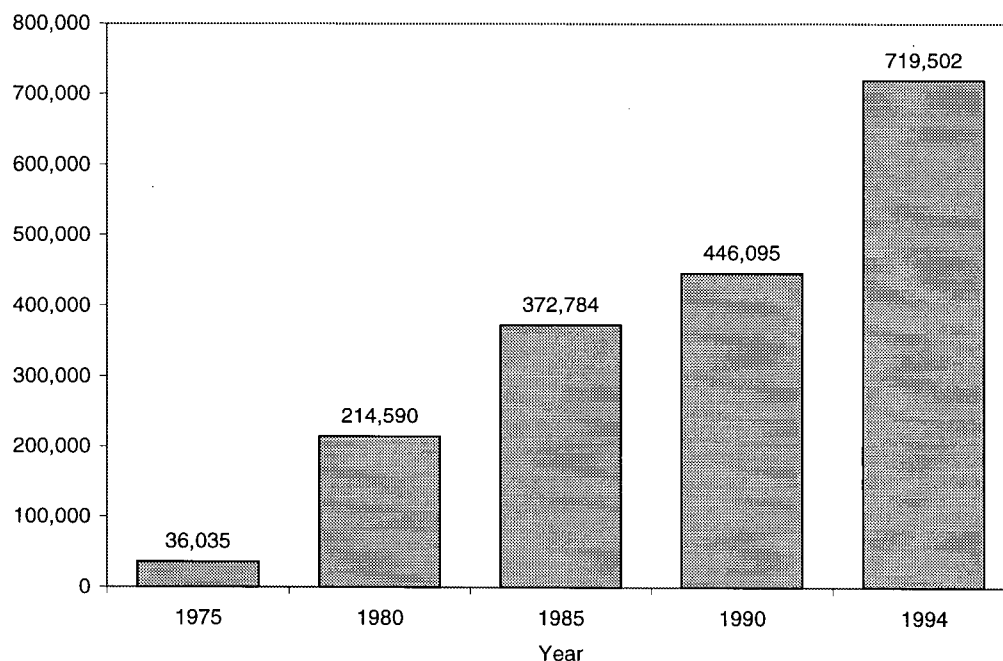
6.3 The overseas phenomenon

In 1994, approximately 720,000 workers were recorded by the Philippine government as deployed (Figure 6-5). Informal, and likely inflated, estimates place over two million Filipinos working abroad. That would be roughly two percent of the population as a whole and about five percent of the nation’s

¹⁵ Bernardo, C., 1996, “Elan,” *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 1 May, 1997, D8.

labor force. Of the women deployed overseas in 1990 -1991, sixty-six percent were between twenty and thirty-four years of age, with a median age of twenty-nine years, and eighty percent were recorded as single.¹⁶

Figure 6-5 Deployed OCWs by selected year



Though the manual labor of domestic work would be considered low status in the country, its performance abroad is refigured because of the income it brings. As returned OCWs, migrants can indulge in patterns of local consumption that increase their status, re-validating their manual labor in the overseas context. Movies, radio and TV shows, popular music and the press glamorize and sometimes distort the reality of migrants working overseas, though migrants themselves are the best advertisement for the values of migration. Returnees are often just as proud of their lighter-colored skin as they are of their new clothes, accessories and appliances.

¹⁶ Data from Beltran, R. and G. Rodriguez, *Filipino women migrant workers: at the crossroads and beyond Beijing* (Quezon City: Giraffe Books, 1996), p. 16.

Female circular migration for employment abroad has been supervised, monitored and coordinated by the Philippine State since the 1970s.¹⁷ Much of the expenditure related to “going abroad” for work involves negotiating the bureaucracy: passports must be secured, contracts approved and authenticated by government agencies, documents prepared for travel clearance, customs and immigration, and taxes. As part of the ‘labor export policy’ of the state, laws have been relaxed to facilitate the travel of female workers to meet demand in the international market. Before this expansion in the demand for female labor, women had to file a “No Objection Certificate” from their father or husband to obtain a passport. This restriction has since been dropped and, since many women in the rural Cordillera do not have an official marriage certificates but have ‘traditional’ or “common-law” unions, was likely never particularly effective in preventing women’s migration from the region.

Representations of the worker pool made by Philippine government agencies rely on tropes of docility, obedience, beauty and English education to market Filipina labor.¹⁸ These images of Filipina femininities also coincide with sexually defined representations used to attract tourism in the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁹ Contracts are procured, laborers recruited and workers deployed, all under the supervision of the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA). Provincial women must commute to and from the metropolitan offices of the POEA to become “deployed.” In the provinces, they can deal with local recruiting agents whose authenticity and POEA approval may be doubtful. James Tyner reports that there is a particular demand from employers for labor recruited from ‘the provinces’ because *probinsyanas* are perceived to be less interested in socializing and consumer culture, while more docile, and energetic in cooking, cleaning and childcare.²⁰ This construction of rural femininity and its market value explains the

¹⁷ For a discussion of female migration within the history of Filipino migration see Tigno, J. “International migration as state policy: the Philippine experience as model and myth” *Kasarinlan* 6 (1/2), 1996: 73–78.

¹⁸ Tyner, J., “The gendering of Philippine international labor migration” *Professional Geographer* 48(4), 1996: 405-416.

¹⁹ Tyner, J., “Constructions of Filipina migrant entertainers” *Gender, Place and Culture* 3(1), 1996: 77-93.

²⁰ Tyner, J., “The gendering of Philippine international labor migration” *Professional Geographer* 48(4), 1996: 405-416, 413.

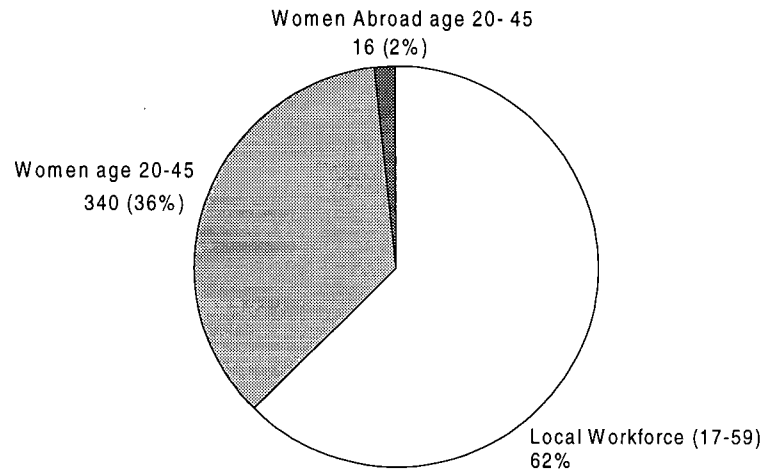
prevalence of recruiting drives, both real and fake, in provincial communities, including those of the Cordillera.

Costs for migration vary, but estimates from my respondents ranged from C\$ 1500 for Singapore or Hong Kong, C\$ 4000 for “saudi” to over C\$ 6000 for Canada or Europe. These estimates included expenses related to the contract itself, like airfare and a medical exam, agency fees for placement and, possibly, training, travel expenses to and from government offices, possible gratuities for government offices, and the fees of “fixers” who shepherd applications through the bureaucracy. Though many of my respondents expressed interest in overseas work, these costs of deployment were cited as the major reason why comparatively few women from the Cordillera have taken contracts abroad.

Statistics are not available for the deployment of OCWs by province, nor, with the lack of postal and telephone service in the mountains, would such information necessarily accurately reflect OCWs’ communities of origin. Several of the women I interviewed gave friends’ or relatives’ addresses during the deployment process. In the Ilocos, Raul Pertierra reports that some areas have thirteen percent of the adult working population overseas, with seventy percent of those migrants female, and sixty-two percent of households reporting migrant workers.²¹ In the Haliap/Panubtuban case, there are far fewer workers abroad (Figure 6-6). The explanations for this situation given by Cordillera respondents included the distance of their home communities from the recruiting sites and POEA offices and the existence of cultural and linguistic differences between the mountain groups and the lowland metropolitan inhabitants. These differences lead to stereotyping and poor treatment in agencies and government offices. Most important, and most often cited, was a lack of capital for the initial expenses.

²¹ Pertierra, R., *op. cit.*, 67.

Figure 6-6 Women overseas as proportion of local workforce, Haliap/Panubtuban (1996)



6.3.1 Local impacts of overseas work

Migrant labor earns approximately US\$ 3 billion annually for the national economy in terms of direct remittances. When remittances from those of Filipino descent are included, the total is closer to US\$ 6 billion, approximately the same amount as the national budget.²² OCWs are part of an underground economy that subverts state attempts to track and control the flows of money. Remittances are difficult to track because much of the money returns hand-carried by friends and family members of OCWs, rather than by bank drafts and transfers. Like Pertierra, I found that most families and migrants reported remitting an average of C\$ 60 - \$ 120 per month.²³ Sixteen of one hundred sixty-seven households reported OCW remittances, often carried directly by friends or family every few months. Only two of the sixteen households reported that they received a regular bank draft to cash.

These remittances usually affect the community of origin through individual families, rather than more collective structures, though there is a growing trend for groups of OCWs from a particular sending area to set up their own “benevolent associations” to aid those at home. The Asipulo Municipal Hall received a donation from one such group. At least discursively, the charitable activities of OCWs have been tied

²² Tyner, J., “Bodies, letters, catalogues: Filipinas in transnational space” *Social Text* 14(3), 1996: 49-76, 57.

²³ I estimate that this represented from one tenth to one third of the monthly cash income of their households. Respondents did not provide enough data for this to be calculated with accuracy.

to long-term migrants who also set up non-governmental organizations in their receiving nations. For instance, I found the following on the Igorot E-mail list:

Abra girl helps other domestics

Conrado "Connie" Quiblado is a management degree-holder from Abra, but for economic reasons, she opted to become a domestic helper in Saudi Arabia in 1981, then Singapore in 1984 and finally in Hong Kong in 1988.

She is still in Hong Kong working and helping other migrant workers. The Lupa-Tubo HK Group she founded helped send material contributions to Barangays Luba and Tubo in Abra.

Later, she founded and led the Sampaguita Organization of Hong Kong. Composed of domestic workers from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India and Hong Kong, it seeks to promote sisterhood, brotherhood, unity and cooperation among contract workers.

The organization sends donations to earthquake victims in the Philippines and helps in the construction and improvement of school buildings and churches. They also contributed to the construction of deep wells and waiting sheds, and the giving of scholarship grants.²⁴

At home, overseas work is most beneficial to households who did not have to borrow money to deploy a worker and households whose workers obtained regular, remunerative employment. Investments from overseas work rarely result in a more differentiated or diverse local economy. Because returned workers wish to install themselves at the apex of local hierarchies of class and status, they appear to be attracted to investments in locally recognized symbols of status. These include land, housing, appliances, and further education for household members. While the small number of investment opportunities may limit the potential for OCWs remittances and savings to diversify local economies, social pressure seems to be a contributing factor.

Given the heroic way OCWs can be portrayed, as in the quote above, the personal sacrifices required to take part in overseas work can be used by returned migrants to argue for entitlements to enhanced status and a 'comfortable' life. Other people are proud of this yet simultaneously jealous. The trappings of enhanced status – the clothes and appliances – can attract gossip and accusations of stinginess from other community members. This can lead to pressures to redistribute the wealth to friends and relatives, either to honor their requests for loans, educational support or to make 'grand gestures' in donations to

²⁴ Posted to igorots@onelist.com, Sun, 14 Feb 1999, by IS.

community events. Sometimes, the pressure is much less subtle, as in the case of one returned OCW who invested some of her savings to become a local distributor of Tupperware. Her investment failed because many people took the containers on credit but never paid their debts. When I asked her neighbors about this, they argued that, since she was “already rich from abroad,” she did not need their money.

Tupperware, for her, they claimed, was “just a sideline.” She, however, told me that she had staked her savings on the venture and was now considering taking another contract in Singapore, much as she disliked the idea of leaving her children again. Her other option, to run a small *sari-sari* store from her house, would also be doomed: “If you don’t give credit, they won’t buy anything, but if I give credit, they say ‘nevermind, she’s *balikbayan* already,’ and then it’s only credits and never money. People are jealous here; they don’t want to know how hard it is, abroad.”

6.3.2 Discourses of OCW deployment

The ways in which people construct ‘going abroad’ reflect ambivalence about OCWs’ sacrifices, social status and femininities. There is a longstanding Southeast Asian discourse on travelers as ‘masters’ of an external realm of adventure that has most often been applied to male migrants. However, it can also be applied to explain experiences of female circular migration. Local constructions of femininity and masculinity do not gender the traveler in prescriptive terms. Though this prestige has been traditionally masculine, it is possible for women to create new forms of femininity based on their overseas work. Thus, in describing his *balikbayan* niece, returned from Singapore and planning to go to Taiwan, one older man explained to me: “How can we keep her here, now that she has seen those far places? There is no more for her to do, except more adventures there.” Self-actualization through travel may be just as much a feature of female lives as male, as open to women as to men. A young *balikbayan* recruiting “girls” for her ‘auntie’s’ agency in Singapore explained it thus:

What’s left for them here, anyway? They get married in high school, have their babies... There’s no money, there’s nothing here. What can they do? They are already wives, mothers but it is still *kurang*. Always looking somewhere for food, for money. No nice things, no respect. So they like to go abroad. It is something new for them. There is money... but there is also new friends, new places to learn.

The prestige and novelty of travel was not the only discursive construction of female work abroad. Other female migrants stressed the economic necessities of their family roles as the push factors that led to their migration. "When I see our rice pot is empty, I'm the one to find for our needs, so I went to Hong Kong" explained one returned worker. Metaphorically comparing the household budget to the cooking pot locates her overseas work within feminine domestic responsibilities to make ends meet. She constructs her migration in terms consonant with femininity as "knowing what to do" as well as the roles of "dutiful daughter" or 'self-sacrificing mother.' Other women chose images from the market economy that similarly fit within these discourses:

We mortgaged our fields, our beans were destroyed, so there is nothing for us. Our problem was, we have no capital to do some business. I am the one who was sent to school, so it is for me to look for money, to find a capital. So we mortgaged more fields and I went to Hong Kong to earn.

Lastly, God was often invoked by migrants as the rationale for taking a contract abroad:

So, before I went to see the agency with my friends, I prayed 'Lord, if this is what you want, help me.' I think, 'if God is willing, things will work out for me' and that is how I came to go to Singapore. God chose that for me, that I be the one in our family to go out and find money for us.

While these discourses of feminine adventure and feminine economic responsibility were deployed to justify female migration overseas, other constructions of femininity in circular migration placed women firmly in the home.

Descriptions of migration as causing the collapse of the family were common in the Philippine radio and print media and amongst the elites during the period covered by my research. Though none of my migrant respondents described their experiences in these terms of family collapse, the comments of some elite, non-migrant women, reported in Chapter 5, were drawn from this discourse. The absence of women laboring overseas was described as:

a role reversal in our family system...instead of menfolk leaving home in the off season to work elsewhere, it is now our womenfolk who leave home on extended periods to find work as domestics in far away places such as Hong Kong, Singapore and the Middle East. Please note that I am not leveling any criticism here. Our beloved sisters, just like us, are willing to make a sacrifice in order to help their families attain higher living standards and to provide resources for the future education of their children. ... there is now an increasing incidence of crimes against children such as incest and child abuse and crimes by those neglected children themselves... the consequences of moms leaving children in the care of overburdened grandparents and husbands who may be good providers but are poor substitutes for mothers.²⁵

This quote draws on a broader 'family values' discourse that did get regular play in the media during my field research. This discourse on the family did not fit with the traditional flexibility of the gendered division of labor on the Cordillera where men are constructed as equally capable of child care and parenting happens in extended families. In fact, this broader discourse constructs the absence of women from their role in overseeing interactions in the home as leading to neglect, abuse and sexual predation on children by other family members, usually clearly identified as males.²⁶ In one instance, where a rise in the number of reported cases of sexual abuse committed by fathers was reported, the cases were attributed to male "culture shock... brought about by... reports on the crimes of foreign pedophiles in the media ... and mothers away from the home...as OCWs."²⁷ This problematization of the absence of mothers from the home produces a discursive version of Filipino men that reflects globalized Euro-American ideas of male child-abuse perpetrators, rather than locally flexible divisions of labor, contingent gendering and extended household systems.

The contradictory discourses on gender outlined above were circulating at both the community and national levels. The contradictions allowed women to justify their choice to migrate, in the case of my *balikbayan* respondents and other hopefuls, or to remain at home, like the community's Health Workers.

²⁵ Andrew Bacdayan, Professor of Economics, Northwestern State University, Louisiana, in a speech to the second International Igorot Consultation, Arlington, Virginia, 5 July 1997.

²⁶ This quote is an example I taped in a public speech that reflected the discourse of newspaper articles I had read and radio broadcasts I had heard while in the Philippines.

²⁷ Dulnuan, M., "Rape cases increasing" *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 19 September, 1996, A3.

Refigurings of local masculinities and femininities into globalized discursive frames were experienced by both women and men. In the local context, from elites to migrants and farmers, both men and women were performing genderings that interwove with threads of traditional, modern, local and global. Reworkings of gender situated them in very specific material and ideological sites within the local economy. Where globalized ideas of masculinity touched down, men were constructed as unfit fathers in very different fashions, according to class. The poorer husbands of female swidden farmers were perturbed that their childcare work was invisible to the development aid that would 'uplift' the community. The comparatively better-off husbands of female OCWs were being portrayed in the media as suspects in potential cases of abuse, a vice that had been "imported" with foreign visitors and their undesirable values. Where globalized femininities came to intersect with local understandings, female farmers were backward and resistant to development efforts, yet 'naturally' devoted parents. In contrast, female migrants were at once glamorous sophisticates, economic heroines, and insufficiently committed to their maternal roles, abandoning their children to predatory, foreign-influenced men in their search for money.

6.4 Becoming *balikbayan*

What was clearest about the status of returned female migrants was their transformation: returned female OCWs do not return to farming. They conceptualize themselves as having a different identity than their pre-departure farming selves. Returned OCWs are even named differently than their pre-departure farming selves; they are now identified as "*balikbayan*," as opposed to merely "college students," "professionals," or "farmers" by their communities.

This naming of OCWs as a special category marks their novelty in local conceptions of 'the modern' and local understandings of the trajectories of 'development.'²⁸ *Balikbayan* is a Tagalog word meaning "returned to the nation" from one's dwelling place elsewhere, on a temporary or itinerant basis. Vincente Rafael, in his essay on overseas Filipinos, distinguishes between "*balikbayan*, or immigrant Filipinos

primarily from North America who periodically visit the homeland, and overseas contract workers (OCWs) who are employed on a contractual basis in such places as the Middle East, Europe, East and Southeast Asia.”²⁹ This, indeed, appeared to be the prevailing distinction in the media. My respondents, however, referred to returned OCWs as “our *balikbayan*,” suggesting that, in Ifugao, OCWs played the same role as visiting Filipino-Americans did elsewhere. This borrowing of a Tagalog term to name this new social position marked the permeability between the two categories Rafael distinguishes. OCW women, like the videographer at Hungduan and Rosa in the Netherlands, appear to have the opportunity to make permanent connections to the nations that have received them as contract workers and are thus no longer truly ‘locals.’ As Rafael describes them, *balikbayans* desire to set themselves off from the rest of the “natives,” rather than re-assimilate with them. They are at once figures to be resented for their pretensions and envied for their success.

This elision of OCW and *balikbayan* in Ifugao perfectly expressed the ambivalence of local feelings toward returned female migrants. Some OCWs can expect to remain permanently in their host country or stay ‘abroad’ for many years on continual contract renewals. English speaking and Christian, women from the Cordillera are not completely excluded from the linguistic or religious communities in all nations that receive them. From my interviews, and observations it was clear that people understood that female OCWs could return home, as visitors, with video cameras to display the ways in which a “foreign” marriage has enhanced their status. This was apparently the goal of the Filipinas in the Netherlands whose lies about their Dutch boyfriends amused Rosa. Canada and the Netherlands were considered “good” countries for trying to become “a permanent.” By conflating OCW and *balikbayan*, my respondents also commented on the apparent inability of returned women to fit back in to the communities they had left and, like Gloria or Sally, their propensity to go ‘abroad’ repeatedly. Like Luz, they seem to their neighbors to prefer to save some of their displays of consumer goods and elite culture

²⁸ Rafael, V., “‘Your grief is our gossip’: overseas Filipinos and other spectral presences.” *Public Culture* 9, 1997, 267-291, 269.

²⁹ Rafael, V., *op. cit.*, 269.

for those foreigners and fellow travelers who can appreciate them; they are stingy with these things within the community they have transcended, confining their gifts to the practical and expected. The irritation of returned OCWs with the demands of relatives, ties of community reciprocity, and underdevelopment of local amenities was sometimes palpable to me, and definitely noticed by their families and neighbors. Many non-migrant locals, caught within their familiar webs of social demands and a lack of resources, would like themselves to have this option of leaving for elsewhere. They envy those overseas, sending home gifts to earn the gratitude and respect of family and friends and, returning briefly, being able to express their dissatisfaction with local life openly.

This dissatisfaction with local life was clearly expressed within the labor choices made by returned OCWs: none of the returned women I interviewed was actively farming. In some cases, members of their households were farmers or they had land and tenants. However, they no longer wielded the hoe and digging stick themselves. This was an essential feature of their *balikbayan* identity, as noted by their communities. Several of these women expressed that their reluctance to farm came, not from within themselves, but from the sense that the rest of the community would think of them as “failed” in their plans if they returned to agriculture. Several of those who had returned without investments told me that they would plan to go abroad again rather than do manual labor.

OCWs were censured for not “working” in agriculture but people were very proud that they have been “abroad.” The cultural capital they had accumulated by going abroad -- fairer skin, a particular style of presentation, distinctively imported clothes, make-up etc. -- was considered very important, both for the women themselves and for what it indicated about the resources and sophistication of particular communities. Even those women among the Health Workers who complained about returned OCWs poor ‘family values’ and reluctance to farm wanted to perform in the fancy dresses the returned migrants had brought back with them. OCW femininity was a desirable role to perform, even as the women themselves were ambivalent figures in the local landscape.

6.5 Migration experiences and gendered identities

She leaves her country like someone giving up dreams: she disowns her family like someone pawning memories. Living where innocence is a crime, she witnesses with disgust what she will end up being.³⁰

Circular migration has a strong impact on gender identities. Jane Margold's study of male migrants from the Ilocos region who worked in construction sites in "saudi" found that "the sense of manhood developed locally may be partially disassembled when the migrant is incorporated into the ranks of the global labor force. There, he is ghettoized, ordered to work at top speed, and quickly repatriated, often before his economic gains outweigh his feelings of shock."³¹ Experiences in construction work in the Arabian Gulf dehumanized and desexualized Filipino men, leading to psychological withdrawal from their local communities on their return home. As elsewhere in Southeast Asia, prestige is accorded to those who can narrate their adventures "out" from the community and show mastery over external influences and discourses. This kind of self-actualization and status acquisition through travel has traditionally been a male enterprise associated with warfare and long-distance trade or diplomacy. Yet, these claims to status through performances of narratives of 'abroad' are not possible for outmigrant men who have endured humiliating and confusing work conditions. In their experiences, the vocalizations, emotional displays and social interactions that make up a distinctive local masculinity in Ilocos were repressed and replaced by a globalized hyper-masculinity. Thus, male migrants returned home feeling 'un-manned' by both 'saudi' society and their own indigenous standards. Unable to tell their stories, they instead displayed unusual levels of violence, aggression and misogyny towards their relatives and neighbors – a phenomenon glossed as "saudi syndrome."

In the following, I want to explore how women understand their gendered experiences abroad. As I have shown above, on the Cordillera, narratives of female adventure 'abroad' are also an acceptable strategy

³⁰ Yourcenar, M., *Fires*. Trans. D. Katz. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, 5.)

³¹ Margold, J., "Narratives of masculinity and transnational migration: Filipino workers in the Middle East" in Ong, A. and M. Peletz, eds., *Bewitching women, pious men: gender and body politics in Southeast Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995: pp. 274 - 298), p. 276.

for outmigrant women, but, I will suggest, muted among my respondents for many of the same reasons that silenced male construction workers. Jane Margold has shown how contract work fundamentally alters the masculine subjectivities of Ilocano men. Here, I wish to explore the experiences of female migration and femininities. Since most female migrants from the Cordillera find themselves employed as domestic labor, does their work abroad reconstitute their self-understanding as feminine? I asked a varied group of returned OCW women to talk with me about their experiences as women abroad. The narrative I heard and shared were these women's responses to both their placement and my own within global discourses on gender and ethnicity. These narratives locate commonalities among women navigating transnational space in their commodification as aesthetic body, laboring in the service sector. The perceptions of Filipinos in host societies, regional hierarchies of racial privilege, and varying linguistic ability create differences in these experiences. The stories that women told me of their time abroad retrieve the tropes of exoticism, docility and poverty found in the colonial discourses on gender, development and ethnicity. These tropes precede and then structure the lives of female circular migrants from the Philippines while they are overseas. None of the women whose stories I have represented here is a 'typical Filipina.' Their Igorot ethnicity marks them as different within the nation. Paradoxically, they really do not become "Filipinas" until they are abroad.

6.5.1 Balikbayan and autobiographical exchange

My interviews with these *balikbayan* women were conducted on an ongoing basis, using techniques of open-ended questions and autobiographical exchange. Since I, too, was a traveler, the problems of traveling as a woman was a common starting point. In fact, many of these women approached me, first, on just that commonality between us as women. Anna Tsing describes this dynamic in her own field research as a partial and gendered bond created around the shared understanding that "we were both women with experience of the pleasures and limitations of other ways of life."³² In most of what became my "interviews," our discussions of femininity and travel began as gestures of friendship. Only later did

³² Tsing, A., *In the realm of the diamond queen: marginality in an out of the way place* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 215.

several of these friends decide to participate in a formal interview process. Though I interviewed only nine women on this iterative basis, I drew background information from insights, personal detail and commentaries supplied by many more.

In exchanging life stories with me, these women described their lives as a series of context-driven and often contradictory performances of femininity. This element of autobiographical exchange emerged from within the interview process, rather than as a pre-conceived research strategy on my part. Perhaps because my own social position and performances of femininity were also greeted with ambivalence by my host community, this dynamic of personal discussion was one that I found both intellectually productive and personally comforting.

Reading the transcripts of my interview discussions, I found I had worked in details from non-interview situations into formal discussions in order to display my knowledge and elicit further comments. I also answered a number of biographical questions and sometimes offered personal detail, spontaneously, as a gesture of solidarity and in the hopes that I, myself, would be understood. In one of my first interviews, as we spoke about our biographies, I realized that one implicit rule of autobiographical exchange was that you do not ask, you wait to be told. Both of these dynamics – that of personal understanding and waiting for detail – are evident in the transcript of my interview with Ruth and Marilyn that precedes this chapter.

The transcripts and narratives I have selected to report here are thus limited by the privacy, familiarity and level of comfort we shared during each of our interviews. It is my situated claim to the status as ‘woman,’ and that of my respondents’, too, in these conversations which enables me to offer up the resulting excerpts. Reading these narratives locates commonalities among women navigating particular transnational spaces and suggests that such exchanges can contribute to methodologies for building broader feminist affinities on a transnational scale. In selecting and structuring these narratives within the dissertation, I have tried not merely to retrieve these stories, but to show how the research process

allowed local resistance to pass through my own privileged outsider positioning. By acknowledging that these stories are always partial and staged within a vocabulary of familiar (post)colonial tropes, we can avoid both essentializing these women as victims or heroines and homogenizing their experiences. The variety of experiences here, in its divergence from a postulated common ground of 'woman,' highlights the contingent construction of femininities globally.

6.5.2 Performing femininities as cultural capital

What emerges most clearly from the lives of all my *balikbayan* respondents - Luz, Sally, Gloria, Rosa, Marilyn and Ruth – is the myriad of ways that performances of femininity become cultural capital, limited in its utility by the context of performance. As migrants and indigenous women, they are positioned in and outside of national and transnational discourses on ethnicity and femininity in contradictory ways. Much of this positioning relied on discourses of beauty, the ethnic body and docility. Their assessments of their situations and decisions on the contexts where resistance was possible or accommodation strategic reminded me of my own anxiety around the photograph taken by my friend in the clinic. To what extent was I duped by globalized gender into participating in my objectification as embodying categories of race and sex and to what extent did my actions before and afterward serve to show up those categories? Their experiences show that, while adjusting one's performance of femininity to a globalized notion of female beauty and charm might seem an accommodation, such adjustments can also function as acts of resistance. These acts of resistance show up transnational hierarchies of ethnicity and class for the un-natural constructions they are.

The interleaved narratives I have presented are rich sources for the discussion of gender as a transnational performative and I can only select a few examples to discuss here. To begin, I would highlight the way in which, Luz's careful study of the mechanics of performing a middle-class femininity was an essential tactic in her successful negotiation of her years abroad. She accumulated the cultural capital of Euro-American femininity in the forms of consumption and presentation, all the while

asserting her rights as an employee. In Hong Kong, Luz managed to move up the hierarchy of employment experiences from least to most desirable of positions – one with the option of permanent residency outside the Philippines. Luz accomplished this by “going with” and mimicking her female employers. It seems as if her strategy was to say, in the subtext of her performances: how can you treat me as less than an equal when I am just like you? By sitting with her in her living room, years later, our body language mirroring each other as we drank our Fortnum and Mason’s Earl Grey tea, my own performance in response confirmed this yet again.

Luz also quite consciously looked for Filipina contacts that also knew how to work the system of feminine performance she encountered in Hong Kong. This pattern of relating between employer and *DH* and between Filipina migrants themselves appears to strengthen particular discourses on Filipina’s feminine behavior as diligent workers, pleasing personalities, curious, grateful, well-groomed and well-mannered. Luz was eager to share those attributes and have them confirmed, again, as globalized cultural capital, in interacting with me, though her performative however, is not without its costs and displacements. No longer ‘at home’ in Ifugao, Luz is trapped in a lifestyle she finds tedious by her husband’s jealousy and what she perceives to be his limited ambition. She told me that she explained to her spouse how she could have petitioned both husband and son to join her in Canada after two years. Her husband, however, preferred to be a property-owning member of the local elite than start again abroad. The irony that it was her successful stint in Hong Kong that has funded his improved status is not lost on her.

Luz’s experience shows how overseas work can produce middle class status for the household in the sending community. Having a domestic helper – *kattulong* – is part of that for many middle-class Filipino households as it is for Luz. Apart from Luz, several of the other older and more established contract workers I met had domestic help. Ironically, the trials endured abroad by OCWs are not usually considered alongside the experiences of local domestics in their OCW employer’s homes. These women are usually younger, ‘working students’ from even more remote areas and impoverished households.

Unlike the ethnicization of class categories described earlier, I found that domestic helpers in the Philippine homes of Cordillera *balikbayan* were constructed as poorer relations being “helped out,” rather than ugly and of limited potential. They, too, wished to model themselves on their employers and ‘graduate’ to work abroad and then deploy ‘cross-country,’ moving toward the coveted goal of securing residency and permanent employment outside the Philippines.

6.5.3 Accommodating ‘beauty’

Local ideas of feminine charm, economic potential, beauty and the performances of OCW femininity are mutually constitutive. In a nation where physical beauty is supposedly a defining characteristic of the Filipina as national femininity, women from the Cordillera, in particular, have been constructed as ugly in the national imaginary -- dark skinned and heavy legged. While overseas, Cordillera women try not to live up to these stereotypes. They attempt to fit in to the ‘Filipina’ mold as best they can, applying make-up and wearing much showier clothes than they would in their home communities where simple presentation is an indicator of humility. Sally’s performance at the wedding was an example of this kind of presentation being transferred back to the sending region as both advertisement of success and claim to status.

Marilyn told Ruth and I a second-hand story about an exceptionally pretty Igorot woman from Kalinga who went to Hong Kong. She met some Filipinas on her “off” day at Nathan Square. When her Tagalog-speaking companions there discovered her ethnic origins, they commented that “maybe she did not have a tail like other Igorots.” Incensed, the Kalinga woman replied: “Just look and see who of us is more beautiful? Me. And I was here first; I pioneered this place.” The important theme passed on here is that Igorot women abroad must be prepared to hold their own in contests over Filipina beauty staged to authenticate claims to Filipina identity and entitlements to Filipino friendship networks overseas.

This accommodation to “beauty” is an ambivalent performance because Cordillera women may also rely on ethnic stereotypes within the Filipina category to gain employment. Where significant numbers of

Cordillera women are deployed in Hong Kong, being 'from the North,' as Luz and Marilyn both reported, is associated by employers with a sturdy physique, hard work, good English, and a lack of vanity. Ruth responded to Marilyn's story, above, with her own experience in Italy. She told a story in which she and several Igorot companions were able to circumvent Tagalog-speaking Filipino networks in Rome because they had pale skin. They deployed their personal variations from Italian stereotypes of Filipinos to "pass" as Chinese!

Being 'abroad' is understood as being close to the center of desirable status and in contact with valuable commodities that reinforce and enhance beauty. As Sally and Luz showed me, *balikbayan* women from the Cordillera bring home fancy clothes and gifts, make-up and ideas of style that they have learned. Given the proportion of their time off that OCWs reported spending in malls, part of their process of cultural accumulation abroad might be described as a pilgrimage to the sites where feminine beauty is produced and commodified. When you are 'just a maid,' as Luz explained to me, it is very important to dress well on your "off" (days) and go to those places an employer might go. According to Luz, even window shopping can make you feel like you are free to participate in the pageant, to leave your maid's uniform back at your worksite. As Sally's comments on the differences between our clothing and lipstick show, part of this experience is the education OCWs receive in determining the good from the better, the lower status from the high.

Plate 6-1 shows a group of Filipinas on their 'day off,' doing just this by sitting, in their 'best' clothes, in front of the Christian Dior store in Hong Kong's Nathan Square area. By occupying this public space, they appropriate the globalized version of commodified beauty and status symbolized by the Dior label. Even maids can know about Dior and maybe, one day, buy it. Simultaneously, their occupation of this public space protests their exclusion from participation in Hong Kong's own discursive constructions of femininity and citizenship that allow them, as female guest workers, no space to interact but the sidewalk.

Plate 6-1 Filipina contract workers in front of Dior, Hong Kong



6.5.4 Negotiating relationships and transformations

Ethnicity, sexuality and appearance are conflated in very particular ways in the spaces inhabited by individual Filipina migrants. This is made clear in the letter from Rosa, who, when she wrote it, was a twenty-four year old who came from an outmigration area and had worked both in Ifugao and in neighboring provinces as a schoolteacher. She graduated with a teaching degree and planned to return to university for a master's at some point. She found a position as an "au pair" in the Netherlands through her family's connections with the Dominican mission in Nueva Viscaya. Her interest in the 'au pair' program was piqued by the opportunity to audit university classes at a Dutch university and to see Europe. I met her originally in 1992, and caught up with her just as she was about to depart for the Netherlands.

Between several jobs in tourism and her contract work in education, she had moved through several different work sites in a period of a few years. We discussed the problems single female travelers have with men, cultures and customs as they move from one place to another. She promised to write me about her experiences there as a woman and a foreigner for my research project. I have reproduced the text of her letter.

6.5.4.1 Rosa's letter

In this letter, Rosa expresses the frustrations of her situation eloquently. Her ethnicity, Ifugao/Igorot, makes her friendships with some fellow au pairs possible, but seems to have alienated her from some of the other Filipinas she has met. Likewise, her comments on her Dutch suitor are telling: she has one, because all Filipinas have one or want one, but she is not really interested. Getting married provides a way out of au pairing without returning home, but it is not a game she wants to play. Her letter suggests that she sees the kind of relationship she could have with a Dutch man as being inherently unstable and based on deceit and manipulation.

Rosa clearly prefers her professional position in the Philippines to working as a domestic in Holland. She

is angry that the educational and cultural benefits she anticipated from the au pair program have been denied to her on the basis of ethnicity.³³ Moreover, she is determined, somehow, to see France. Though her experiences are moving her down the same track outlined by the FDI papers that both Gloria and Sally gave me, through beauty and into finding a husband, Rosa insists on her curiosity, her education and her ability to fend for herself. She does not wish to be transformed in this way by her experiences but wants to return to her role as teacher in the Philippines.

6.5.4.2 Ruth's story

In contrast, Ruth's life story outlines her transformation through girlfriend and wife and from *DH* to cook in Rome, geriatric care worker to cleaning lady in the United States. On her travels, she passed through most of the subject positions and job descriptions identified with Filipinas outside the Philippines. She did so successfully by passing as Chinese, by asserting her indigenous knowledge of English, her ability to learn and her strength of character. Like Rosa, above and Marilyn and I, Ruth had negotiated some of the tight spots of her journey by entering into an ill-defined relationship with a "boyfriend" who provided economic support and companionship, but left a bad feeling afterward. She remembered with sadness that she had objectified and exploited her own femininity. This was followed by an ill-fated marriage that brought her to the States and her eventual management position in a cleaning agency as a single mother of two. Despite her hardships, she had also traveled from being the English-speaking curiosity in a child's show-and-tell exhibit in an Italian school to a space where she related to the surrounding culture and to "her clients" from a place of self-respect and strength. Only after that strength was achieved, did she have the courage to return home. As Ruth's story suggests, the paths of transformation do not always end in dwelling abroad, but in returning to the Philippines, embedded within new, global networks of meaning.

³³ These benefits were clearly outlined in English-language materials obtained for her by Dutch nationals she met through her ties with the Dominican mission in Nueva Viscaya.

6.5.4.3 Transformations in self and place

For Ruth, her self-respect and strength are decidedly attributable to the transformation inherent in her born-again Christianity. Ruth locates her in the Christian faith and community ties she developed while in California. This transformation and set of relationships that allow her to navigate in transnational space alienate her from her natal community. To me, she expressed embarrassment over local 'pagan' or traditional religious rituals. Her religious transformation brings her into conflict with local tradition that serve to locate ethnic identity as Igorot. In contrast, Marilyn, her friend, has come to the opposite position. She returned from abroad to re-embed herself within local religious practice as "igorotism." As Marilyn expressed it: "Igorots are those who perform the rituals. The others are just... become Filipinos." Marilyn's experiences in Singapore and on the American bases have transformed her 'back' into "more of an Igorot than when I left," she said.

Both Ruth and Marilyn had returned with a strong sense of home and their stake in it, committed to preserving some aspects of local tradition and changing those ideas of propriety and gendering that they find oppressive. Yet, they approached this with two very different vocabularies, one of nativism, the other of Christianity, which would put them at odds with each other. The commonalities that they established in sharing their experiences 'abroad,' however, bound them to a critical approach to local life. In the transcript I include, it is evident that they recognized that the connection between their marginal and place and the metropolitan center is more than one-way. Their oppositional consciousness was directed towards their own rethinking of experience, their community life, their experiences abroad and my questions as researcher.

Not all returned women have returned to stay. In contrast to Ruth, Marilyn, Luz and Rosa, Sally and Gloria both wished to go abroad again, this time, perhaps, to Canada. Since they were not "home for good," Sally and Gloria seemed to see their relationships within their sending communities in different ways. I also noted that they also tended to construct me, in our interactions, as a potential advisor and sponsor, rather than as a friend and peer.

6.6 Narratives of transformation

Relationships with employers, other OCWs and boyfriends appear in these *balikbayans*' stories to be unbalanced but reciprocal ties that could be mobilized to provide personal economic security for the migrant while abroad. This security is to be achieved through a process of transformation in the migrant worker's status that seems to be accompanied by mastery of performances of femininity. Gloria's papers and Ruth's story all develop a common theme of transformation in OCW experiences. Ideally, it seems, a Filipina migrant begins as a domestic helper in a desirable receiving nation, often having to go 'cross-country' to get there, and then moves through other roles – geriatric care worker, cleaner, service worker are common – to the final goal of permanent residency. Marriage to a host national is one way to shorten the transition from contract worker to resident and hasten the development of personal economic security. This narrative of feminine development was displayed very clearly in the fake recruiting papers Gloria received. I have chosen to focus on the appearance of this narrative in the fake recruiting scheme because it can be used to tie women's experiences in Ifugao and Singapore to the understandings of female migration and transnational gender that circulate at the origins of these papers in Canada.

6.6.1 Femininity as commodity

The argumentation of the papers themselves is compelling. In the order Gloria received them, they begin with an application that promises a wonderful job in Canada with \$1400 a month, own room, color TV and phone, nine-to-five only, paid overtime and holidays etc...³⁴ Canada is "Heaven on earth land for you!" On the enclosed letter, the Canadian flag abuts the American, suggesting that the two countries are somehow interchangeable; as if, once one arrives in Canada, the 49th parallel becomes permeable. The next set of papers, posted in response to the receipt of Gloria's deposit contains instructions for falsifying a tourist visa application for Canada. The applicant is instructed to write that the purpose of her trip is: "to visit a friend, few churches and to experience Canadian culture!" Canadian culture is apparently located in Toronto and Ottawa. The information on the visa application was accompanied by the actual

³⁴ The papers arrived with Toronto, Ontario, Canada postmarks on the envelopes.

application form from the Canadian Embassy in Manila. The recruiters suggest that the legal boundaries between a tourist visit and a working visa can be easily blurred.

When Gloria showed me these papers, I was doubtful of them immediately. Beginning with the first sheet, I began to think of all the missing details. Canadian caregivers I know rarely get their 'two years' in the required three years and with one employer. When they do get their residency, they are rarely earning enough money to sponsor family members, and there are limits to the ages and relationships of the members they can sponsor. After two or three years as a caregiver, they are deskilled. Their Philippine qualifications in Engineering, Commerce, Secretarial etc. are rarely recognized in Canada. Most Filipinas who arrived under the Live-In Caregiver Program remain in the care-giver occupation or move to other low-paying service sector jobs.³⁵ None of this was mentioned in the stack of colored photocopies that Gloria held.

In the same envelope was another xeroxed sheet announcing that a job offer had been received for the applicant. It has a picture of a smiling Caucasian women in the top corner. It suggests that the applicant recruit some friends to help the agency. Even more bewildering, there is another sheet that contains a letter pleading for work as a domestic. It is addressed to an unknown "Madam." Is this letter to be copied out by the applicant or merely an example of how 'girls' who do not use an agency must humiliate themselves? It is unclear. The letter from the 'president' of the 'agency' – 'Mark' – promises to eliminate middlemen and 'make you to love your new job in Canada.' By the point she had met me, Gloria had already sent her money, so there was nothing to do but wait and see what came in the mail while I reported the scheme to whatever authorities would investigate.

About a month after she sent her payment, another set of papers arrived in Gloria's mail, headed by a sheet entitled: "Urgent Notice!" The text is an abusive letter asking for payment of the 'balance' and the names and addresses of ten to twenty 'girlfriends.' Accompanying this was a 'testimonial' from an

³⁵ This information is derived from work with the Philippine Women Center, a Vancouver-based NGO for Filipina migrants in Canada.

apparently satisfied client in the 'U.A.E.' that incorporated Christian rhetoric. Since employers in the Emirates tend to favor Muslim Filipinas, it seems a peculiar choice of location for a Christian client. With this is a small card containing a "personal prayer to the Holy Spirit" under a picture of some Filipinas (?) receiving their diplomas (?) for something or other. Here, the 'agency' has linked Christianity and education with 'going abroad,' invoking the themes of religious and educational transformation, and then accused the applicant of being recalcitrant.

The final sheets of paper in the envelope follow the distinct discourse on femininity and progress I outlined above: from *DH* through virtuous migrant to wife. Apparently, FDI is affiliated with RTS, Rapid Transfer Service, Inc., which claims in these papers to be- "the largest matrimonial service in the world." In Canada, their text promises men "fully screened and 100% decided and committed to marry (sic) a Filipino." The mail-order bride option is presented as being a way to "marry rich" without waiting a year to process a "Nanny-Visa." Some sample photographs of men are included, combining shots of Caucasian commercial models cut from advertisements with clipped photos of Filipino men. This commodifies the husbands-to-be for the gaze of their putative brides, reversing the usual mail-order format and suggesting that, in the transnational space of this Canadian agency, both men and women of all ethnicities are treated as commodities.

That this was all being mailed from Toronto is revealing. Apparently, Filipinos now resident in Canada had created this agency as a money-earner. The materials they were sending out revealed a very real progress from the commodification of Filipinas as laboring bodies through to their commodification as sexual objects, whether it be for Caucasian or Filipino men. Men located in the metropolitan center, regardless of their ethnicity, are the desirable partners who control the economic future and life aspirations of peripheral, *probynsyana* Filipinas. Nannying is constructed as a diversion on the path to the true success to be had in marriage. With the secular use of religious symbolism, the idea of a transnationally mediated marriage is at once an outcome of a catholic Christian faith and of the desirability of the Filipina as a partner. This desirability appears to rely on the same performative

characteristics of submissive femininity expressed in the letter to a potential employer.

Of course, this is not necessarily what people in the Philippines believed about gender and migration.

Many people who saw these papers recognized the hoax immediately. Gloria, herself, was disgusted with the abusive letter and the mail-order bride materials. What these papers do show, however, is the way in which those who have negotiated transnational space and arrived in Canada chose to portray the process: dehumanizing, objectifying and sexualizing. Yet, by flattering applicants with ideas on the desirability of Filipinas abroad, and burying things in Christian rhetoric, the senders hoped, it seems, to conceal the economic calculus that apparently drives their business.

Gloria and I did not have much time to discuss her reactions to this scheme; she left for Taiwan barely a month later. When I asked after Gloria, two weeks after our parting on the road, her friend told me she left directly from Manila and her husband was angry: "he did not like her to go, but he must accept her decisions – she is the one earning." Unlike Luz's case, Gloria's spouse was unable to control her movements and she left him, again, managing the fields and caring for their three children with the help of relatives.

As for me, I wondered how Gloria raised the rest of the money for her travel and whether or not she would be all right in Taiwan. I felt ambivalent about our interactions. In paying her, did I take on responsibility for the fake recruiting scheme? Was that, in the end, an accurate assessment of what went on between us? I tracked down a copy of the POEA poster warning against fake recruiting operations (see Figure 6-7.)³⁶ I found it posted above the window of a local store along the road to Kiangnan. Surely, Gloria must have seen this? Did she just want to believe, against the warnings, that it could be true; that she could go to a well-paying job in Canada by sending money in the mail? Alternatively, did the 'agent' convince her somehow? Questions of literacy and the policing of authenticity spun in my head. Why

³⁶ Translations of the Tagalog on the poster are as follows: *Huwag madala sa "gimmick"* - Don't fall for gimmicks; *Alamin ang dapat gawin* - Know what you are supposed to do; *Magtanong* - Ask; *Itaguyod ang* - Bring about; *Magingat sa illegal Recruiter* - Be careful of illegal recruiters.

could not she see that the photocopies were poor and thus not from a legitimate office? And then I thought of the quality produced by the local xerox machine and laughed – functioning communications technology is, of course, a very material sign of one's placement on the axis of center and periphery.

Figure 6-7 POEA poster on fake recruiting

Mag ingat sa illegal Recruiter!

DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!



Huwag madala sa "gimmick"

- Don't deal with "fixers"
- Avoid "training centers" or "promotions companies" charging "training fees" in exchange for future employment overseas
- Don't believe enticing advertisements requiring you to reply to a Post Office (P.O.) Box, and to enclose payment for processing of papers

Alamin ang dapat gawin

- Check recruiters against the LIST OF LICENCED AGENCIES, which is available at any DOLE or POEA office nearest you
- Check with the POEA Action Center (Metro Manila) if the recruiter has a current job order
- Don't pay a recruitment fee of more than P5,000.00; and make sure you are issued an official receipt
- Pay the agency only if you have a genuine employment contract
- Don't accept a tourist visa; demand a working visa

Itaguyod ang
PHILIPPINES 2000!

Magtanong

- Does the recruiter have a license in his name or in the name of the corporation he represents?
- Is his office located in the same address indicated in his license?
- Does he have a Special Power of Attorney duly approved by the POEA?

THE NATIONAL
ANTI-ILLEGAL RECRUITMENT
CONSCIOUSNESS YEAR
PROGRAM (1994-1995)



Under the Joint auspices of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA)

6.6.2 Contract work in Canada

Women can be ventriloquists, but they have an immense *historical* potential of *not* being (allowed to remain) nationalists; of knowing, in their gendering, that nation and identity are commodities in the strictest sense: something made for exchange. And they are the medium of that exchange.³⁷

It is apparent that there is a particular set of representations of 'the Filipina' circulating through these women's overseas workplaces, their sending communities and host nations. To see how these images work to structure the experiences of women in a context outside the Philippines, we can turn to the Filipina as represented in *The Globe and Mail*, January 20, 1995. In a cover story entitled "Canada

³⁷ Spivak, G., "Acting bits/identity talk" *Critical Inquiry*, 1992, 18: 770-803, 803.

beckons cream of nannies," we find the familiar colonial dynamic of *white men saving brown women from brown men* identified by Spivak in British colonial discourse on Indian women. The difference is that here a 'white' nation - Canada - is saving women by admitting migrant laborers, rather than a colonial regime protecting native women from the depredations of native men in the tropics.

The Philippines is identified as a 'traditionally' "male-dominated" society. Overseas work, away from male domination, is constructed as providing the Filipina with an opportunity to improve her status: "(f)or the women themselves, improving their economic status helps them challenge the Philippines' traditional stereotype of women as submissive homemakers, who need to rely on their husbands, fathers, or brothers to survive. The huge exodus of female contract workers from the country in the past decade has created a generation of women who are more confident and independent about their role in a society that has now been forced to ask some hard questions about many of its traditional paternalistic attitudes."³⁸ This representation of the Filipina and gender relations in the Philippines is used to justify Canada's import of contract workers as nannies, thus freeing Canadian women from some of their domestic and childcare responsibilities. One of the Philippine women interviewed for the story describes her nanny job as "exploitation." However, her opinion is overshadowed by comparisons made with the situation for women in the Philippines that suggest that work in Canada, no matter how poorly paid or demeaning, is ultimately liberatory. It liberates Filipinas because it frees them from 'tradition' and 'paternal attitudes,' allowing them to actualize themselves through migration and labor.³⁹ Thus the "native" Filipino construction of femininity is problematized and the (post)colonial economic relations that fuel the export of female labor recede from view.

As the preceding chapters have shown, there is more than one discourse on femininity in the Philippines. This discursive conflict over gendering is historical. The stories I have reported here highlight the spatiality of the production of femininities by demonstrating differences between constructions of

³⁸ See Vincent, I., "Canada beckons cream of nannies", *The Globe and Mail*, January 20, 1995, A5.

³⁹ Ibid.

Filipina femininities in Canada, Singapore and Manila, as well as on the Cordillera. This suggests a set of discourses on women's migration circulating in transnational space created by contingent forms of (post)colonialism and an equally spatialized set of gender discourses. The conjunction of these discourses on gender and ethnicity allows labor-importing countries the delusion that domestic work is liberatory for Filipinas because they are oppressed by patriarchy at 'home.'

6.7 *Metaphors of movement*

Migrancy...involves a movement in which neither the points of a departure nor those of arrival are immutable or certain. It calls for a dwelling in language, in histories, in identities that are constantly subject to mutation. Always in transit, the promise of a homecoming – completing the story, domesticating the detour – becomes an impossibility.⁴⁰

Movement and exile are not merely metaphors here in transnational spaces, they are real and material, lived experiences. Homecoming is impossible, yes, but the problematic of home should also be established. For many of these women and their sending households or communities, what may be called their home is itself a shifting and contested site within the nation, as shown in Chapters 3 and 5. Home is not simply the ground from which their travel departs and returns but in movement, in process, itself.

Metaphors of margin and centre emerge from colonial constructions of Igorot 'home' produced to map Filipinos into an organized colonial space. In the experiences of *balikbayan* women, the ideas of margin and center become meaningless as a metaphor of location. The terms are structured as fixities in language while they attempt to convey lived experiences of fluidity. Instead of remaining fixed, the idea of center and margin becomes fractalized by experience, split into smaller and smaller components of margin and center, margin and center, until the dyad finally loses its explanatory power and collapses into itself. What appeared throughout Ruth's narrative of her years abroad is a reliance on categories of margin and centre, tribal and modern, pagan and Christian, that does not do justice to the nuances of the experiences she has had, nor the analysis she attempts to convey. She posited herself in this text as both marginal – to people in Rome and in California – and central – to people from 'the far barrios' and, to some extent, to her "clients" in California.

Likewise, when it comes to mapping subject positions, it is difficult to argue that Ruth's experiences in Rome are somehow marginal to her (now) central, Christian self. Rather they are a state she moved through and dwelt in which formed her, to some extent, but does not speak the totality of her being. As her friendship with Marilyn shows, neither does her religion overdetermine all her subject positionings and interactions, as important as it is in her self-concept. Naming oneself as Igorot, as Christian, is a way of creating a space that contains some subjective mobility, creating a temporary and strategic resting place for the traveler's self-understanding.

As *balikbayan*, these women have earned the admiration of their communities. All have cultural capital to show for the experience. They are seen, locally, as the epitome of feminine ambition – as women who 'know what to do.' Having traveled and returned, they are now, in the words of Anna Tsing, "exceptionally competent women, rather than anti-women."⁴¹ They are not contained by discourses on gender that circulate within their communities of origins, rather their experiences of travel and return reflect the articulation of those local understandings with a more globalized, commodified version of femininity. As Filipinas in this circuit, these Cordillera women have become "girls" who replace each other, body after body. They wear uniforms or mimic the dress style and manners of their employers. Abroad, they begin to organize their movements around those of men in a way they would not have considered before, because of their entry into realms that are more patriarchal and, often, positions of somewhat greater economic vulnerability. They are courageous women who risk leaving their communities in order to develop further economic autonomy, pride, and a set of "foreigner handling" skills valued in an area experiencing increasing tourism and possible multi-national investments.

Female migrant workers are not the cultural dupes of neo-imperialism and patriarchy -- to make this assertion would effect the very erasure of individual women's subjectivities against which Spivak argues.

⁴⁰ Chambers, I., *Migrancy, culture, identity* (London: Routledge, 1994, 5.)

⁴¹ This idea is borrowed from Tsing, A., *op. cit.*, 220: "Travel made me an exceptionally competent woman, rather than an anti-woman."

While tracing the material dislocations migrant workers, the pressures for migration and the problems and benefits of Overseas Contract Worker status, we must not preclude the possibility that women's individual identities are never completely subsumed into the orientalist "Filipina."⁴² These women move through the paradoxical spaces of transnational circuits in ambivalent ways, but can emerge as figures that destabilize ideas of centered, fixed subjects and definitions of ethnicity. The female *balikbayan*/OCW as tourist is one such figure.

6.7.1 *Balikbayan* tourists

The same tourism pressures and development discourse push some OCWs to go abroad in the first place, in a desire to escape from the specific gendering of the living museums they are supposed to inhabit. These women, not wanting to be the backward female farmers who populate the development and tourist imaginaries for the region, take "knowing what to do" into transnational space and learn from a new series of experiences. The very presence of *balikbayan* as tourists themselves destabilizes these identities. As locals, gone transnational and then returning for a visit, migrants can take on the identity of tourists. In addition to the woman at the Hungduan Fiesta, I met five more *balikbayan* Igorots, visiting their home region with cameras in hand, apparently in search of images defining their 'home' to bring back to their diasporic friends and relatives. Future research might map out the impact of this transnationalisms on representational histories and determine if new images enter the visual economy as a result. I would speculate that the interpretations of time and identity that underpin these representations should differ in diasporic sites. Perhaps *balikbayan* OCWs and their diasporic families, unlike other tourists, will not arrive with the expectation that images created in the American colonial period will correspond to the experiences of the contemporary Cordillera. Maybe the *balikbayan*- as -tourist will produce a new set of images and imaginaries in the visual economy of the region.

The emergence of this phenomenon of the female *balikbayan*-as-tourist brings the parade to a close. This marks the emergence of the woman-with-the-camera who returns the observer's gaze and shows up, in

⁴² Varadharajan, A. *Exotic parodies: subjectivity in Adorno, Said and Spivak* (Minneapolis: University of

her very presence on the scene, the fictive nature of the categories of gender and ethnicity in the narrative of history and development. It is not simply that individuals have experiences but that they come to be constituted and positioned as subjects – named – through those experiences. At Hungduan, the woman with the camera presents a problematic performance that can only be contained by speculation. Is she an OCW, a *balikbayan*, a ‘native,’ a ‘tourist’ or all of these names, at once? Is she ethnically Filipina, but Canadian by nationality? How would I see her? Would that be the ascription of my local hosts, too? How does (or can) she name herself? It seems doubtful that we are all going to agree on her identity, yet we are all looking at her body language, her clothes, her movements, her demeanor for clues to name her. Identities thus are acquired by subjects through processes of ascription attached to their performances. Ascriptions of names to performances depend on the contexts into which the observers are interpellating what they see. These contexts, as I have suggested here, spread from singular local events, like the parade at Hungduan, to global networks of relations and meanings.

Chapter 7– Naming and the illimitability of context

Gender, ethnicity, landscape, nation -- all do not exist as real places or categories but as the effect of various practices that bring these bodies and spaces into being. This dissertation has been an effort to rethink concepts of gender and ethnicity away from traditional, colonial ideas of existing places, embedding them within social practice as performatives emerging from the colonial encounter. Igorots' gendered and ethnic subject positions and subjectivities are never merely local. This text has placed the imaginative work of gender and ethnicity within a palimpsest made of transnational practices and concepts and local knowledges and histories. It is in the interstices of these divergent contexts in which individual performances of gender and ethnicity occur. I have visited, mapped and interrogated the colonial present on the Cordillera in order to describe this contradictory, interstitial space of performance.

The stories I have presented here show that locality is, and always has been, firmly embedded in and produced by both local experiences and global identifications of difference. Further, I have shown that the issues of power and respect underlying contemporary attempts to redefine indigenous identity are not merely expressions of control over material culture, over land or bodies, but power over narratives. These stories matter, and they are driven by the spatiality of the images they deploy. As the woman with the camera enacts in the parade, it is by narrating and dis-placing these colonial tales that their power to constitute subjects with coherent names is challenged. Gender and ethnicity remain potent, yet illimitable, as performative categories in transnational space.

7.1 On the parade

This dissertation has followed the route of the ethnic parade through the (post)colonial geographies of gender and ethnicity as performatives. My vignettes and ethnographic observations have shown that, on the Cordillera, the local strands of discourse on gender and ethnic identities are not just sites of localized knowledge but are also, and always, as Anna Tsing has described, *displacements* within powerful

discourses on civilization and progress.¹ In the stories and performances by local actors I have presented here, people subtly transform globalized discourses of gender, ethnicity and progress.

When viewed closely, they are not merely copying the tropes of femininity or progress but exaggerating them, shifting the representation slightly in order to move it under their own performative control.² Like the drag performance of the Health Workers in the OCWs' dresses or the dance in the final scene of *Apocalypse Now*, these shifts confuse the distinctions between local subjection to global discourses on gender and ethnicity and local objections to them. These appropriations and shifts in the meaning of performance produce a local world view that defends the value of locality as the imagined home place.

These tactics of mimicry and performance protect local conceptions of community, identity and gender as they are continually reimagined in dialogue with locally-produced interpretations of the global. These struggles for integrity and self-determination deploy both tradition and modernity, authenticity and hybridity simultaneously as counterpoints. As James Clifford argues: "...where every cultural agent (especially global capitalism) is mixing and matching forms, we need to be able to recognize strategic claims for localism or authenticity as possible sites of resistance and empowerment rather than of simple nativism."³ Such claims of localism and authenticity staged around ethnic identities create particular problems in understanding the history and discursive power of gender.

7.1.1 Mapping a colonial present

What Said describes as the "cartographic impulse" is the context for the performance of Igorot ethnicity.

As I illustrate, the power relations of colonialism have constituted local communities and local ethnic identities in specific ways. With the analysis of the visual economy presented in Chapter 3, it becomes clear that difference is contained in the ambivalent discourses emanating from the metropolitan centre. It

¹ Tsing, A., *op. cit.*, 8.

² See Tsing, A., *op. cit.*

³ Clifford, J., *Routes: travel and translation in the late twentieth century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 183.

is also produced in the actions and reinterpretations on the periphery. People look back to the metropolis with their own imaginaries and technologies of representation, inscribing their culture and interpretations into metropolitan discursive frames by choosing which stories to tell and selecting stereotypes to address.

The apparent absence of female agency in this local resistance emerged as a persistent problematic. Women's absence from the present is often defended by citation to their absence from the past – by 'tradition.' By focusing on the constructed and always-in-the-present nature of tradition, I suggest that histories are always partial, one narrative of many that could have been remembered, embroidered, circulated and then written. This fourth chapter explored the politics of representation in the case of absent or silenced women. In a situation where local identities and experiences do not necessarily correspond with bounded spaces, communities organize around allegories – around figures such as the stereotyped Igorot, the OCW or the media version of Flor Contemplacion. The representations of these allegories are not, in the strictest sense, sufficient to constitute reality but operate as discursive resources that can be mobilized to materialize particular ends. Within a centre/periphery understanding that structures things in binaries, silence - representation by non-representation on the part of the actor - becomes an effective, disruptive strategy. Silence is a critical site of resistance to the normalizing effects of discourses on gender and ethnicity.

It may seem puzzling that the 'real' fieldsite only emerges in Chapter 5. What I have tried to demonstrate in this structuring is how the concerns of the preceding chapters – the colonial representations of landscape and ethnicity and the attempts to restructure feminine subjectivities – form the context in which local lives are lived. By exploring the gendered division of labor in contemporary agriculture, Chapter 5 deconstructs the category of "woman" itself at the local level. Local understandings of gender are not bound by time or place or some strict periodization of tradition and modernity but have discursive flexibility. The fluidity of gender, its contingent character, reflects local histories of change, resistance and accommodation. The strategies I report for local actors show how people picked up on the colonial discourses of place and progress – "improving" and "pioneering" – to justify their own movements into

outmigration sites and transnational space. The potentials of migration become the context for the performances of gender.

Contexts, the social frames in which actions and representations are understood, are produced through the articulation of discourses and their material practices. Contexts are illimitable because each context implies other contexts, extending into a global network. As Arjun Appadurai expresses it: "The way in which neighborhoods are produced and reproduced requires the continuous construction, both practical and discursive, of an ethnoscape (necessarily non-local) against which local practices and projects are imagined to take place."⁴ The relations of power and resistance that affect the production of local places are inherently translocal.

Having partially described the contexts of performances of gender and ethnicity, I then turn to the personal narratives of female migrants. Their femininities emerge as historically constituted performatives at work in a transnational problematic of circular migration. The presence and experiences of circular migrants restructure local understandings of ethnicity and gender, moving the imaginary 'local' into a transnational present. Gender and ethnicity retain their power as categories in these transnational experiences because they use and then cover over the stereotypes through which they circulate. In the case people from the Cordillera, these stereotypical notions of identity originate within colonial tropes of representation for the region as well as in local deferrals and resistances directed against them. Thus, as subjects, female migrants move within a field of enabling constraints determined by colonial representations of their 'home.' They are brought within this field of constraints by their naming - historical, ongoing and unstable as it is - as both 'woman' and 'Igorot.'

7.2 On naming, ethnicity and gender

Thus, instead of using the metaphors of margin and center, my analysis of these stories suggests exploring naming as a practice of mapping that contains mobility. Naming people and practices is a

⁴ Appadurai, A., "The production of locality" in Fardon, R., ed., *Counterworks: managing the diversity of knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 1994, pp. 204 – 225), p. 209.

technique that brings order into a terrain where peripheries and centers coalesce and slide out of each other again, like the insides of a kaleidoscope. Naming creates a space that contains and overdetermines performances of the various subject positions at play. With naming, there is a sense in which critical discourse becomes an instrument of domination. For example, here, by articulating Ifugao within Igorot identity, I will be charged with mis-naming those who reject Igorot identity. Yet, not saying such things locks names in place, arresting the possibility of further articulation and new knowledges. It is the imagination, the mobility of identities, that matters in the reimagining of selves and worlds.

The names of ethnicity - Igorot, Ifugao, Ihaliap - and woman are clearly what constitute subjects in particular positions. As the naming of my host community indicated, names are applied by others or in resistance to their power. These names have the effect of interpellating and constituting subjects. One is always dependent on a relation to another, whether person or another place, for a name. As Judith Butler describes it, naming puts one "in one's place," even if such a place is "off the map."⁵ As this dissertation has illustrated with ethnic identities, naming is always a spatial practice that involves a displacement from an imagined origin. One is brought into a specified social location and time through the interpellative process of naming. Thus, names confer spatial and temporal specificity. Even if one objects to a name, it continues to force itself on and delineate the space one occupies.⁶ Thus, one's subject position is constituted by the discursive practices of naming, but at a distance from one's self as subjectivity.

Naming comes not necessarily from particular speech acts of other speakers, but through censuses, colonial categorizations, research forms, development programs and bureaucracies. Butler describes this as "(t)he bureaucratic and disciplinary diffusion of sovereign power" producing "a terrain of discursive power that operates without a subject by constitutes that subject in the course of its operation. This does not mean that there are no individuals who write and distribute the forms. It means only that they are not

⁵ Butler, J., *Excitable speech: a politics of the performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

the originators of the discourse they convey and that their intentions, however strong, are not finally what control the meaning of that discourse.”⁷ Power is thus capillary and emerges through naming which arrests the mobility of identities and subjectivities. Naming is an unstable and ambivalent activity that must be anxiously repeated in order to sustain a particular configuration of power/resistance: “(t)he name carries within itself the movement of a history that it arrests.”⁸ Moreover, the context of naming is always open to revision because the force of a performative lies in the illimitability of its context.⁹

Performances of ethnic identity are inherently spatial because they occur within the boundaries the name attempts to delimit. The subject addressed is not a subjectivity, but a location, a demarcated space. This holds true as much for gender as for ethnicity: ‘woman’ is likewise a space of delimiting potential action, rather than a subjectivity. When it comes to gendering, one *is* not feminine in the sense that one *is* living or breathing. “Be feminine” is an injunction meaning “act more so,” and thus different from merely saying “breathe” or “be.” Gender is ritualistically repeated in performance, through a long string of interpellations, where each repetition “occasions both the risk of failure and the congealed effect of sedimentation.”¹⁰ Yet, performative outcomes remain unstable and uncertain. Will one, in being feminine, be feminine enough to pass within a particular scene? Will one’s audience understand the performance, contextualize correctly and respect the performer’s intention?

Performances are always in some way out of the performer’s control because the performing subject is constituted by the context in which a performance occurs. Thus, actors perform identities in a field of enabling constraints and gender is transitive, as is ethnicity. Gender and ethnicity “accumulate their force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior and authoritative set of practices.”¹¹ Claims to or

⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 147.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 51.

namings of gender and ethnic identities simultaneously draw on and conceal the constitutive conventions through which they are mobilized. Hence the author of the brief quote that opens Chapter 5 declares things about the gendered division of labor that constitute gender identity. The actor who then cites these particular performatives of femininity or ethnicity becomes temporarily produced as its (fictive) origin, but the chains of citation and instability extend far behind this declaration and into the gendering of colonial narratives of progress and development. Similarly, in telling stories in a particular way, as in the story of the deer, one becomes “native” or “indigenous” because of the style and conventions of the performance. In performing gender through one’s dress, one’s work, one’s comportment, one becomes a woman, occupying the subject positions of ‘Filipina,’ ‘housewife,’ *baballasang*, *binabae*, and *balikbayan* that now define local and translocal femininities.

Neither performances of gender nor those of ethnicity speak the truth of a subject’s being. Other narratives - other namings, other identifications – are both possible and crucially important. In this text, by moving between them, I have destabilized the citational strength of gender and ethnicity and revealed them as enabling fictions of (post)colonial relations of power. I suggest that more rigorous thinking about the-persistence of the colonial past in the apparently de-colonized present, using these concepts of performance and naming, can help to make greater theoretical and empirical sense of the (post)colonial world.

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