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# The Pearl of the Prairies: The History of the Winnipeg Filipino Community

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in History

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## **Abstract and Keywords**

Canadian historical and national narratives often prize the creation of “White Canada” through immigration from European nations. Significant movements of people from the Asia-Pacific region often get left out of these narratives, even though Asian populations have been in Canada as long as white settlers. Furthermore, the growing body of Asian Canadian literature itself has developed a tunnel vision for East and South Asian immigrants, neglecting myriad other groups from regions such as Southeast Asia. While Chinese, Japanese, and South Asian immigrants have dominated immigration from Asia until recently, other groups such as Filipinos have long been living and working within Canada. Today, the Philippines is the largest source country of immigrants to Canada and yet remains one of the least studied ethnic communities.

This dissertation analyzes the history of the Filipino community in Winnipeg to the 1980s, as well as detailing their longer history in Canada. Today, Winnipeg has the third largest Filipino population in Canada, which is the largest in terms of per-capita population. The major research question, “Why Winnipeg?”, forms the heart of this dissertation. What factors in Canada and the Philippines have combined to create the historically vibrant Prairie community? This study first lays out the history of the community to fill a knowledge gap on the Filipino diaspora in Canada, particularly from a historical perspective, analyzing themes of post-Second World War international relations, labour history, and the history of under-development in the Philippines. This analysis argues that a serendipitous confluence of events led to the origins and growth of the Winnipeg Filipino community. After laying this historical foundation, the themes of identity and memory are explored. This dissertation adopts the term “Filipino Self” and the “Filipino Other” to describe how, through the medium of ethnic media, the Winnipeg community negotiated a Filipino identity in the diaspora that directly engaged with the Philippine national identity, demonstrating

the tight connection maintained to their Southeast Asian homeland. The analysis then examines the dynamics of historical memory within the community, and the politics that come along with crafting such discussions, through the examination of a museum exhibit celebrating 50 years of Filipinos in Winnipeg.

Keywords: Immigration, Ethnicity, Canada, the Philippines, diaspora and transnationalism, ethnic media, history and memory, Philippine State Migratory Apparatus, International Relations, Labour history.

## Acknowledgements

I begin by acknowledging that I have researched and written this dissertation while living on Turtle Island, the traditional lands of Canada's indigenous peoples. While at Western University, I have inhabited the territories of Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lenape, and Attawandaran peoples. In Manitoba, I have inhabited Treaty 1 lands, which include the traditional territories of the Anishinabek, Assiniboine, Cree, Dakota, Métis, and Oji-Cree, and Métis Nations.

Without any doubt, this dissertation and my successes of the last few years would not have been possible were it not for Dr. Stephanie Bangarth. As a new student from out of province, she accepted me into Western with open arms and easy friendship. That has been a very key component – friendship – as we have navigated my development not just as a student but as a professional. Stephanie has shown me the worth of strong values and scholarship, writing about what you believe in, but also all the positive aspects of academia, such as spirited discussion, friendship, and comradeship. I came to Stephanie an idealistic student thinking I could change the world, and it is a true testament to her character that I am leaving the program just the same – but no longer a student. Your comments, suggestions, and guidance have led me through this program and made me a better researcher, but your confidence in me and willingness to push me when needed (while giving me the space that is sometimes needed), has made me a better scholar *and* person. To Dr. Carl Young I also owe a great deal of gratitude. In my first term, the weekly visits for our reading class were intellectually stimulating and personally engaging. Carl has been a strong supporter of my development since our first email exchange. He has come through for me on many occasions and has offered me a Southeast Asian perspective that my

research has greatly benefited from. Above all, Carl has been a great friend and was there for me during some rocky starts in the program in 2012. His guidance and friendship are greatly valued.

My friends, colleagues, and mentors in the Migration and Ethnic Relations (MER) program may never truly know the impact they have had upon me. The nature of the program, and all the people involved – including the numerous colloquium speakers that the program sponsors – limits all the names I can thank, but I must thank Dr. Vicki Esses, Dr. Belinda Dodson, Dr. Stephanie Bangarth and Dr. Teresa Abada. These faculty members helped make MER a welcoming, nurturing, and challenging academic community at Western. All the friendships I have made with MER will never be forgotten, and the lessons I have learned from each of them will forever enrich my life. The interdisciplinary nature of MER and the networks I have forged have enriched my time at Western and shown me the value of stepping outside of my disciplinary comfort zone. My dissertation defense on 31 March 2014 provided me with feedback that set me down the proper path for my research. Dr. Stephanie Bangarth put a lot of effort giving me feedback and comments on my proposal, and comments from Dr. Carl Young and Dr. Shelley McKellar during the defense helped bolster potential weakness in my work as I began my dissertation path.

All this research stands on the phenomenal efforts of those who have assisted in its success. On each of my visits to the Library and Archives of Canada, I was also assisted by the ready and pleasant expertise of their archivists. Even the security guards, who without fail helped me open my locker on each visit, contributed to my success. The Provincial Archives of Manitoba and Manitoba Legislative Library were my home for months on end, and not one day did I not feel welcome. I owe particular thanks to Mary Grace Golfo, Martin Julius Perez, Portia Gemma Acuna, and Paul Vincen Avecilla for facilitating my access to Philippine government

archives. It was not an easy process, but they nevertheless went out of their way to assist me greatly.

I have received much institutional support over the last few years. In 2013, I received the Ivie Cornish Memorial Fellowship for receiving the highest standing in comprehensive exams among my batch, and have received other funding from Western such as the Kenneth Hilborn award for conference travel. The University of Manitoba has also offered me significant monetary and institutional support while I conducted research in Winnipeg, such as the Arts Endowment Fund and the J. S. Ewart Memorial fund from the department of history to allow travel to Ottawa for archival research. The University of Manitoba Institute for the Humanities made me a Research Affiliate for three years, which included generous funding and dedicated office space. Without a doubt, David Watt and Paul Jenkins provided a welcome environment and vigorous intellectual opportunities during my time there.

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I have also benefitted from several stimulating conferences where I've been able to present my research in various forms of development. The Canadian Historical Association meeting in Ottawa in 2015 provided useful feedback at a time when my research was coming together in a tangible form. The Ateneo de Manila's Institute for Philippine Culture's graduate summer school in 2015 gave me a further push into the direction my research has taken by allowing me to share some of my ideas and get feedback on what scholars in the Philippines found relevant and interesting about the Winnipeg Filipino community. Finally, the *Bridging Worlds* conference in 2018 in Manila, Philippines, gave me the needed energy to push through the final stages of my dissertation and to assure myself of the relevancy of my research within the Philippines.

A much-needed expression of gratitude also goes out to the Filipino community. Within Winnipeg, I have almost always received a warm and excited reception to my research. This dissertation has been a result of a commitment to the Winnipeg community as well as to the Philippines itself. Their support in my early stages gave me the assurance that I, as a so-called outsider, could possibly write a history that the community could use. Thanks go out to Flor Marcelino, Emmie Joaquin, Perla Javate, Gemma Dalayoan, Dr. Rey Pagtakhan, Diwa Marcelino, Levy Abad, Winifred Frias, and Ramon Sales, who have each in their own way made this work that much better. I have developed a strong bond with the Winnipeg Filipino community that will continue beyond this research project. If anything, I have learned from this dissertation – thanks mostly to the Filipinos whom I've come across – that such research means nothing if it is not deeply rooted within the community it studies.

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## Introduction: The Pearl of the Prairies: The history of the Winnipeg Filipino community, 1949-1982

In his final poem written the night before his execution by Spanish colonial officials on 30 December 1896, the hero of Philippine independence José Rizal penned his mighty poem *Mi Último Adiós*, in which he bid farewell to the Philippines. His opening lines read:

¡Adiós, Patria adorada, región del sol querida,	<i>Farewell, my adored land,</i>
	<i>beloved of the sun,</i>
Perla del mar de oriente, nuestro perdido Edén!	<i>Pearl of the Orient Sea, our</i>
	<i>Eden lost</i>

The phrase *perla del mar de oriente*, or Pearl of the Orient sea, has become one of the most endearing names of the Philippines to the Filipino people at home and abroad. As Filipinos over the last decades have spread across the globe, settling in regions and climates distinct from their homeland, they have held on to their Philippine heritage and past. This has been especially true in Canada, where the policy of multiculturalism has encouraged Filipinos to maintain their cultural ties even as they become active Canadian citizens. The title of this dissertation, the *Pearl of the Prairies*, recognizes this experience of Filipinos abroad. While integrating and working to become good Canadian citizens, many Filipinos insist that their best contribution to Canadian society is through their Philippine heritage. This title captures the spirit of the Winnipeg community, one that has contributed much to the city while constantly working to maintain and cultivate their Filipino identity.

## **Why Winnipeg?**

This dissertation responds to two research questions. First, it investigates the beginning and history of Canada's third largest Filipino community. What were the centripetal forces that made Winnipeg an attractive destination to settle, and what were the centrifugal forces that caused emigration from the Philippines? Early Filipino immigration to Canada was facilitated by structural forces such as international diplomacy and Canadian labour market trends. I argue that race played an important role in early Filipino immigration, and that Canadian officials struggled to maintain notions of a white Canada as being adamantly non-Asian. This racism was confronted by other structural forces such as the growing labour demands of Canadian industry which traditional European sources of immigration could no longer supply. It was no coincidence that Filipino immigration began in earnest as Canada's postwar economy was beginning to decline. The history of the Winnipeg Filipino community, especially in its early decades, is a story of the convergence of these factors as labour shortages in Winnipeg coincided with changing political, social, and economic circumstances in the Philippines. The beginnings of immigration are at first glance a relevant question as Winnipeg may not seem a likely destination for Filipinos. In early presentations of this research, I have invariably been presented with the question "Why Winnipeg?" Sometimes it is a spurious question, meant to be a Canadian inside joke that pokes fun at Winnipeg as Canada's winter wasteland, perhaps (so the stereotype goes) the most inhospitable city for immigrants from the tropics. This sort of question is, in fact, rather distressing as it harkens back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when officials upholding Canada's racist anti-Asian immigration policies used cold climactic conditions as justification to prevent the immigration of Filipinos. In most cases, however, there

is a genuine curiosity about how Winnipeg has risen to be the third largest Filipino community in Canada, next to Toronto and Vancouver. The short answer is that labour demands in healthcare and garment manufacturing led to the immigration of the first waves of Filipinos, who subsequently sponsored their families. It is, of course, more complicated than this, but it stands that the community built a strong foundation between the 1960s and 1980s, upon which subsequent waves of immigrants built the Filipino community.

Filipinos living in Winnipeg have also been faced with the question “Why Winnipeg?” In a piece from the *Silangan* newspaper in June 1977, Sophie R. Tiburcio demonstrated that Winnipeg was seen with pride as being a city of culture, rich ethnic variety, and a thriving Filipino community.

*Why Winnipeg? By Sophie R. Tiburcio<sup>1</sup>*

*Often times we are confronted with this question from Canadian friends in Winnipeg as well as friends from different provinces in Canada.*

*Many of us have chosen Winnipeg because of various reasons, but most of us think it is the best among the ten provinces' capital-cities. With its central location, it is where East and West meet and is rightly known as the “crossroads of Canada”.*

*Very alive and very advanced, Winnipeg is home of the world renowned Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery which has the distinction of bringing in the Masters' collection of painting from Russia. The city has played host to numerous national and international conventions due to its large convention centre - reputed to be among one of the largest in North America.*

*The friendliness and good atmosphere of the city is reflected in its friendly people who are visibly more tolerant to the different ethnic groups. And proof of this is FOLKLORAMA - the annual show held every August which is increasingly becoming North America's number one ethnic show. It is a kaleidoscope of people from different countries who compose the so-called “Manitoba mosaic”.*

*So what more could we ask for? Everything is here...more than half a dozen Filipino grocery stores, a Filipino radio and television show...and now - the only Filipino newspaper in Canada! - all these make us really proud to be Winnipeggers and we can truly say - “There's no place like Winnipeg”.*

Since its early history, members of the Winnipeg community have been connected to the Philippines as well as to the Filipino diaspora, having friends and family around the world. This,

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<sup>1</sup> Sophie R. Tiburcio, “Why Winnipeg?” *Silangan* June 1977, 3.

in a way, put Winnipeg ‘on the map’ of possible destinations for immigrating as a major deciding factor often is whether there are any social support networks in potential communities. As family immigration has increased in Canada, Filipino kinship ties to Canada, and Winnipeg particularly, have increased. I have witnessed evidence of this in my own travels. In Western University’s Collaborative Graduate Program in Migration and Ethnic Relations, I met one colleague whose aunt lived in Winnipeg, and another who had a family friend in the city. On a trip to the Philippines in 2016, while sharing a cramped front seat of a taxi with a gentleman from Manila, I discovered that his brother lived in Winnipeg. This mapping of Winnipeg in the Filipino diaspora is in part a result of the wide networks that Filipino kinship encompasses, with close-knit ties maintained with close friends as well as extended family but is also due to the expansion of the Filipino community, often along networks of kinship.

Illuminating these networks is the second goal of this dissertation. I argue that much of the Winnipeg Filipino community’s development and understandings of their identity were often worked out through debate and disagreements. The development of the community was often rife with diverging opinions over various issues, and these debates often became a means of negotiating cultural identity, even if at times it led to discord or multiple interpretations existing at once. I argue in these chapters that transnationalism, cultural identity, and ideas of Filipino heritage were integral to the community’s formation. Since the early years of the community, Filipinos in Winnipeg have maintained a variety of connections to the diaspora, to the Philippines, and to Philippine culture. I began my project interested in mapping out these networks, of drawing out the various links and nodes that community members maintain and foster, but as I progressed in my research and writing I became more drawn to what meanings were given to these connections. My research on the Winnipeg Filipino newspaper, the *Silangan*,

revealed that maintaining an active connection with their Filipino heritage was a pressing issue in the community in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Why was it so important? It was more than simply remembering their roots; members saw their Filipino identity as key to their integration into Canada as productive citizens, but also felt that they could contribute to the progression of Filipino culture in the Philippines from their new homes in Canada. This last point, discussed in Chapter 3, was unexpected and reveals that connections to the Philippines were not mere static memories but were enhanced through the experiences of immigration.

### **Towards Inclusion: Bringing Filipino Histories into the Fold**

A third goal of this dissertation is a historiographical intervention beginning with the merging of Canadian immigration and Asian Canadian studies. In the last few decades, a growing number of studies have demonstrated the sustained presence and contributions of Asian immigrants to Canada from the second half of the nineteenth century to the post-World War II period. These narratives undercut the image of a Canada dominated by White Anglo-Saxons, and make it clear how various levels of Canadian society were challenged by the presence of Asians. Before World War II, politicians at the municipal, provincial, and federal level were often torn between the economic need for Asian labour and demands from many White Canadians to limit immigration. In the period leading up to the war and the decade afterwards, a growing segment of the population, including Asian Canadians, began to call for a more inclusive society. In recent years, historians of Asian immigration have shifted their attention from the exclusionary laws enacted against undesired immigrant groups to demonstrate that there were many in Canadian society that supported Asians in Canada. What the recent historiography has shown,

indeed, is that people of Asian descent living and working in Canada have been involved in major changes in policy and society experienced during the 19th and 20th centuries.

One such case is the implementation and eventual elimination of Canada's racist and exclusionary laws and practices that attempted to limit and even stop immigration from Asian countries. Known as the Exclusion Era, these restrictions were meant to forestall and completely halt immigration from Asian nations. The 1885 Chinese Head Tax required Chinese coming into Canada to pay up to \$500 before being allowed entry into Canada, and in 1923 the Chinese Immigration Act prohibited Chinese entry entirely. The Continuous Journey Act of 1908 required immigrants to Canada to come directly from their country of origin without any prolonged stopover. Thus, Indians could not go through the UK and the Japanese could not come through Hawai'i. Although there were no direct restrictions against Japanese immigration, Canada worked with the Japanese to limit the flow of immigration from Japan. These restrictions began to be dismantled piecemeal following the Post-War period until the implementation in 1967 of the Points System Program, which placed value on employable skills over race.<sup>2</sup>

The literature surrounding the Exclusion Era is continuing to complicate the traditional image of Asians living in Canada as being objects of racism and repression as historians look to uncover the complex intersections these Asian communities inhabited. There is a distinct shift, though, in the literature on the period following 1967. This period, continuing to the present, will be referred to as the Points System Era, referring to the new style of immigration which scored applicants upon a points-based system. This policy era is nominally predicated on the idea that admission to Canada is based on the skills set of a potential immigrant rather than race, although

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<sup>2</sup> Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at our Gates: Canadian immigration and immigration policy, 1540-2015*, 4th ed. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2016); Ninette Kelley and Michael J. Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (University of Toronto Press, 1998).



a number of critiques of this rhetoric have been made. There is a strong contrast between the fields due in large part to the historical context. The Exclusion Era literature might be generally characterized as exploring how Asians living in Canada dealt with discriminatory laws and practices, mitigated the effects of racism, interacted with broader Canadian society, and fought for the repeal and eradication of exclusionary laws.<sup>3</sup> With the 1967 Points System and the implementation of a multicultural policy in 1971 by Pierre Elliot Trudeau's Liberal government, the public discourse on race and the meaning placed on cultural diversity in Canada became more positive. In comparison, the Points System Era literature can be generally characterized as questioning the limits of multiculturalism in Canadian society, what role race and ethnicity continues to play in immigration selection policies and integration into Canadian society, and is noted for its attention given to labour market integration.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> James W. St. G. Walker, "A Case for Morality: The Quong Wing Files," in *On the Case: Explorations in Social History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, 1998); Lisa Mar, "The Tale of Lin Tee: Madness, Family Violence, and Lindsay's Anti-Chinese Riot of 1919," in *Sisters Or Strangers? Immigrant, Ethnic and Racialized Women in Canadian History*, eds. Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta and Frances Swyripa, 2003); Gillian Creese, "Exclusion Or Solidarity? Vancouver Workers Confront the 'Oriental Problem'," *BC Studies: The British Columbian Quarterly* 80 (1988), 24-51; Angelika E. Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy? Canadian Immigration Policy and the Admission of Germans, 1945-50," *Canadian Historical Review* 74, no. 2 (1993), 228; Kay J. Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (Montreal; Kingston: MQUP, 1991); Lisa Rose Mar, *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 69-88; S. D. Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest: Defending Citizens of Japanese Ancestry in North America, 1942-49* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008); Patricia Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990); Patricia Roy, *The Oriental Question: Consolidating a White Man's Province, 1914-1941* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003); Patricia Roy, *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Japanese and Chinese in Canada, 1941-67* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007); Munro, John A. "British Columbia and the 'Chinese Evil': Canada's First Anti-Asiatic Immigration Law." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 6, (1971): 42-51; Midge Ayukawa, "Japanese Pioneer Women: Fighting Racism and Rearing the Next Generation," in *Sisters of Strangers? Immigrant, Ethnic, and Racialized Women in Canadian History*, eds. Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta and Frances Swyripa (Toronto: UTP, 2004), 233-247.

<sup>4</sup> Roland Sintos Coloma et al., eds., *Filipinos in Canada: Disturbing Invisibility* (Toronto: UTP, 2012); Philip F. Kelly, *Filipinos in Canada: Economic Dimensions of Immigration and Settlement*. (Toronto: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement – Toronto, [2006]); Rita Cohen, "'Mom is a Stranger': The Negative Impact of Immigration Policies on the Family Life of Filipina Domestic Workers," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 32, no. 3 (2000), 81; Patricia M. Daenzer, "An Affair between Nations: International Relations and the Movement of Household Service Workers," in *Not One of the Family: Foreign Domestic Workers in Canada*, eds. Abigail B. Bakan and Daiva K. Stasiulis (Toronto: UTP, 1997), 80-118; Roland Santos Coloma, Bonnie S. McElhinny, John Paul C. Catungal, Ethel Tungohan, and Lisa M. Davidson, eds., *Filipinos in Canada: Disturbing Invisibility* (Toronto: UTP, 2012); K. W. Taylor, "Racism and Canadian Immigration Policy," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 23, no. 1 (1991); Abigail B. Bakan and Daiva K. Stasiulis, eds., *Not One of the Family: Foreign Domestic*

The period of the 1960s and 1970s is often presented as a watershed moment in Canadian immigration history, with the removal of overtly racial discriminatory practices inaugurating new patterns of immigration that has included increased numbers from Asia. One can sense a similar break reflected between the Exclusion Era literature and the Points Era literature. Both fields are sufficiently developed with their own characteristics, but there has been no larger attempt to bridge the literature on Asian immigration during the Exclusion Era to new patterns and experiences that have developed following the policy restructuring of the 1960s. Given the seeming drastic shift in policy, this might seem to be a defensible reality. However, this seems to privilege the view that experiences by ethnic Canadians correspond only to official policy, neglecting wider societal and cultural experiences. Furthermore, given that some have argued that racism, if not overt, remains prevalent in immigration policies and within the Canadian labour market, creating a broader and more inclusive narrative of Asians in Canada will help to better understand the saliency of such arguments and to better appreciate the historical experiences of Asians in Canada.

Another issue arising out of this literature review is the prevalent focus on East Asian immigration and community formation in the Exclusion Era. Given that Chinese and Japanese migrants to Canada, along with South Asians, were the most affected by exclusionary laws and practices, this might be understandable, although my own research makes it clear that Filipinos were exposed to the same racist, exclusionary practices. What does not seem clear, however, is why more comprehensive studies of Asian communities, especially of new ethnic groups from Asia, in Canada during the Points Era have not been carried out. Certainly, some good studies

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*Workers in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Yasmeen Abu-Laban, "Keeping 'Em Out: Gender, Race, and Class Biases in Canadian Immigration Policy," in *Painting the Maple: Essays on Race, Gender, and the Construction of Canada*, ed. Veronica Strong-Boag and others (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1998a)

exist but it is argued here that they lack a larger historical engagement. A recent collection, *Filipinos in Canada: Disturbing Invisibility*, brought together scholars from sociology, women and gender studies, education, anthropology, and geography to discuss issues facing the Filipino community in Canada. While this is a foundational text in Filipino Canadian studies, it remains largely within a Toronto-Vancouver matrix which Tom Lusi has stated needs to be overcome.<sup>5</sup> The lack of a significant historical analysis, never mind a historian in the list of contributors, is similarly the case on Glenda Bonifacio's *Pinay on the Prairies*, which analyses the experiences of Filipino women in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.<sup>6</sup> Alison Marshall's recent text, *Bayanihan and Belonging*, makes some contributions to understanding Filipino history in Canada, while discussing the important topic of religion.<sup>7</sup>

### **Connecting Filipino Diaspora and Philippine Studies**

A corollary of placing the history of the Filipino community in Canada within Asian Canadian studies and beyond is connecting this community to the larger history of the Philippines. This dissertation argues that the history of the community does not begin with its founding in Canada, but with the development of the historical contexts within the Philippines that came to affect Filipino immigration. Thus, to best understand Filipino immigration one must understand Philippine history. In the realm of Filipino diaspora studies this is not always the

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<sup>5</sup> Tom Lusi, "Filipino Immigrants in Canada: A literature review and directions for further research on second-tier cities and rural areas," (8 February 2009). Available at <http://www.geography.ryerson.ca/hbauder/Immigrant%20Labour/filipinoSettlement.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Glenda Tibe Bonifacio, *Pinay on the Prairies: Filipino women and transnational identities* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013).

<sup>7</sup> Alison Marshall, *Bayanihan and Belonging: Filipinos and Religion in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018).

case. Many studies of Filipino American communities focus on the development and dynamics of the community without much attention to either the historical forces that precipitated immigration or the concurrent developments in the Philippines that many Filipinos abroad followed.<sup>8</sup>

Divorcing an analysis of an immigrant community from broader migration patterns misses the bigger picture and only captures a part of an immigrant's experience. This is especially true for a diaspora as large as the Philippines, with estimates of ten percent of Filipinos living and working abroad.<sup>9</sup> As with other diaspora communities, there is a high degree of engagement with the Philippines and the Philippine diaspora among immigrants.<sup>10</sup> Thus, this dissertation seeks to place itself within the existing literature on the Filipino diaspora. As has been noted by Filomeno Aguilar, Jr., the literature on Filipino diaspora has been too focused on the American experience, limiting the scope and understanding of broader realities.<sup>11</sup> Injecting Canadian Filipino experiences into the wider diaspora will allow an examination of why Filipinos chose to settle in Winnipeg, what networks they built and maintained, how their host country affected their identity, and how they have been situated within the global Filipino

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<sup>8</sup> An exception is *Empire of Care* by Catherine Ceniza Choy which takes an in-depth look at the historical development of nursing immigration from the Philippines to the United States and the structural forces that shaped that movement. Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and migration in Filipino American history* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> In December 2013, the stock estimate of Filipinos overseas is 10,238,614. This is 10.4% of the 2013 population of 98,390,000. In 2013, Canada received the fifth highest number of Filipino immigrants (721,578). (Commission on Filipinos Overseas, "Statistics," [http://www.cfo.gov.ph/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=134&Itemid=814](http://www.cfo.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=134&Itemid=814). Accessed 2 October 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Jon G. Malek, "Silangan Rising," *Philippine Studies*...; Filomeno V. Aguilar Jr., "Is the Filipino Diaspora a Diaspora?" *Critical Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2015): 440-461; Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, *Little Manila Is in the Heart: The making of the Filipina/o American community in Stockton, California* (Duke University Press, 2013); David Camroux, *Nationalizing Transnationalism? The Philippine state and the Filipino diaspora* (Centre d'études et de recherches internationales, 2008); Emily Ignacio, *Building Diaspora: Filipino community formation on the internet* (Rutgers University Press, 2005); Epifanio San Juan Jr, *From Exile to Diaspora: Versions of the Filipino experience in the United States*. (ERIC, 1998); Filomeno V. Aguilar, Jr., "The Dialectics of Transnational Shame and National Identity," *Philippine Sociological Review* 44, no. 1/4 (1996): 101-36; Blas Ople, "The Filipino Diaspora: A Global Tribe?" *Overseas Info Series* 6, no. 1 (1993): 20-23.

<sup>11</sup> Aguilar Jr., "Is the Filipino Diaspora a Diaspora?"

village. Diaspora communities are built upon complex networks and find expression in multiple mediums and forums. Approaching the Winnipeg Filipino community through a lens of global migration will place this research within a transnational context, but also a trans-local setting as it will trace and map Winnipeg's myriad connections to communities across the globe. Thus, it will examine both the macro, transnational spaces within which community is formed, while also surveying the micro, trans-local networks that bind Winnipeg to the global network. The theme of transnationalism will be present in Chapter 2 in its more traditional theoretical understanding as the movement of goods and people.<sup>12</sup> Chapters 3 and 4 apply transnationalism using the term's capacity to act as a heuristic to understanding the conceptual, abstract spaces which immigrant lives occupy. I have avoided an in-depth analysis of the various approaches to theorizing transnationalism, and have instead chosen to let my use of the term and its theory come out in my analysis. In this way, working within the literature on the Filipino diaspora returns the dissertation to the first motivation of expanding Canada's Asian immigration historiography. It will be seen that Canada's immigration history, especially after World War II, has not only had a heavy trans-Pacific element, but that these immigrants have tied Canada into a global pattern of migration.

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<sup>12</sup> Adrian J. Bailey, "Turning Transnational: Notes on the Theorisation of International Migration," *Population, Space and Place* 7, no. 6 (2001): 413–28; A. Portes, "Introduction: The Debates and Significance of Immigrant Transnationalism," *Global Networks* 1 (2001): 181–193; A. Portes, L. E. Guarnizo, and P. Landolt, "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (1999): 217–37.

## **Personal Motivations**

A further, more personal, purpose of this research is to offer something of meaning and value to the community. I have been blessed as a researcher and individual to have been so warmly welcomed by the Filipino community - often, literally into their own homes. This welcome has not just come from Filipinos in Winnipeg, but also the Philippine Ambassador and Consul General who invited me to the Embassy during a research visit in Ottawa. Philippine-based academics have also extended encouragement for my research, with one established scholar encouraging me to “tell the story” of Filipinos living in Canada. Significant amounts of trust and faith have been placed in myself and my research so that a great deal of responsibility has rested on my mind over the last few years. This responsibility has not been a burden, but rather a reminder of one of the reasons I began this project. I’ve made bonds with the community that I will not sever after this research is done, as so-called parachute-researchers who insert themselves into a community, gather their data, give their acknowledgments in publications, and then withdraw themselves. On many levels, this project has become personal to the extent that the insider-outsider dichotomy often evoked in community-based research is difficult to apply. While already being a problematic term that can mask a researcher’s embeddedness and power within a community, it is difficult to identify as one or the other in this project. On the one hand, I am a non-Filipino university-based researcher whose career path depends upon conducting research within the community and writing publishable material on it. In this context, I benefit from my relations with the community, and indeed from their history that I write about. On the other hand, through my personal relationships I have become connected to the community, with

members affirming that this makes me a member of the community, in addition to my genuine interest and concern with the Philippines and Filipinos.

This welcome is heartening and encouraging to me as an individual and researcher, but it does not make me an “insider” proper, especially in relation to this research. While I have been named an “honourary Filipino” on more than one occasion, I am not a Filipino. I did not grow up in the Philippines in the unique conditions experienced there and did not grow up as a second-generation youth in Winnipeg with all the attendant struggles that it has brought to some. I have not gone through the experience of immigration, of leaving my home and settling into a new place. While I maintain and participate in Filipino networks that extend throughout the diaspora, this does not give me the same experience as those about which I write. I do, however, maintain a deep respect and love for the Philippines and Filipinos across the world, which includes an active participation in many aspects of Filipino culture daily, which brings passion to my role as an “outsider” in this research. This passion translates into a genuine interest in a country which and people whom I have grown to love in the past few years.

### **Focus**

This dissertation focuses on the historical developments that have influenced the immigration of Filipinos in Canada, including developments in both Canada and the Philippines. Just as the experiences of an immigrant do not begin once they enter a new country, but rather include the lifestyle and choices which lead to immigration, so too have developments in the Philippines affected Canada’s general acceptance of Filipinos. Analyses of identity creation, the interplay of history and memory, and the place of Winnipeg Filipinos in the diasporic and

transnational communities is crucial in establishing context. This dissertation examines not only circumstances that would motivate migration, but larger structural processes that facilitated such movements. A corollary of this is the opportunity to re-evaluate immigration to the Canadian Prairies. Research in the last few years has indicated that the Prairies, and Manitoba more specifically, has had complex immigration waves that extend far beyond Eastern European immigrants in the early twentieth century.<sup>13</sup> Some of the literature emphasizes the large amount of Pacific immigrants, in particular Chinese but also Japanese immigrants.<sup>14</sup> This growing body of work on the Prairies shows that Winnipeg was often the destination, rather than a “gateway to the West” through which immigrants would travel on their way to settlements further west. Moreover, significant numbers of immigrants were from Asia, making Winnipeg and Manitoba cosmopolitan and ethnically diverse. However, the Filipino population residing in Manitoba, and particularly Winnipeg, has yet to be included in this budding historiography.<sup>15</sup>

The focus of this research is on the Winnipeg Filipino community, although at times my analysis will look at Filipino immigration to Canada more generally to create the historical context for Winnipeg. Little historical work has been done on Filipinos in Canada. One notable exception is *Seeking a Better Life Abroad*, a history of Canadian Filipinos written in 2008. This text outlines the history of Filipinos in Canada from 1957, and is mostly for a popular audience,

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<sup>13</sup> Royden Loewen and Gerald Friesen, *Immigrants in Prairie Cities: Ethnic Diversity in 21st Century Canada* (Toronto, 2009); Ryan Eyford, *White Settler Reserve: New Iceland and the Colonization of the Canadian West* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016).

<sup>14</sup> Lisa Rose Mar, *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945* (Oxford University Press, 2010); Alison R. Marshall, *The Way of the Bachelor: Early Chinese Settlement in Manitoba* (UBC Press, 2011); Alison R. Marshall, *Cultivating Connections: The Making of Chinese Prairie Canada* (University of British Columbia Press, 2014); Aya Fujiwara, *Ethnic Elites and Canadian Identity: Japanese, Ukrainians, and Scots, 1919-1971* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2012); Aya Fujiwara, “Japanese-Canadian Internally Displaced Persons: Labour Relations and Ethno-Religious Identity in Southern Alberta, 1942–1953,” *Labour/Le Travail*, 69 (2012): 63–89.

<sup>15</sup> Filipinos in the Prairies have also recently attracted attention from scholars outside of history (Bonifacio, *Pinay on the Prairies*; Alison Marshall, *Bayanihan and Belonging: Filipinos and Religion in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018).) Each text adds to the body of knowledge of Filipinos in Canada, but lack rigorous historical analysis of the community's history.



although it does raise pertinent issues such as experiences of racism and “resistance [to an open immigration policy] from militant gatekeepers.”<sup>16</sup> There are two limits that should be pointed out, however. Although this text is a history of Filipinos *in* Canada, it is extremely difficult to obtain the text from *within* Canada, either through purchase or through libraries. In addition to the *Memories of Migration* project discussed in Chapter 4, there is another community project that looks at the early history of Filipino “pioneers” to Winnipeg.<sup>17</sup> These two community-led projects relied upon oral histories, and while presenting much needed work on the community, they do not use archival sources to the degree as this research. As a result of the lack of academic historical work, it has been necessary in certain places to take a broader look at the phenomenon to create a proper context.

The justification for focusing on Winnipeg is in response to the significant amounts of literature in other disciplines on Toronto and Vancouver.<sup>18</sup> Winnipeg offers an ideal city to study as it shares many similarities with other Filipino communities across Canada, such as the role of labour migration, while offering a unique case in other respects. For example, while Toronto, Vancouver, and other cities have had large numbers of Filipinos immigrate through the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), Winnipeg has experienced low levels. Compared to Toronto, Hamilton, Vancouver, Calgary, Ottawa, or Montréal, which have seen the LCP account for twenty to thirty-five percent of Filipino immigration, in Winnipeg it has only accounted for about two to three percent over a thirty-year period (1980-2009).<sup>19</sup> Manitoba’s Provincial

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<sup>16</sup> Eleanor del Rio-Laquian and Aprodicio A. Laquian, *Seeking a Better Life Abroad: A Study of Filipinos in Canada, 1957-2007* (Pasig City, Philippines: Anvil Publishing, 2008).

<sup>17</sup> Gemma Dalayoan, Leah Envarga-Magsino, Leonnie C. Bailon, and Romulo F. Magsino, *The First Filipino Immigrants in Manitoba, 1959-1975* (Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Government of Manitoba, 2005).

<sup>18</sup> Lusi, “Filipino Immigrants in Canada.”

<sup>19</sup> Philip Kelly, “Understanding Intergenerational Social Mobility: Filipino Youth in Canada,” *IRPP Study* (February 2014), 11.

Nominee Program, on the other hand, has accounted for nearly forty percent of Filipino immigration in the same period, with Calgary and Vancouver seeing around two percent. In terms of population, Winnipeg has the third-largest Filipino community in Canada, and so the fact that it remains woefully understudied is a glaring gap in the literature which has tended to focus on the so-called MTV of Montreal-Toronto-Vancouver.<sup>20</sup> This is more-so the case when it is recognized that, in terms of *per capita* ratio, Winnipeg has the highest concentrations of Filipinos in Canada, with the community accounting for nearly ten percent of the population (see Fig. 1.1). Winnipeg can serve as a case study for the history of Filipinos in Canada. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, the immigration of health professionals and garment workers to Winnipeg was part of larger movements into Canada.

City	Filipino Population	Total Population	Per Capita
Montreal	33,050	4,098,927	0.806%
Toronto	254,475	5,928,040	4.29%
Vancouver	123,170	2,463,431	4.99%
Winnipeg	73,875	778,489	9.49%

Fig. 1.1. Canada's largest Filipino communities (CMA regions) and their *per capita* ratio (2016 Census).

## Significance

This research engages with several discussions surrounding immigration, community, ethnic history, and diaspora studies. As noted earlier, it is also an attempt to bridge Filipino

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<sup>20</sup> Kelly, Philip F. and Tom Lusi, "Migration and the Transnational Habitus: Evidence from Canada and the Philippines," *Environment and Planning A* 38, no. 5 (2006): 831–47.

Canadian studies (and Canadian studies more broadly) with Philippine Studies. In the realm of Philippine and Filipino Studies, these two terms are not interchangeable. The former has come to describe the research and literature examining the Philippines itself, while the latter refers to the body of work on the Filipino diaspora and is largely dominated by Filipino-American studies. It has recently been pointed out that Filipino diaspora studies are often not in conversation with Philippine studies.<sup>21</sup> While it may not be intuitive that scholars from one field be interested in the other, it is necessary to understand the lived worlds that Filipino immigrants inhabit. The changing immigration policies in Canada during the 1960s had significant consequences for the movement and destinations of Filipinos from the Philippines. While the Canadian social or political climate may not directly relate to matters of concern in Philippine studies (and vice versa), understanding the climate of emigration from the Philippines will help better contextualize the immigration to Canada. This dissertation makes a preliminary attempt to respond to the disconnect between Philippine and Filipino studies, and to the fact that a Filipino's life in Canada has numerous connections to the Philippines that go beyond regular movements back and forth.<sup>22</sup>

### **Pacific Canada and the Trans-Pacific**

Part of this dissertation's contribution is to "refract" Canada's Pacific past and long engagement with the trans-Pacific.<sup>23</sup> The growing field of Asian Canadian studies, while a

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<sup>21</sup> Janus Isaac Nolasco, "The Brains of the Transnation: Overseas Filipino Academics and Philippine Historiography in the Late 20th and Early 21st Century," Paper presented at *Bridging Worlds, Illumining the Archive: An International Conference in Honor of Professor Resil B. Mojares*. Manila, 31 July 2018.

<sup>22</sup> This requirement had been an adamant requirement in labeling a phenomenon as transnational by Portes et al., "The Study of Transnationalism," 219.

<sup>23</sup> John Price, *Orienting Canada: Race, empire, and the transpacific* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011); Henry Yu, "Global Migrants and the New Pacific Canada," *International Journal* 64, no. 4 (2009):

latecomer to Canadian historiography,<sup>24</sup> has offered an important corrective to Canadian national histories that tend to emphasize Canada as an Atlantic nation. The histories of Canada's diplomatic relations with the Asia-Pacific region and of Asian migration to Canada are part of what John Price has called an "uncommon past," that is, one that has not found expression in national narratives.<sup>25</sup> A trans-Pacific lens, as advocated by Price and Henry Yu, refracts the Canadian national narrative by creating a discursive space for "the role of those excluded from the centers of power."<sup>26</sup> This metaphor of a lens or prism refracting Canada's singular national narrative into constituent parts is a helpful means of understanding Canada and the trans-Pacific. Pacific historians have been targeted by traditional Canadian scholars as "killing Canadian history;"<sup>27</sup> if it is indeed 'killing' a nationalist narrative that has sought unity and conformity through exclusion and simplification, then let the funeral bell toll. The continuation of these narratives, both in Canadian academe and public memory, are not only exclusionary towards significant realms of Canada's history, but in fact misconstrues and misinforms, creating and propagating a fundamental misunderstanding of the diverse and complex histories - both trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific - that have made Canada. John Price attributes some of the reticence towards Asian Canadian studies to an "avoidance syndrome" in Canada's historical memory, a reluctance to face its history of racism, exclusion, and xenophobia, which has characterized much of its Pacific history. Under-privileging Canada's trans-Pacific history has allowed a nationalist mythology, built upon a false uniformity, that needs to be deconstructed, or refracted,

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1011–26; Henry Yu, "Refracting Pacific Canada: Seeing Our Uncommon Past," *B.C. Studies*, no. 156/157 (2007): 5–10.

<sup>24</sup> Henry Yu, Guy Beauregard, and Christopher Lee. "The Lateness of Asian Canadian Studies." *Amerasia Journal* 33, no. 2 (2007): 1–18.

<sup>25</sup> Price, *Orienting Canada*, 3.

<sup>26</sup> Price, *Orienting Canada*, 2–3.

<sup>27</sup> J. L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1998); Price, *Orienting Canada*, 3. For a critical response to Granatstein, see Timothy J. Stanley, "Why I Killed Canadian History: Towards an Anti-Racist History in Canada," *Histoire Social/Social History* 33, no. 65 (2000).

and its dispersed parts reconstituted into a more inclusive narrative. A fallout of this reluctance has been the perception that Asians were late comers to Canada, when in fact they have been present since Canadian Confederation.

This work also contributes to the field of Asian Canadian studies by performing another kind of refraction that looks at Filipinos as one of its dispersed component parts. As will be discussed later, the literature on Filipinos in Canada is under-developed and unbalanced towards the social sciences; this is one of the first historical studies on Filipino immigration to Canada and works to place this history in the broader narrative of Pacific Canada, itself a relatively new theme in Canadian historiography. While some community studies of Asians in Canada take international relations into context, they are often portrayed as barriers to immigration.<sup>28</sup> One of my goals is to look at the other side of this, at how Canada's interstate relations with the Philippines eventually allowed and facilitated Filipino immigration. In particular, I show in Chapter 1 how diplomatic pressures from a recently independent and internationally confident Philippines forced the Canadian government to begin the process of opening its doors to Asian immigration.

This study contributes to the broader literature on Canadian immigration in the postwar era in Canada, which Franca Iacovetta has stated needs more work.<sup>29</sup> She argues that the dearth in such historical works was a result of a "reluctance of historians to tackle the postwar era, stating that most work had been taken up by sociologists and other social scientists."<sup>30</sup> While this has changed since she wrote in 1992, for the Filipino community the field has been dominated by

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<sup>28</sup> Roy, *A White Man's Province*; Roy, *The Oriental Question*; Roy, *The Triumph of Citizenship*; Mar, *Brokering Belonging*.

<sup>29</sup> Franca Iacovetta, *Such Hardworking People: Italian immigrants in postwar Toronto* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992): xxiii.

<sup>30</sup> Iacovetta, *Such Hardworking People*, xxiii.

geographers and sociologists. This dissertation takes a prairie perspective to this period, arguing that Manitoba had strong immigration pulls from the fields of labour. Like many other studies of ethnic communities across Canada, much of this narrative has been about maintaining a distinct ethnic identity within Canada. Canadian immigration historiography in the postwar period has tended to focus on non-Asian communities,<sup>31</sup> but studies by Aya Fujiwara and Royden Loewen and Gerry Friesen, have brought these communities into view.<sup>32</sup> This dissertation contributes to these discussions by expanding our knowledge of Asian immigration to postwar Canada.

This research also offers a distinct postwar historical analysis to Canadian immigration history. Canada's major ethnic populations – Ukrainians, Italians, Mennonites, Chinese, Japanese, and South Asians, to list a few – all have pre-war histories in Canada. The works of scholars like Iacovetta, Jordan Stanger-Ross, and others examine postwar dynamics of communities established in previous times. And, while Filipinos were living in Canada as early as the 1890s, the community dynamics that developed with other ethnic groups such as the Chinese did not begin until after the Second World War. As Stanger-Ross notes, North American cities were transformed in the postwar period, which caused a divergence of historical experiences in ethnic communities.<sup>33</sup> However, whereas existing studies such as Stanger-Ross' look at how these transformations affected existing communities, the research presented here narrates the development of an Asian ethnic group whose immigration to Canada began in this period. This community's start was part of the slow, lumbering moves towards liberation in Canada's immigration policies. Like these other ethnic groups, the acceptance of Filipino immigrants into Canada was tied to the value of their labour, which out-weighed the concerns of

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<sup>31</sup> Iacovetta, *Such Hardworkin People*; Jordan Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian: Urban change and ethnic life in postwar Toronto and Philadelphia* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009)

<sup>32</sup> Aya Fujiwara, Loewen and Friesen

<sup>33</sup> Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian*, 7.

government actors in maintaining a white-only vision of Canada. Ethnic communities with longer histories than Filipinos arrived at a time when Canadian government and society were intent on maintaining a policy of white Canada. While these concerns were still present when Filipinos began immigrating in the late 1950s, as will be seen in Chapters 1 and 2, it also coincided with a fundamental change in how Canada was being envisioned. Indeed, Filipinos were just one of many ethnic groups originating from Canada whose history really began in the 1950s and 1960s.

Much of the historiography on postwar immigration to Canadian urban centers has focused on non-Asian groups, with a critical look at ethnicity, a theme crucial in this study. As Iacovetta notes in *Such Hardworking People*, it is insufficient to ascribe cultural behaviours by immigrants as “necessarily reflecting some set of culturally predetermined norms and customs.”<sup>34</sup> This was reaffirmed by Stanger-Ross when he stated that “ethnicity is a social practice rather than an immutable attribute,” and that detailing its historical development has developed rich scholarly studies.<sup>35</sup> This dissertation takes the same view, and argues that it is the fluidity of culture and its discursive elements that drove much of the community’s development. The limits of this study, especially in a Canadian prairie context, is that it does not detail the so-called boundary zones where ethnic groups interact with broader society to which Royden Loewen and Gerald Friesen have analyzed.<sup>36</sup> Their study on immigration to prairie cities straddles the pre- and post-war era in the Canadian prairies, and offers a base upon which more research on the Winnipeg Filipino community can be examined.

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<sup>34</sup> Iacovetta, *Such Hardworking People*, xxv-xxvi.

<sup>35</sup> Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian*, 7.

<sup>36</sup> Royden Loewen and Gerry Friesen, *Immigrants in Prairie Cities: Ethnic diversity in Twentieth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 93.

This research also builds upon Canadian immigration historiography in the postwar era by examining the inherent transnational ties of the community. This is not new; when Franca Iacovetta wrote in 1992 about postwar Italians in Toronto in the 1960s, much of what she described was transnational. Even though the term had yet to be coined by Nina Glick-Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton,<sup>37</sup> the “phenomenon was already well known to historians of international migration.”<sup>38</sup> The publication of *Nations Unbound* by Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc sparked interest in the use of the term ‘transnationalism.’ Their definition of the term is often the starting point of many discussions on transnationalism:

We define ‘transnationalism’ as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders.<sup>39</sup>

Basch, Schiller, and Blanc tied the phenomenon of transnational migration to changing global capitalism and its relation to labour migration flows.<sup>40</sup> While operating within this global context, they recognized that transnationalism is an act of agency, stating that “Transnationalism is a process by which migrants, through their daily life activities and social, economic, and political relations, create social fields that cross national boundaries”.<sup>41</sup>

Within a few years of Basch, Schiller and Blanc’s influential work, Portes, Guarzino, and Landolt sought to intervene in a new field that they felt was in need of direction by suggesting a

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<sup>37</sup> Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Christina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational projects, postcolonial predicaments, and deterritorialized nation-states* (London: Routledge, 1994).

<sup>38</sup> Donna Gabbacia, Franca Iacovetta, Fraser Ottanelli, “Labouring Across National Borders: Class, Gender, and Militancy in the Proletarian Mass Migrations,” *International Labour and Working Class History* 66 (Fall 2004), 60.

<sup>39</sup> Basch, Schiller, and Blanc, *Nations Unbound*, 7.

<sup>40</sup> Basch, Schiller, and Blanc, *Nations Unbound*, 23.

<sup>41</sup> Basch, Schiller, and Blanc, *Nations Unbound*, 23.



typology of transnationalism.<sup>42</sup> In addition to the use of poorly defined units of analysis, they asserted that current studies “form[ed] a highly fragmented, emergent field which still lacks both a well-defined theoretical framework and analytical rigour”.<sup>43</sup> A critique given by Portes et al. was that many instances described as transnational are in fact better described by an already existing term. They suggest that the unit of analysis should be the individual and that what may qualify for the term ‘transnational’ are the “high intensity of exchanges, the new modes of transacting, and the multiplication of activities” that require movement and contacts that span borders. The emphasis on the individual as a unit of analysis was defended as an entry point to examining all other levels, such as communities and states, from a grassroots, bottom-up approach. A key defining feature of the theory suggested by Portes et al. is that it acknowledges that the same patterns of contemporary migration existed before,<sup>44</sup> however what defines it as ‘transnational’ is the intensity with which it is carried about and the role of technology in allowing these new levels of migration.

A focus from the bottom up, from the unit of the individual migrant, might blur some of the higher-level processes and, furthermore, does not sufficiently explain how migrants interact with broader processes. Portes et al. make useful contributions to understanding what is meant by transnationalism, but Peggy Levitt’s work has shown how other units of analysis can offer fresh insight. Her book *The Transnational Villagers* looks at how transnational communities act as a sort of intermediary between the transnational migrant and the ‘home’ nation-state.<sup>45</sup> While Portes et al. appropriately point out that individual migrants are transnational in their integration

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<sup>42</sup> Portes et al., “The Study of Transnationalism.”

<sup>43</sup> Portes et al., “The Study of Transnationalism,” 219.

<sup>44</sup> Portes et al. (1999) claim that precursors to current migration patterns arose in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, this could easily be pushed back further in regions such as Southeast Asia which has experienced circular migrations of various ethnic groups, even centuries before European involvement in the region.

<sup>45</sup> Peggy Levitt, *The Transnational Villagers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

to host societies while maintaining cultural behaviour from their home,<sup>46</sup> Levitt's conception of the transnational community as "the social fields from which migrants and non-migrants operate" allows for a nuanced description of this process.<sup>47</sup> The transnational village emphasizes that on the sending side of migration, it is not only the state and government officials who affect migrants as seen in Basch, Schiller, and Blanc, but also the families and contacts of migrants who do not migrate.

Much of this literature on transnationalism around the turn of the millennium had some theoretical problems. Discussions often pointed towards immigrants regularly travelling from host to home countries to conduct business. However, in many cases it is not clear how these are in fact transnational and not cross-border activities of immigrants living and operating within a highly-globalized economy. Cross-border commercial activity by migrants have been occurring for centuries: the Atlantic triangular trade, the Silk Road, and the Age of Commerce as explained by Anthony Reid<sup>48</sup> all point toward highly connected migrants whose lives involved regular circulation. What seems to be different, then, is the speed and regularity of these movements (not to mention expansion across the world) that is often attributed to the time-space compression that globalization has brought about.<sup>49</sup> Finally, there is the etymological roots of transnationalism, which implies that a certain set of activities must in some way *transcend* national geopolitical boundaries. Portes et al. referenced the social networks that migrants utilized in these economic activities, but it is those fields that can be seen transcending borders, not economic activity,

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<sup>46</sup> Portes et al., "The Study of Transnational," 229.

<sup>47</sup> Levitt, *Transnational Villagers*, 7.

<sup>48</sup> Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680: Expansion and crisis*. Vol. 2. (Yale: Yale University Press, 1988).

<sup>49</sup> David Harvey, "Time-Space Compression and the Postmodern Condition," *Modernity: Critical Concepts* 4 (1999): 98-118.

which is a practice still controlled and regulated at the state-level. It is more useful to focus on those social networks that are mobilized in economic affairs as well as myriad others.

These social networks and transactions are best illumined with a qualitative lens that conceives of transnationalism as conceptual space within which immigrants live their daily lives. Immigrants bring with them values, mores, practices, and beliefs that they were socialized with in their homeland. Even as they adapt to the new social and ideological settings in their new home, these inheritances continue to affect their daily experiences, as well as their decision-making process. Moreover, these value sets create and are sustained by links to their homeland, or their country folk abroad. Community members interviewed spoke of ongoing connections to the Philippines, such as annual travel to perform volunteer medical service. Many of these actions are perceived as mundane actions - sending money to a relative is done within the same logic as going to work. This transnational space requires various forms of technology so that links may be maintained with more than one location at one point in space and time. Thus, there has been a recent growth in literature studying the link between diaspora and social media. While diaspora and transnationalism are distinct theoretical fields, many in the diaspora do occupy a transnational space, as this chapter will reveal. The role of technology is important and its use can be dated prior to our modern age of computers, internet, and cellular communication; indeed, in the nineteenth century a great deal of communication was carried out via letter writing, which itself was a form of technology as it required a certain skill set such as hand writing, and the dispatch and reception of letters which relied upon a postage system that would have been a hallmark of contemporary technology. The growing hyper-speeds of modern communication removes much, is not all, of the time and space once required to send a message.

Peggy Levitt was aware, as was Portes et al., that “the term ‘transnationalism’ is used to describe everything under the sun,” and she expanded upon this theory to respond to such critiques.<sup>50</sup> Going against the claim of Portes et al. that only sustained practices, and not sporadic responses like irregular financial remittances, should make up transnational activities,<sup>51</sup> Levitt distinguishes between ‘core transnationalism’ and ‘expanded transnationalism’.<sup>52</sup> Core transnationalism is that advocated by Portes et al., the regular and patterned activities that transcend borders and form an integral part of a migrant’s life, while expanded transnationalism are those infrequent or irregular activities.<sup>53</sup> Peggy Levitt’s work also addresses the relationship between transnational communities and diaspora. For Levitt, transnational communities are not the same as a diaspora: they are “the building blocks of diasporas that may or may not take shape”.<sup>54</sup> This diasporic space within which the transnational migrants would dwell arise out of real or imagined connections that form between the transnational communities and their homeland and “if a fiction of congregation takes hold, then a diaspora emerges”.<sup>55</sup> Thus, a diaspora in Levitt’s conception is the collected body of transnational communities, such as Filipino communities in Toronto, New York, Honolulu, Hong Kong, and Saudi Arabia.

Philip Kelly and Tom Lusi have emphasized not only the experiences of the migrant, but have also drawn out the decisions they make and how they judge success in migration, drawing out the agency that migrants can express in global capital structures. Michael Samers has pointed out that most approaches to migration have sought out the complexity and “*indeterminacy*” of migration and as Kelly and Lusi state, “Individual immigrant stories are now frequently used to

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<sup>50</sup> Peggy Levitt, “Transnational Migration: Taking stock and future directions,” *Global Networks* 1 no. 3 (2001b): 169.

<sup>51</sup> Portes et al., “The Study of Transnational,” 219.

<sup>52</sup> Levitt, “Transnational Migration,” 198.

<sup>53</sup> Levitt, “Transnational Migration,” 198.

<sup>54</sup> Levitt, *Transnational Villagers*, 15; Levitt, “Transnational Migration,” 203,

<sup>55</sup> (Levitt, *Transnational Villagers*, 15.

highlight experiences which confound expectations.”<sup>56</sup> Kelly and Lusi seem to suggest that transnationalism as a process does not begin when a migrant crosses the border of a new country, or even when the decision to migrate has been made.<sup>57</sup> The limitation to this, although Kelly and Lusi do not outright state it, is that the perspective the migrant has inherited from their home community is presented as static, unchanging, and perhaps monolithic. However, through their theorizing of the ‘transnational habitus,’ they demonstrate an ongoing connection with both a migrant’s receiving society *and* their home society. This trans-border sense is similar to what Levitt referred to as the transnational community, involving migrants and non-migrants alike. However, what both do not state is how a transnational experience or transnational habitus is not only affected by a nation’s present, but also its past and the perception of that past.

The conceptual approach to transnationalism in this dissertation draws upon that draws upon Philip Kelly and Tom Lusi’s notion of transnational habitus wherein immigrants are seen as inhabiting an arena where they are grounded in more than one conceptual area at one time. This approach is more in line with the original theorizing of transnationalism by Basch, Schiller, and Blanc who defined it as “the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.”<sup>58</sup> These processes created “social fields” that that crossed geographic, cultural, and political borders and draws attention to the connections that are made.<sup>59</sup> The idea of the transnational habitus, as argued by Kelly and Lusi, demonstrates an ongoing connection with both a migrant’s receiving society *and* their home society.<sup>60</sup> Chapters 3 and 4 deal with different aspects of this transnationalism,

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<sup>56</sup> Kelly and Lusi, “Transnational Habitus,” 831.

<sup>57</sup> Kelly and Lusi, “Transnational Habitus,” 832.

<sup>58</sup> Basch, Schiller, and Blanc, *Nations Unbounded*, 7.

<sup>59</sup> Basch, Schiller, and Blanc, *Nations Unbounded*, 27.

<sup>60</sup> Philip Kelly and Tom Lusi, “Migration and the Transnational Habitus: Evidence from Canada and the Philippines,” *Environment and Planning A* 38, no. 5 (2006): 831-847.

but both work from the observation that Filipinos living in Winnipeg were inhabiting at least two worlds, one Canadian and one Philippine. These areas meant different things to different people at different times, and recognizing this opens rich avenues of research in the development of the community's identity. The dissertation examines the multiple transnational strands that bound the community to the Philippines, to Filipinos overseas, and to the community itself. In a community whose identity has been built around maintaining a Filipino heritage, this approach to transnationalism is crucial.

### **Converging Histories**

The history of Filipino immigration to Winnipeg is part of much larger and longer historical processes, both in Canada and the Philippines. Centuries of colonialism under the Spanish (c.1570s-1898) and later Americans (1898-1946) constructed a Philippine society that was significantly colonized and was introduced to global labour flows deriving from Western economic expansion. The history of colonialism in the Philippines created a firm tradition of economic underdevelopment, which was only exacerbated after independence in 1946 and led to mass emigrations.<sup>61</sup> Chapters 3 and 4 deal, in various ways, with how Filipinos have negotiated post-colonial issues and identities.

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<sup>61</sup> Anna Romina Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes: The Transnational Labor Brokering of Filipino Workers* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2009); Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export: How the Philippine state brokers labor to the world* (University of Minnesota Press, 2010); James A. Tyner, *Made in the Philippines* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004).

## Filipino Global Migrations

The Philippines has the dubious record of being colonized for over three hundred years. The history of colonialism in the Philippines has had various influences on the rise of modern Filipino global migration. Both Spanish and American colonialism transformed the Philippine economy and society to better serve their economic systems and global outlook. This colonial past imposed structural realities that have been reproduced until the present. The Philippines today is “a country of the super-rich and the abject poor,”<sup>62</sup> which has resulted from the landed elites that rose to influence in the Spanish period. This Filipino landed elite were colonial collaborators who benefitted from the mobilization of labour and collection of land tributes.<sup>63</sup>

The beginnings of Filipino labour migration to the United States began in Hawai'i in 1906, when sugar plantation owners began importing Filipino labourers.<sup>64</sup> There was acute racial discrimination against Filipinos by Anglo-Americans who were nevertheless unable to legally restrict them from working in the U.S. The ironic solution to this was to initiate the process of Philippine independence in 1934 with the Tydings-McDuffie Act which laid out a ten-year period of transition to a Philippine Commonwealth. The Act had some immediate consequences, including the removal of U.S. national status, thus preventing immigration, and trade restrictions.<sup>65</sup> For example, while Philippine goods going into the U.S. were given heavy trade tariffs, American goods going into the Philippines entered unrestrictedly. When independence was recognized at the end of the Pacific War in 1946, the Philippine economy was over-

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<sup>62</sup> James Tyner, *The Philippines: Mobilities, identities, globalization* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008), 4

<sup>63</sup> Tyner, *The Philippines*, 13.

<sup>64</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 28.

<sup>65</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 31.

dependent on its agribusiness, with over ninety percent of all exports relying on just four crops, destined almost exclusively for the U.S.<sup>66</sup>

By the time that the Philippines became independent in 1946, the United States had been established in the Philippine imagination as the land of opportunity. Catherine Choy, in her crucial study on nursing migration between the Philippines and United States, demonstrates how early colonialism in the Philippines created a nursing education system that annually produced Filipina nurses that were in demand in the United States.<sup>67</sup> These migration patterns continued after independence and for decades the United States remained the destination of choice for many wanting to work abroad. Furthermore, the economic underdevelopment during the American occupation was exacerbated by pro-American trade policies imposed by the United States upon independence that kept the Philippine economy dependent on American foreign investment and emphasized an export-oriented economy. Thus, instead of setting the Philippines down a path towards self-determination, the end of the American colonial period merely saw the continuation of economic dependence on the United States and saw the creation of a mass body of Filipinos for whom survival largely depended upon working abroad.

As the internal economy failed, and as the Philippines became encumbered by a mounting balance of payment deficit from overseas borrowing, the IMF and WB intervened in the Philippine economy during the 1960s. These institutions suggested that a policy of export-oriented industrialization would result in rapid industrial growth. Under the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos (1965-1986), several acts were put in place to enact these changes. The

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<sup>66</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 31.

<sup>67</sup> Choy, *Empire of Care*.



Investment Incentives Act of 1967<sup>68</sup> gave a broad range of tax incentives to export producers. These incentives were expanded in 1970 with the Export Incentives Act,<sup>69</sup> which gave 10-year tax exemptions for goods and capital used in manufacturing and processing. At the beginning of the 1970s, the Philippines was faced with growing social and economic pressures, putting the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos in danger. National indebtedness to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB), a lack of interest of foreign capital, and rampant corruption were creating social dissatisfaction which were made worse by declining employment conditions and political dissidents in the Philippines' Muslim region in Mindanao.<sup>70</sup> Using the militant unrest for justification, President Marcos declared Martial Law on 21 September 1972. With the declaration of Martial Law, all constitutional hurdles were cleared for the accelerated expansion of an export-oriented industrialization in the Philippines. In coordination with the IMF and WB, Marcos brought about a major reworking of the labour system within the country that emphasized formal labour export.<sup>71</sup> What was initially intended to be a temporary stop-gap, the global export of Filipino labour soon propelled the Philippines as a legitimate international supplier of skilled labour. Labour export became so entrenched in the Philippine and global economy that, with the People Power Revolution of 1986 that toppled the Marcos regime, this practice was retained as an invaluable component of the Philippine economy.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Republic Act 5186. *An act prescribing incentives and guarantees to investments in the Philippines, creating a board of investments, appropriating the necessary funds therefor and for other purposes (The Investment Incentives Act of 1967)*. September 16, 1967. [https://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1967/ra\\_5186\\_1967.html](https://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1967/ra_5186_1967.html)

<sup>69</sup> Republic Act 6135. *An act to invigorate the country's export trade as a means of accelerating economic growth by granting certain incentives and exemptions to registered export producers, export traders, and service exporters, repealing export incentives granted under republic act numbered fifty-one hundred eighty-six, and for other purposes (Export Incentives Act of 1967)*. August 31, 1970. <http://www.chanrobles.com/republicacts/republicactno6135.html#.XBA8ThNKhE4>.

<sup>70</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 47-48; Christina Siracusa and Kristel Acacio, "State Migrant-Exporting Schemes and their Implications for the Rise of Illicit Migration: A comparison of Spain and the Philippines," *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 5 No.3 (Summer 2004), 333

<sup>71</sup> Siracusa and Acacio, "State Migrant-Exporting Schemes," 333

<sup>72</sup> Siracusa and Acacio, "State Migrant-Exporting Schemes," 333.

### **The Philippine State Migratory Apparatus (SMA)**

It was not until 1946 that the current system of Filipino labour export began to take shape, as a result of American intervention after World War II. The war, including a ruinous Japanese occupation, ravaged the Philippines; in addition to the loss of nearly one million lives, the infrastructure and industrial capacity of the country was destroyed. Following the devastation of the Philippines, American capital “moved in” to the Philippines.<sup>73</sup> At the same time as American investment in the Philippines was portrayed as supporting the country’s reconstruction, these actions were also strategic to American interests in securing an Asian base to counter a perceived Soviet threat and fortify economic interests in the country’s economy. For example, the U.S. provided \$620 million, of which only \$120 million was devoted to the repair of the Philippines’s infrastructure. A further \$100 million was to take the form of surplus American military property (he does not detail what this is), with the remaining \$400 million going toward the restoration of individually held property. The impact of this was not a restructuring of the Philippine economy, but rather a continuation of the same unequal distribution of land and wealth that had been characteristic since the Spanish colonial period.

Despite this exploitation of the Philippine economy by the U.S., the Philippine state began to exert some economic independence between the late 1940s and early 1950s through policies such as the Import Control Act of 1948 which encouraged a Filipino-first approach aimed at implementing an import substitution industrialization program. For a time, tax exemptions and access to credit allowed a shift away from the typical cash-crop economy of the

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<sup>73</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 44.

Philippines to a more industrial economy focused on packaging, assembly and light manufacturing. However, by the mid-1950s, the economy experienced a slowdown in growth as many of the Philippine-based industries were unable to expand beyond the limited domestic market and to absorb an expanding labour force of about 700,000 new workers a year.<sup>74</sup>

There was a growing crisis tied to the emergence of a surplus labor force that neither the manufacturing nor agricultural industry could absorb. In the years following the end of World War II, there was a conjuncture of events that resulted in a dramatic increase of migrant Filipino labour. First, years of colonialism and migrant flows of labour to the U.S. had set a precedent of migratory Filipino labour. Second, a degenerating economy was creating high levels of poverty, urban squalor, and unsatisfactory job opportunities. The third factor was a change in U.S. immigration policy that once again opened the door to Filipino immigration.

In the ten-year period from 1965 to 1974, changes in government policies of the U.S. and Philippines would thrust the Philippines to the fore of the global migratory labour market and secure its identification as one of the most efficient labour brokering states, especially signified in two events. The first event was the 1965 U.S. Immigration Act that overturned the restrictions of the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934. With this more liberal immigration policy, migration of skilled Filipino labor into the U.S. surged. The 1965 legislation coincided with an acute nursing shortage in the U.S. and from 1966 to 1970 sixty-five percent of Filipino immigrants were highly skilled and educated professionals.<sup>75</sup> In 1967, the Investment Incentives Act of 1967 gave a broad range of tax incentives to export producers. These incentives were expanded in 1970 with the Export Incentives Act, which gave 10-year tax exemptions for goods and capital used in

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<sup>74</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 46-47.

<sup>75</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 30.

manufacturing and processing.<sup>76</sup> The flow of labour to the U.S., which had been established as early as 1898 and had been maintained by the flow of Filipino nurses during the period of the Tydings-McDuffie Act, remains a major reality in Filipino labour migration today.<sup>77</sup>

The second event, in 1974, was the worsening of the Philippine economy and the exacerbation of the situation under the Presidency of Ferdinand Marcos. As Guevarra indicates, “in the shadow of these migration processes was a country in economic crisis.”<sup>78</sup> In 1965, escalating trade deficits led the Philippine government to turn to the IMF once again. Whereas in 1949 the IMF had suggested trade restrictions, it now imposed structural adjustment policies (SAPs) that favoured an economic liberalization, which was detrimental to the local industries of the Philippines. Favours the economic interests of foreign investors and wealthy Filipino elites, these structural adjustments further sapped the lower levels of Philippine society and the economy itself. By 1969, the Philippine trade deficit was USD \$257 million. Behind this worsening period of the Philippine economy was the corruption and dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos (1965-1986). Elected in 1965, Marcos’ presidency became synonymous with corruption; his second term election involved such a huge expenditure of public funds that inflation skyrocketed and domestic prices were sent soaring.<sup>79</sup> The growing crisis of the Philippine economy, coupled with unrest resulting from rumours that Marcos was conspiring to remain in office beyond the constitutional limit of two terms, led to increased social unrest in the Philippines. In response to this, Marcos declared Martial Law in 1972 with the backing of the

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<sup>76</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 47-48.

<sup>77</sup> For instance, at the end of 2008 there were 284 459 non-permanent Filipinos in the U.S., accounting for 6.6% of global non-permanent Filipinos (CFO, 2008) and a total of US \$7.8 billion in remittances, accounting for a total of 47.5% of total global remittances (Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas).

<sup>78</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 30.

<sup>79</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 30.

U.S. under the guise of responding to a growing Communist threat, which was itself a reaction of the landless Philippine population to the current economic and political situation.

Thus, in the early 1970s there was a growing economic crisis in the Philippines and growing political unrest. Rather than reform the Philippine economy and introduce social welfare programs to address the plight of the destitute, Marcos made Filipino migratory labour a state-sponsored practice. Gaining political legitimacy from the U.S. state, Marcos ensured that Philippine economic policy was in line with the neoliberal agenda of the U.S. and the IMF. However, this meant that poverty, unemployment, and landlessness within the Philippine population went unchecked and, as a form of social control, Marcos instituted the Labour Code of 1974 with the goal of minimizing the effect of unemployment on Philippine society.<sup>80</sup>

E. San Juan Jr. argues that “the Philippine government has earned the distinction of being the most migrant- and remittance-dependent ruling apparatus in the world, mainly by virtue of denying its citizens the right to decent employment at home” because of the billions of dollars that are remitted, none go to national projects such as industrial or agricultural developments, but rather go to pay off foreign debt and “subsidizes the wasteful spending” of the political elite.<sup>81</sup> The first form of a state migratory apparatus (SMA) were three sub-apparatuses: the Overseas Employment Development Board (OEDB) and the National Seamen Board (NSB) were new creations, and the existing Bureau of Employment Services (BES) was positioned under the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE), later the Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE).<sup>82</sup> After 1974, the next major institutional transformation to the SMA was the merger of the OEDB, the NSB and the BES into the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA).

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<sup>80</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 31.

<sup>81</sup> Epifanio San Juan Jr., “Overseas Filipino workers: The making of an Asian-Pacific diaspora.” *The Global South* 3 no. 2 (2009): 99-129.

<sup>82</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 54.

This streamlining of government agencies was an attempt by the Philippine government to intensify the attempt to capitalize on the shifting markets of the global economy and to utilize surplus Filipino labour as a development strategy.<sup>83</sup> Part of the POEA's mission included discursively recasting the Filipino overseas worker as a hero rather than a victim sacrificing themselves for the better of the nation.<sup>84</sup> As well, working overseas was described as just one option available to workers in an attempt to downplay the feeling by many that Filipino had no other option to find employment.

The discourse surrounding the state's role in migrant labour experienced a dramatic shift in 1995 with execution of Flor Contemplacion, an OFW in Singapore. Flor was sentenced to death by hanging for the alleged murder of a fellow Filipina domestic worker and the child that was in her care, even though evidence seemed to suggest it was her employer who was guilty. A consequence of the Contemplacion case was a reorganization of the POEA that saw a gradual deregulation over a period of five years. Instead of portraying itself as a body that promoted overseas employment as a means of economic development, the SMA, and the POEA in particular, was recast as a state agency there to protect and advocate for the well-being of all OFWs. By adopting a neoliberal stance to labour migration through deregulation, the Philippine state created an environment where the Filipino labourer could become a globalized commodity.<sup>85</sup>

The role of the Philippine state and the SMA are integral to the process of increasing flows of labour migration. The role of the government in labour export is necessary to understand the process, as the movement of people across borders is far more circumscribed than

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<sup>83</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 64.

<sup>84</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 66.

<sup>85</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 68.

other material commodities. Through the process of deregulation, the Philippine state allowed trade in a commodity the POEA claims they are ‘blessed’ with: surplus human labour. This diction effectively hides the causes behind the excess labour including colonialism, inequitable land distribution, export and cash-crop oriented economy. Speaking of human labour in terms of commodity makes it possible to explain large-scale labour migration simply resulting from a saturated labour economy. However, the reality is that there are insufficient economic opportunities for those wanting and needing work in the Philippines. Furthermore, this discourse attempts to deny any complicity of the Philippine government in creating and reproducing the conditions for global inequality. As James Tyner summarizes:

The POEA in effect has repositioned itself not as a tool for capital accumulation, but rather as an omniscient authority that seeks objectively to manage a natural, global, process. This objectivity, accordingly, masks the capitalist rationale underlying the promotion of overseas employment. Globalization is presented not as a process, but rather as cause; the Philippine state, subsequently, is presented not as an active agent, but as a neutral mediator.<sup>86</sup>

Agencies such as the POEA have the role of authorizing through training and documenting migrants. Robyn Robyn Magalit argues that this authorizing role is needed because the transnational flows of labour are reliant on mutual trust between states. This trust is built by three functions of the state. The first is offering programs such as the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority that trains workers in the profession they will be engaged in. The second is to assure for receiving countries the moral character of Filipino workers by background checks through the Philippine National Police. Third, the state agency verifies that the worker is

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<sup>86</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 76.

a healthy body able to perform manual labour.<sup>87</sup> By certifying workers to be sufficiently prepared to work abroad, the Philippine state assures that this trust with receiving nations is maintained.<sup>88</sup>

Through the state's role of authorizing Filipino workers, host countries are provided with a body of labour that is guaranteed to be sufficiently disciplined and prepared. However, to properly benefit from this, the state also engages in market missions to sell their precious commodity of excess labour power. As with any commodity, Filipino labourers are branded with specific traits that possible employers would find attractive. This includes, Rodriguez argues, a peculiar racialization of the Filipino by portraying them as fundamentally docile, loyal, and hard working. Further, the work force is gendered, with women specifically marketed for traditionally gendered jobs such as maids or nannies.<sup>89</sup>

A key component of marketing Filipino labour is what Rodriguez calls "immigration intelligence."<sup>90</sup> This entails targeted market research that determines where new labour markets are opening that Filipino labourers can be placed within. When opportunities are identified, the state then proactively pursues them with diplomatic missions to host countries. These missions include meetings with potential employers in the host country, as well as discussions with government officials on allowing migrants entry.<sup>91</sup> These marketing missions travel to countries like Taiwan, Israel, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, Japan, the United Emirates, and Canada. The variety of target countries that these missions travel to, Rodriguez argues, demonstrates the global reach that the Philippine brokerage state has developed. Furthermore,

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<sup>87</sup> Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 48-49.

<sup>88</sup> Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 21-22.

<sup>89</sup> Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 52.

<sup>90</sup> Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 22.

<sup>91</sup> Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 59.



she states that the neoliberal notion of labour brokerage inherently suggests the role that the state-led ‘labour diplomacy’ plays in exporting migrant labour.<sup>92</sup> Similar to what James Tyner argued, the state’s role in actively seeking markets for export indicate that it does not take a passive role, but is rather constantly producing and reproducing the process of global migration.

The Philippine state not only fosters the movement of Filipinos through the institutionalization of the labour migration, but also creates an image of the ideal overseas worker in the social imaginary of the nation, which Anna Romina Guevarra calls an “ethos of labour migration.”<sup>93</sup> This ethos, which is characterized by a willingness to migrate and a belief that overseas employment is the key to a better future, was fostered by the colonial history of the Philippines and has been intensified by recent partnerships between states and employment agencies. Guevarra argues that the typical discourse of the Philippines being home to a “*natural* source of *ideal* labor,”<sup>94</sup> resulting from a recovering economy, “does not take into account the varied mechanisms that propel this social imaginary and, specifically, the overseas migration of Filipino workers.”<sup>95</sup> The ethos of labour is important to grasp, she argues, because presents the Filipino people as an ideal labour force, based on racialized standards (discussed above), and overseas as their ideal employment. Guevarra seeks to deconstruct the claim that the Philippines is a natural source of labour by demonstrating the colonial trajectory of the Philippines, much as James Tyner and Robyn Magalit Rodriguez. Different from these two, however, she uses this past to argue that the presence of surplus labour is a direct result of structural realities that colonialism has imposed and that have been reproduced until the present.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 72.

<sup>93</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 4.

<sup>94</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 4.

<sup>95</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 4.

<sup>96</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 48.

The marketing of Filipino workers by the Philippine state has had consequences for gender issues as well. Discursive structures that categorized the Filipino in racialized and gendered terms created images of docile, caring, agile and compliant workers that would be used later by recruitment agencies to market Filipino workers abroad. Thus, while the current form of labour migration began to develop after World War II, especially after the 1970s, there are continuities that need to be addressed to understand the development and operation of the Philippine brokerage state. Racialized and gendered discourses were mobilized by the American colonial administration, as well as the American media,<sup>97</sup> to legitimate foreign policy and as a means of presenting the Filipino to the public. A popular image was that of the Filipino as child, with numerous caricatures portraying ‘Uncle Sam’ as being charged with the paternal care of the Filipino child, often depicted as naked or scantily dressed. Caricaturists in favour of annexing the Philippines used these images to argue that Filipinos were not prepared for self-rule and that American tutelage could guide them to maturity. At the same time, Filipinos were also portrayed as wild savages, signifying that if they *were* capable of civilizing, they were by no means civil in their current state, reaffirming the need for American occupation.<sup>98</sup>

In presenting the Philippines as a nation in need of guidance, images of women were also used to depict the Filipino. In addition to placing women in the periphery of nation building as being caregivers confined to the domicile, leaving the creation of the Philippines to men (either American or Filipino), women were presented as docile and meek in the face of (male) authority.<sup>99</sup> Many of the images of women presented in imperial caricatures reflected the

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<sup>97</sup> Servando D. Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire: Race and gender images and the American colonization of the Philippines* (Diliman, Quezon City: The University of the Philippines Press, 2006); Julie A. Tuason, “The Ideology of Empire in National Geographic Magazine’s Coverage of the Philippines, 1898-1908,” *Geographical Review* 89 no. 1 (Jan., 1999), 34-53.

<sup>98</sup> Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire*, 43-59.

<sup>99</sup> Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire*, 186.

presentation of the ideal Anglo-Saxon women,<sup>100</sup> and although women are presented prominently in these cartoons, it is in no means an empowering presentation. These figures of women, moreover, were mobilized to portray the success and victories of male administrators and soldiers, creating the image of woman as the embodiment and result of peace. These women were used, as Halili, Jr., argues “to depict women as men’s submissive” helpers.<sup>101</sup> This presentation of the Filipino woman as being docile and meek in the face of male superiors is important to note, as it is an image used in contemporary attempts to sell Philippine (female) labour.

Brochures published by the POEA with the intent of selling commodified Filipino labour creates images of Filipino workers who are known for their “characteristic ingenuity, innovative spirit, skill and dexterity” and benefit from a government sponsored education that “instills not only skills development but the right attitude towards work.”<sup>102</sup> Such a “right attitude towards work” often means docility, acquiescence and obedience. These discourses surrounding Filipino workers, posited by both government agencies such as POEA and private recruitment agencies, reassure potential clients that the Philippines is the source of a naturally crafted workforce and that, through government training programs, “disposable Philippine workers, women (and men), can nevertheless be quickly and easily replenished by a reserve arm of Philippine labor at the ready for deployment around the world.”<sup>103</sup> One POEA pamphlet states that Philippine medical workers are preferred because of their “strong desire to heal and help people.” Rodriguez compares this with an interview she had with a POEA official who stated that “Filipinas have a

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<sup>100</sup> Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire*, 186.

<sup>101</sup> Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire*, 195.

<sup>102</sup> Cited in Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 50.

<sup>103</sup> Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 52-53.

warmth and care that people like.”<sup>104</sup> These essentialized discourses of Filipino women completely neglects, however, the historic focus on training and hiring Filipino nurses, initially for the U.S., and the direct result this has had on the production of nurses in the Philippines.

Halili, Jr. demonstrated that pro-annexation caricaturists promoted an image of a submissive, subservient and docile woman to serve as man’s submissive helper.<sup>105</sup> This colonial relationship of subservience, acquiescence and servility has become key marketing tools in process of attracting foreign employers. This image of an ideal woman is replicated in recruitment pamphlets that depict physically fit and attractive (female) bodies. This emphasis on “beautiful bodies” conforms to an often over-looked motivation for hiring foreign workers as a status symbol for the employer.<sup>106</sup> He points to the fact that Filipino domestic workers are preferred over Sri Lankan women by employers in Italy and Jordan, and that additional corporeal information such as height, age and weight are provided by employment agencies to potential clients. James Tyner argues that these physical profiles are not only related to job performance and that, indeed, something more than labour power is being purchased. Just as the colonial woman served the (colonial) male master in American caricatures the Philippines, so is the labouring woman depicted by labour agencies as serving her male employer as a docile worker and status symbol.

The regular practice of sending remittances to the Philippines from abroad is largely responsible for the Philippine economy and its continuing under-developed labour market remaining afloat. As E. San Juan Jr. has argued, the so-called ‘modern day heroes’ have allowed

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<sup>104</sup> Cited in Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 61.

<sup>105</sup> Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire*, 195.

<sup>106</sup> Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 69.

the Filipino oligarchy, comprising less than one percent of the population, to continue living in luxury and privilege.<sup>107</sup> In 2004, Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) sent \$8.5 billion (USD), equal to half the country's national budget, while in 2008 they remitted \$15.65 billion (USD). As seen in Fig. 1.2, this figure has increased annually to a value of \$27.9 billion (USD). The 2016 annual report of the *Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas*, the Philippine Central Bank, stated that numerous positive developments in the Philippine economy, including private consumption, household savings, and foreign exchange gains.<sup>108</sup> The remittances have produced more money than tourism or the banana industry, which is the third largest in the world. In 2006, remittances were five times higher than direct foreign investments and were valued at over half the international reserves of the Philippines. Of the billions of dollars that are remitted, none are committed to national projects such as industrial or agricultural developments, but rather are used to pay off the foreign debt and "subsidizes the wasteful spending" of the political elite.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> San Juan, Jr., "Overseas Filipino Workers," 100.

<sup>108</sup> Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas, *2016 Annual Report*. [Manila], 2017.  
<http://www.bsp.gov.ph/downloads/publications/2016/annrep2016.pdf>

<sup>109</sup> San Juan, Jr., "Overseas Filipino Workers," 100

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Remittances (1000s USD\$)<sup>110</sup></b>	18,762,989	20,116,992	21,391,333	22,984,035	24,628,058	25,606,830	26,899,840
<b>GDP (1000s USD\$)<sup>111</sup></b>	199,591,000	224,143,000	250,092,000	271,836	284,585,000	292,774,000	304,889,000

Fig. 1.2. Remittances to the Philippines, 2010-2017.

The flows of Filipino immigration have significant gendered experiences, especially in the realm of labour migration. There has been significant work on Filipina nurses, domestic workers, and caregivers which emphasize how gendered and sexualized notions of Asian women have affected their recruitment and migration.<sup>112</sup> Guevarra has noted that the discursive construction of Filipina workers by the Philippine state and recruitment agencies relies upon an image of productive femininity that gives women an “assumed predisposition and suitability for performing nursing or domestic work.”<sup>113</sup> The Western image of the docile, doting Asian woman has been coopted by the Philippine state migratory apparatus as a “naturalized view” of Filipinas having “specific racialized and gendered behavioural attributes that determine their work ethic.”<sup>114</sup> The Philippine state and the system of recruitment agencies have cultivated an attractive image to labour markets around the world by selling “*Filipinas* [through] a discourse of productive femininity rooted in a culturally essentialist logic in which the Philippines is a

<sup>110</sup> Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas, *Overseas Filipinos' Cash Remittances*.

<http://www.bsp.gov.ph/statistics/keystat/ofw2.htm>, accessed 16 December 2018

<sup>111</sup> World Bank, *World Bank Open Data*. <https://data.worldbank.org/>, accessed 16 December 2018.

<sup>112</sup> Choy, *Empire of Care*; Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*; Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*; Deirdre McKay, *Filipina Identities: Geographies of social integration/exclusion in the Canadian metropolis* (Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, 2002); Bakan and Stasiulis, *Not One of the Family*; Bonifacio,

*Pinay on the Prairies*. Filipino men are not immune from these gendered constructions, either, whom are marketed as ideal seafarers. (Steven C. McKay, “Filipino Sea Men: Constructing masculinities in an ethnic labour niche,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33, no. 4 (2007): 617–33.)

<sup>113</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 124.

<sup>114</sup> Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 124.

*natural* source of a cost-effective and desirable workforce that has innate caregiving abilities, is multiskilled, and is educated.”<sup>115</sup>

As will be seen in the discussion of Filipina healthcare workers and garment workers in Chapter 2, these discourses were prevalent in Winnipeg recruitment schemes in the 1960s and 1970s. These discourses included other discussions, including Canadian perceptions of Filipino family values: officials sometimes expressed concern that if a Filipina were granted landing in Canada, she would sponsor her husband, children, and parents. As the Consulate General in Manila expressed in August 1968, the fear was that “most Filipino families are very large. A family of twelve is not unusual here.”<sup>116</sup> This reveals another reality about Filipino immigration to Winnipeg, and Canada more generally, wherein women were often the initiators of family migration through their recruitment into certain industries. As the health profession and garment industry were heavily dominated by female workers, they were in unique positions as being the ones to sponsor their families, including their spouses, into Canada.

In the Winnipeg community, this has led to a significant role of women in leadership positions. The Manitoba Association of Filipino Teachers has a rich history of female presidents, and today one of the community’s leading groups - the Philippine Heritage Council of Manitoba - is led by a woman, Perla Javate, who accompanied a group of Filipina garment workers from the Netherlands in the 1980s as a social worker. The Winnipeg community differs from other communities such as Toronto and Vancouver as the Live-in Caregiver Program has had a relatively little role in the community’s development. While the program has changed

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<sup>115</sup> Gueverra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 125. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>116</sup> Canada. Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 4 October 1968.

significantly over the decades,<sup>117</sup> the outline of the program is that a caregiver - most predominantly women<sup>118</sup> - work in Canada on a contract with a private employer, and after two years are eligible to become permanent residents. This has been the immigration path for around twenty-five percent of Filipino immigrants in Toronto and Vancouver, but in Winnipeg has accounted for around two or three percent.<sup>119</sup>

### **Liberalizing Canada's Immigration, 1962-1967**

The development of the Philippine SMA coincided with the liberalizing of Canada's immigration policies, which removed barriers based upon one's race or country of origin. Prior to the significant reforms made to Canada's immigration selection policies, an applicant's ethnicity and place of origin were major factors in who was permitted entry. Asians, as well as other non-white applicants, were heavily prejudiced in this system and were subject to exclusionary laws. In 1885, the Canadian government introduced the Chinese Immigration Act in response to pressure from British Columbia, which had seen an influx of Chinese immigrants following the gold rush and expansion of the railway. This act was to limit and restrict the entry of Chinese to Canada by implementing a head-tax of \$50, increasing incrementally to \$500 by 1903.<sup>120</sup> Those who could pay the tax, however, could still enter Canada and continued pressure from British Columbia led to the passage of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, which

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<sup>117</sup> Agnes Calliste, "Canada's Immigration Policy and Domesticity from the Caribbean: The second domestic scheme," *Socialist Studies* 5 (1989): 5-8; Rina Cohen, "A Brief History of Racism in Immigration Policies for Recruiting Domesticity," *Canadian Woman Studies* 14, no. 2 (1994): 86-89; Abigail Bakan & Daiva Stasiulis, eds., *Not One of the Family*; Rina Cohen, "'Mom is a Stranger'."

<sup>118</sup> In 2014, there were about 11,500 women in the program, while there were less than 1,000 men. ("Canada's Live-in Caregivers," Centre for Global Social Policy, 2016. Accessed 14 November 2018. <http://cgsp-cpsm.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/LCP-Fact-Sheet-Sources.pdf>.)

<sup>119</sup> Kelly, *Understanding Integrational Social Mobility*, 11.

<sup>120</sup> Knowles, *Strangers at our Gates*, 71-73.



outright forbade the entry of Chinese to Canada, except for strict exemptions like members of the diplomatic corps, children of Canadian parents, and merchants with a certain amount of invested interest in Canada.<sup>121</sup>

The Points System of 1967 eliminated overt racial discrimination through increased value given to the nomination of relatives already in Canada, and the emphasis of employable skills instead of race or geographic origin.<sup>122</sup> While many have criticized the Points System for excluding immigrants from developing countries who have less access to education and training required to enter Canada,<sup>123</sup> this policy represented a fundamental shift in values of the Canadian government away from attempting to maintain a white, Anglo ‘character’ of Canada to supplying needed skills to the growing Canadian labour market. Between 1962, when Canada began recovering from a recession that had begun in 1958, and 1973, there were high levels of economic growth along with low levels of unemployment, creating acute labour demands in burgeoning industries such as manufacturing, mechanical, managerial, professional, technical, and clerical occupations.<sup>124</sup> In 2010, the Philippines surpassed China and India as the top source country for immigrants. In this year, the Philippines accounted for 38,614 immigrants - jumping from 28,572 the previous year. As seen in Fig. 1.3, the Philippines remained the dominant source country from 2010 to 2015, except for 2013.

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<sup>121</sup> Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 136.

<sup>122</sup> Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 195.

<sup>123</sup> Yasmeen Abu-Laban, “Welcome/STAY OUT: The contradiction of Canadian integration and immigration policies at the millennium,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol. 30, no. 3 (1998b): 190-211.

<sup>124</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 352-354.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Philippines</b>	18,400	19,833	24,884	28,572	38,614	36,759	34,301	29,532	40,032	50,846
<b>India</b>	33,773	28,731	28,257	29,452	34,226	27,488	30,920	33,078	38,330	39,530
<b>China</b>	33,493	27,630	30,031	29,622	30,381	28,491	33,011	34,115	24,626	19,533
<b>Iran</b>	7,481	6,974	6,474	6,581	7,478	7,479	7,525	11,288	16,772	11,669
<b>Pakistan</b>	13,128	10,123	8,984	7,215	6,812	7,467	11,208	12,611	9,113	11,330

Fig. 1.3. Canada - Permanent Residents by source country.<sup>125</sup>

These changes resulted from decades of calls for a more liberal approach to immigration, both domestically and externally. In addition to this, religious and community organizations were influential in lobbying the government and generating public support for changes to immigration policies.<sup>126</sup> It was similarly a foundational moment in the history of Filipino immigration to Canada, as it nearly coincided with the sharp decline of the Philippine economy in the early 1970s, which generated masses of economic migrants. Strong diplomatic relationships between the Philippines and Canada facilitated these flows of Filipinos to Canada through the Philippine SMA, and bilateral labour agreements known as Memoranda of Understandings (MOU) with various Canadian provinces. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in the Philippines has eleven such MOUs, of which four are with Canadian provinces (Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan).<sup>127</sup> Not only is the number significant, but these

<sup>125</sup> Statistics Canada, Census Program for various years.

<sup>126</sup> Trebilcock and Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 379; Stephanie Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest: Defending North American citizens of Japanese ancestry, 1942-49* (Vancouver: Univer Press, 2008); Stephanie Bangarth, “‘We Are Not Asking You to Open Wide the Gates for Chinese Immigration’: The Committee for the Repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act and early human rights activism in Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review* 84, no. 3 (2003): 395–422.

<sup>127</sup> Philippines, Department of Labor and Employment, “List of Existing Philippine Bilateral Labor Agreements.” <http://ilab.dole.gov.ph/app/webroot/js/ckfinder/jfiles/blas%20hiring%20recruitment-02Dec11.pdf> (Accessed 10 August 2017).

MOUs are unique because the other seven agreements are on the national level - the Philippines only has such bilateral agreements at the provincial level with Canada. Philippine immigrants have typically been considered attractive applicants under the Points System, because they were skilled in English (because of American colonialism), and often had the education and training needed in Canada's labour market. For this reason, the dramatic increase of the Filipino population in Winnipeg from the 1960s to the 1980s resulted from shortages of workers in the healthcare and garment industries.

### **Archives and Sources**

Three major archival sources have been used in this dissertation and can be categorized as government-generated records and ethnic media. Government records, from such bodies such as the Canadian federal government, Manitoban provincial government, and the Philippine federal government, were accessed at multiple sites. The Library and Archives of Canada (LAC) provided enormously valuable resources on the labour migrations of Filipino healthcare professionals and garment workers, and the work that went on behind the scenes to facilitate these movements. There has been some community-level research done on these movements that have relied upon personal interviews.<sup>128</sup> These are valuable contributions to the history of the community, and my archival work is presented as complimenting these existing narratives by providing some of the structural background within which these personal experiences were made possible. Records at the LAC have also yielded fruitful materials on Canada's interstate relations

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<sup>128</sup> For example, Dalayoan et al., *The First Filipino Migrants in Manitoba*.

with the Philippines (Chapter 1) and the racist reception of early Filipino immigrants (Chapter 2).

The Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM) and the Manitoba Legislative Library (MLL) have also provided useful documents, although they have also offered some challenges. Record creators such as the Manitoba Association of Licensed Practical Nurses were accessed through the PAM, and the MLL supplied access to all copies of the *Silangan* newspaper (Chapter 3). However, I experienced challenges with the PAM in accessing sources due to processing times for privacy protected documents. A major request for files related to Manitoba healthcare took nearly a year to get settled; this was not a result of the efforts of all staff involved, but rather had to do with an unfortunate timing as staff were being shuffled. These materials will be worked into the manuscript that will arise from this dissertation.

In addition to Canadian archives, attempts were made to conduct archival research in the Philippines in the spring of 2016. While progress was made, I was presented with several challenges. First and foremost is the decentralized and currently disorganized status of Philippine archival holdings. Whereas Canada has had an archival law conducting federal bodies to deposit records with the Library and National Archives of Canada (LAC) since 1872, no such act existed in the Philippines until 2007.<sup>129</sup> By the time I travelled to Manila in May 2016, there was still some confusion regarding how this centralization was to be conducted, what documents were to be deposited, and where these records were to be stored. In conversation with one archivist, I was told that documents had previously been stored by the agency's library unit, and that he was not entirely sure what holdings were in their possession. However, all of those who I worked

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<sup>129</sup> Republic of the Philippines, "Republic Act No. 9470: National Archives of the Philippines Act of 2007," 13th Congress, 3rd Special Session of the Congress of the Philippines, 2007, RA 9470. <http://nationalarchives.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/National-Archives-of-the-Phils.-Act-of-2007-R.A.-9470.pdf>.

with in the Philippines were extremely helpful and were able to secure access for me to some sources, such as Philippine Consular and Embassy reports in Canada, and various reports from the Commission on Filipinos Overseas. While these sources have proven to be helpful, as a researcher I was not given the kind of access that one might expect in the LAC.

## **Chapter Outlines**

The four chapters of this dissertation can be grouped into two different categories. The first two - Canadian-Philippine Relations (1912-1972) and the history of the Winnipeg Filipino community - provide the historical background to the dissertation, and indeed to future research on the community. As this is the first in-depth historical study of Filipino immigration to Canada, it has been necessary to devote significant space to describe this community's history. Chapter 1 lays out some of the early contacts that Canada had with the Philippines, largely conducted through the colonial government of the United States, and focuses on an event Canadian government officials termed the "Philippine Question."<sup>130</sup> Beginning in 1959, the government of the Philippines prevented the movement of Canadian businessmen into the Philippines in retaliation to Canada's racist exclusion of Filipino immigrants. As this chapter lays out, this was part of a wave of post-colonial nationalism in Asia that signaled to Canadian officials that drastic changes to immigration policy, as well as foreign relations, were required if Canada were to have any influence on the international stage. Chapter 2 lays out the early history of the Winnipeg Filipino community into the 1980s. At the outset of this project, I had intended to extend this research up until the present day, however, as much of this research was original,

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<sup>130</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs, RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1-2. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 24 November 1952.

the chronological scope had to be limited until the 1980s. Recent critiques from within the community (discussed in Chapter 4) have stated that too much focus is given to these early generations of Filipino immigrants, and that more attention should be devoted to recent immigrants, as well as second- and third-generation Filipino Canadians. I fully support this call; however, I have been forced to acknowledge that covering this entire history is too much for this project. As such, I have devoted Chapter 2 to providing the historical background to the movement of healthcare professionals and garment workers. These two groups were integral to the demographic makeup of the early Filipino community. The movement of healthcare professionals brought highly educated medical doctors, nurses, and others, creating a rather higher class makeup. As the community developed, organizations such as the Philippine Association of Manitoba became dominated by this group, meaning that when the second group of blue-collar garment workers began to arrive in the 1960s, there were difficulties integrating. Indeed, as Chapter 3 details, this trouble led to major community conflict in 1980. This chapter uncovers the “behind the scenes” history that made the immigration of Filipinos during this period possible and lays down foundations for further scholarship.

Chapters 3 and 4 are thematic discussions of the community and reveal some of the potential that Filipino Canadian history offers. Implicit to both chapters is the theme of transnationalism. Early outlines for this dissertation provided for a standalone chapter on transnationalism, however it became apparent that this theme was infused throughout the entire dissertation as, on many levels, this community is inherently transnational. Chapter 3, on the *Silangan* newspaper and the crafting of a Filipino Canadian identity, places community debates and discussions on life in Canada *and* life in the Philippines within the medium of ethnic media, which acted as a sort of transnational space within which Canadian and Philippine identities were

fused as one and the same. Chapter 4 on history and memory analyzes a museum exhibit celebrating fifty years of Filipino immigration to Winnipeg, a celebration which not only pondered the meaning of a Filipino Canadian identity but questioned what role a Philippine identity had in this conception.

Together, these chapters provide two valuable contributions. First, they offer a preliminary and critical historical analysis of Canada's early relationship with the Philippines and Filipino immigration. This dissertation argues that inter-state relations have been crucial to the dramatic growth of the Filipino community since the 1960s. It also provides the foundation for future research, such as the role of family reunification and of the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program, which was implemented in 1999. Additionally, this dissertation focuses on only two labour groups - healthcare professionals and garment workers - although many other professions were involved in these early migrations. Teachers, for instance, were recruited from the Philippines to teach in Manitoban schools. A notable silence in this dissertation as well has been temporary Filipino workers, of which there are currently thousands in Manitoba, and live-in caregivers, whom have received little study.<sup>131</sup>

A second contribution of these chapters is to lay out an analysis of a community that is, in many ways, inherently transnational and bounded to the Philippines and the Philippine diaspora. This became especially clear when analyzing the *Silangan* newspaper. Not only did readers write to the newspaper discussing questions regarding life in Canada, Filipino identity, and events in the Philippines, but the newspaper itself maintained connections with Filipinos across the world. In April 1979, the mayor of Manila, Ramon D. Bagatsing, wrote to the newspaper, congratulating it for its success and circulation in Manila, and praising the twinning of Manila

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<sup>131</sup> Catherine J. Fillmore, "Experiences of Migration, Settlement and Work among Filipino Domestic Workers," *Oral History Forum* 16-17 (1997): 39-70.

and Winnipeg as sister cities.<sup>132</sup> In a striking Letter to the Editor, a Filipino wrote from Saskatchewan to the Winnipeg-based *Silangan* to express her appreciation as she turned to the newspaper for news from the Visayas and Mindanao in the Philippines.<sup>133</sup> When approached from the perspective of Filipino immigrants, it did not matter what province they were in - they viewed themselves as part of a larger community that spanned the world. This dissertation provides a glimpse at the Winnipeg community and its place within the Filipino diaspora.

## Conclusion

Filipinos living in Winnipeg have never simply been Filipinos living in Winnipeg. They have remained connected to other communities across the world and have maintained strong and active connections to the Philippines. The Winnipeg Filipino community provides opportunities for a rich examination of these transnational connections, while also revealing a complex community dynamic. This community was by no means one of consensus - few communities are - but was one that at times became embroiled in controversy. However, these disagreements and arguments revealed a common interest in the Filipino community, the integration of the community into Canadian society, and a sustained concern with events in the Philippines. Immigration to Canada by no means meant a severing of ties to the Philippines, nor did it mean that the Philippines was kept at arms-length. In many cases, Filipinos living in Winnipeg maintained an active concern for affairs in the Philippines, and even expressed desire to affect change in their home communities.

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<sup>132</sup> Mayor Ramond D. Bagatsing, "Greetings from Manila..." *Silangan* April 1979, 3.

<sup>133</sup> Belen Juma, "Letter to the Editor," *Silangan* June 1977, 6.



## Chapter 1: The Pearl and Canada: Canadian-Philippine Relations, 1912-1972

### Introduction

The Pacific Ocean has long held an important place in Canada's history, which is often overlooked in a national memory that tends to gaze towards the Atlantic. Trade networks from the Northwest Coast brought sea-otter and beaver pelts from the Hudson's Bay Company across the Pacific to Canton in China.<sup>134</sup> Chinese workers from the American west coast participated in the 1858 gold rush and remained afterward working in the coastal industries of what would become British Columbia in 1871. However, the Pacific region has contributed to Canada's development beyond early economic activity. As John Price notes in *Orienting Canada*, "The Transpacific has played a foundational role in Canadian and world politics in ways that are too often neglected and/or are poorly understood."<sup>135</sup> Price ascribes this neglect as a result of an "avoidance syndrome" that has originated from Canada's discomfort with its racist past. This discomfort further affected its international policies well into the post-war period. In this, Price references Henry Yu's notion of "Pacific Canada," which "refers to a perspective on Canada's past, present, and future that highlights the ways in which the nation has been and increasingly will be shaped by its engagement with Pacific rather than Atlantic world."<sup>136</sup> Pacific Canada is

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<sup>134</sup> James R. Gibson, *Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods: The maritime fur trade of the northwest coast, 1785-1841* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

<sup>135</sup> John Price, *Orienting Canada: Race, empire, and the transpacific* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 2.

<sup>136</sup> Henry Yu, "Global Migrants and the New Pacific Canada," *International Journal* 64 no.4 (Autumn 2009), 1013-1014.

not a geographical synonym for Western Canada, but rather is a “perspective on our past, a way to refract our history not solely through the prism of trans-Atlantic migration and settlement.”<sup>137</sup>

Both Yu and Price refer to this Pacific history of Canada as an “uncommon past” which is neglected, if not erased, from a “common” national memory focused on the Atlantic.<sup>138</sup>

This notion of refracting the history of Pacific Canada resonates with this study. Not only does this and subsequent chapters seek to uncover and place the history of Filipino immigration to Canada, but it responds to projects such as those by Henry Yu and John Price by inserting Filipinos in the discussion of Pacific Canada and Asian Canadian studies. There is a growing body of historical scholarship on Asians in Canada, but Filipinos have yet to be included, which is where this dissertation’s major intervention is situated. Yet, work done by those such as Yu and Price lay the conceptual path of doing this. While much of the dissertation examines the experiences Filipinos have had in Canada, this chapter provides the crucial background discussion of what allowed that immigration to begin in the first place. To assume that it was the Points System of 1967 that led to immigration from the Philippines oversimplifies the narrative, and even erases the agency that the Philippines exercised in the period before Canadian immigration reforms in the 1960s.

This study looks at the trajectory of Canadian-Philippine political relations and their import on Filipino immigration. While tracing the developments of diplomatic relations, beginning with a nineteenth century Filipino revolutionary’s interest in Canada’s dominion status with Britain and ending in 1972 when Canada opened its embassy in Manila, this chapter examines an issue that arose in 1949 with the Philippine Reciprocity Bill. This bill, which forbade visas to foreign nationals whose countries did not reciprocate, reveals the political

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<sup>137</sup> Yu, “Refracting Pacific Canada,” 5-6.

<sup>138</sup> Yu, “Refracting Pacific Canada,” 6; Price, *Orienting Canada*, 2.

maneuvering of Philippine officials which put pressure on Canada to ease its anti-Asian immigration policies in the period following the Second World War. This move by the Philippines was strategic as it affected Canadian businessmen traveling to the Philippines and missionaries who were active in the largely Catholic nation. Both groups were vocal in the pressure towards the Canadian government. This context is crucial, not only because contemporary flows of Filipinos into Canada have benefitted from several political arrangements with the Philippines, but also because the Philippines had a formative role in Canada's move to liberalize its immigration policies in the 1960s. The Reciprocity Bill was a retaliatory move by the Philippine government against Canadian restrictions of Asian immigration. The liberalization of Canada's immigration policy in the 1967 Points System was not an altruistic move initiated solely by Canada's good will, but in part resulted from foreign pressures to abandon its tradition of racial exclusion. The Philippines had an important role in this development as its attractive post-war economy gave it political leverage against what Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King in 1947 labeled a matter of domestic policy.<sup>139</sup>

While there remained ample resistance to changes in immigration policy, growing concerns regarding the international image of the country and economic interests in Asia made Canada vulnerable to such pressures and criticisms. The Reciprocity Bill pitted the Department of Citizenship and Immigration against the Department of External Affairs, the latter of which predicted international political fallout from a continuing ban on Asian immigration based solely upon racial background or geographic origin. In essence, the reciprocity issue brought the aging 'White Canada' policy into conflict with the image of itself Canada tried to cultivate following

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<sup>139</sup> Angelika E. Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy? Canadian Immigration Policy and the Admission of Germans, 1945–50." *Canadian Historical Review* 74 no. 2 (1993): 226-263.

the Second World War as an alternative to a domineering alliance with the United States for nations like the Philippines.

### **Canada-Philippine Relations**

This dissertation asserts that the development of the Winnipeg Filipino community is not merely tied to push-and-pull factors, such as economic and labour conditions in both the Philippines and Canada, but that international relations have also had a significant role, as argued by Steven Hugh Lee.<sup>140</sup> Patricia Daenzer has noted how an “affair between nations” facilitates the movement of Filipinos into Canada to work in exploitative professions such as care giving.<sup>141</sup> While discussing the state of affairs in the 1990s, when Canada’s Live-in Caregiver program was implemented along fairly unequal lines, Daenzer indicates the role that interstate relations had on “The entry of Filipino women into Canada...due to a compromise struck between the government of Canada and the Philippines.”<sup>142</sup> While much research on migration in recent decades has sought to emphasize the role of the individual in migration patterns, as well as labour and economic conditions, it should not be forgotten that diplomatic arrangements are necessary to facilitate immigration, especially at the high levels that Filipino immigration has reached since the 1967 Points System. This should especially be clear given the extreme reaches that the Philippine State Migratory Apparatus, discussed in the introduction, goes to research and secure labour market opportunities for its citizens.

Furthermore, as Lee pointed out in his synthesis of Canadian-Asian literature, “The international context of Canadian attitudes toward Asians has largely been ignored by Canadian

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<sup>140</sup> Steven Hugh Lee, “The Canadian-Asian Experience: An Introductory Synthesis,” *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, 1995, 221.

<sup>141</sup> Daenzer, “An Affair Between Nations,” 103.

<sup>142</sup> Daenzer, “An Affair Between Nations,” 86.

historians”,<sup>143</sup> something which John Price has recently noted and responded to with his book *Orienting Canada*.<sup>144</sup> However, twenty years after Lee’s call, this is still largely the case. With the development of Asia’s international presence and rise of immigration to Canada after the 1960s, it is important to bring together fields traditionally apart, such as Canada’s immigration history and diplomatic history. Lee states that this international “dimension is fundamental to any attempt to situate the immigrant experience within a wider dimension of historical understanding.”<sup>145</sup>

This section traces the development of Canada’s official relationship with the Philippines, starting with informal bonds in the pre-Second World War period, the important period following the end of the Pacific War until 1967, and the diplomatic bonds that have arisen since the Points System. Lee argued that “Canada’s policies toward Asians altered dramatically,”<sup>146</sup> due in large part to the Cold War, however, much of this was in regard to Asians living in Canada. For those wanting to come to Canada, it remained extremely difficult. This reticence is despite the fact that the Philippines very quickly arose as a democratic ally in Asia to counter the Soviet Union. Looking at international relations in the post-war period reveals the degree to which Canadian policy remained racist and restrictive until 1962.

In recent decades, critical geographers such as Harald Bauder have argued for the merits of a “democratic border” that “regulates migration in a democratic manner [and] requires envisioning the border as decoupled from the state.”<sup>147</sup> Some advocate for an open-border system that “affirms the territorial nature of political organizations and the existence of territorial

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<sup>143</sup> Lee, “Canadian-Asian Experience,” 200.

<sup>144</sup> Price, *Orienting Canada*.

<sup>145</sup> Lee, “Canadian-Asian Experience,” 200.

<sup>146</sup> Lee, “Canadian-Asian Experience,” 216.

<sup>147</sup> Harald Bauder, “Toward a Critical Geography of the Border: Engaging the Dialectic of Practice and Meaning,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 101, no. 5 (September 1, 2011): 1135;

borders”, while others push for a no-border system that would eliminate borders entirely.<sup>148</sup> Other approaches to borders, such as social network analysis, which focus on migrant social networks, might overlook the current importance of borders by implying migrant networks “reach across space without the impediment of borders”.<sup>149</sup> In the current international system of nation-states, though, the border - while having multiple meanings<sup>150</sup> - plays a major role in restricting and controlling immigration. As borders operate at the level of the state, furthermore, they are often contested sites of international diplomacy. As John Price argues in the context of limiting general Asian immigration to Canada, “Gaining greater control over immigration demanded a higher diplomatic profile.”<sup>151</sup> In this way, Canada’s international relations, and attempts to control immigration through negotiation, were also an extension of Canada’s domestic policy that discriminated against Asian immigration.<sup>152</sup>

In the context of this analysis of Canada-Philippine relations, not only will it become clear that Canadian regulations directly affected the numbers of Filipinos able to enter Canada, but also that the Philippines, through its economic leverage, exerted diplomatic pressure to change Canada’s restrictive policies against Asian immigration. The Philippines was able to apply this pressure because of Canadian business interests in the Philippines in the 1950s, which the Reciprocity Bill threatened by preventing the admission of Canadian nationals, but also because the growing post-war economy in Canada after the 1950s demanded more labour than domestic supply could provide. This chapter will demonstrate that the state maintains significant control over migrations, and that interstate relations are crucial to forging migration patterns.

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<sup>148</sup> Harald Bauder, “The Possibilities of Open and No Borders,” *Social Justice* 39, no. 4 (130) (2014): 76; Harald Bauder, “The Possibilities of Open and No Borders,” *Social Justice* 39, no. 4 (130) (2014): 76–96; Harald Bauder, *Migration Borders Freedom* (Taylor & Francis, 2016).

<sup>149</sup> Michael Samers, *Migration. Key Ideas in Geography*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), 114.

<sup>150</sup> Bauder, “Toward a Critical Geography of the Border.”

<sup>151</sup> Price, *Orienting Canada*, 20.

<sup>152</sup> Sauer, “A Matter of Domestic Policy?”

While the agency of immigrants remains significant, these relations created, in part, the structure within which choices were made by Filipino immigrants.

Direct relations with the Philippines did not begin until 1946 when Canada officially recognized the independence of the Philippines. Before this, any dealings with the Philippines would have been conducted through the American colonial administration. In this section, the term “Philippine Question” arises in two contexts, one from a proposed visit of Emilio Aguinaldo, a Filipino resistance leader who expressed views against American occupation, and the other from an issue surrounding immigration reciprocity between Canada and the Philippines. The second context, beginning in 1949, dominates this chapter and documents the conflict that arose when pre-war immigration policies based upon racist notions of assimilability clashed with a new world order that would see non-Western (that is, non-white) countries enter the global diplomatic arena. John Price argues that, in the realm of international relations, the Second World War allowed for layers of international relations, such as racism and empire, to be subsumed under the more pressing mission to defeat Japan<sup>153</sup> but “reasserted themselves”<sup>154</sup> after the war, including in the domestic realm of immigration. This resurgence was demonstrated by Mackenzie King’s statement in 1947 that reasserted Canada’s right to limit immigration from Asia so that the “fundamental character” of Canada remained firmly white.<sup>155</sup> As will be demonstrated, though, this view would be challenged by the Philippine government in 1949 and throughout the 1950s and would largely be untenable by the 1960s.

The issues that arose from this period emphasizes the context that John Price referred to as “the culmination of a historical process with local, transpacific, and global dimension

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<sup>153</sup> Price, *Orienting Canada*, 64.

<sup>154</sup> Price, *Orienting Canada*, 107.

<sup>155</sup> Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 163

involving questions of race as well as other dynamics.”<sup>156</sup> The Philippines’ response to the question of reciprocity demonstrated the agency it wielded in the immediate post-war period, and how nations like Canada were affected by post-colonial nationalisms. The Philippine Reciprocity Bill of 1949 was an exertion of Philippine agency as an independent country. The bill was described by the *Sunday Times* in Manila as being “indicative of this country’s ‘awakening to its right’,” and that it demonstrated the Philippine Bureau of Immigration’s willingness to show its “‘teeth’ in the enforcement of its policy of reciprocation.”<sup>157</sup> The initial apprehension of External Affairs, and refusal of the Department of Immigration to consider a quota system, make it clear the role that race still had in Canadian immigration policy. The process of opening Canada’s immigration to the world was a long process that required a paradigmatic shift in approach, driven in part by international pressures and Canada’s booming post-war economy. While the reciprocity issue did not bring about such a shift immediately, it was one of Canada’s first notices that the old system, to which Mackenzie King in 1947 clung, was no longer possible.

### **Pre-Second World War Relations**

Until 1946, Canada’s diplomatic relations with the Philippines were conducted through the American embassy, as the islands remained a colony of the U.S. Other than business and missionary activities, Canada did not maintain much interest in the Philippines, although its dominion status with the British empire drew the attention of some Filipino nationalists. In March 1912, newspapers in Canada reported briefly on a story that Emilio Aguinaldo, who had

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<sup>156</sup> Price, *Orienting Canada*, 4-5.

<sup>157</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 9 March 1952.



been a key figure in the Filipino resistance against the United States, was considering visiting Canada. As the news brief read:

Emelio [sic] Aguinaldo, the former leader of the Filipino insurgents, expects soon to visit Canada with a party of representative Filipinos, in order to study the working connection between the Dominion and Great Britain. He believes that a similar connection between the Philippines and the United States might be the best solution of the Philippine question.<sup>158</sup>

The “Philippine Question” in 1912 was the colonial relation between the Philippines and the United States, which in ways was similar to Canada and Great Britain. It appears that Aguinaldo, a champion of Filipino independence, was interested in the general autonomy that Canada had within the Dominion. Unfortunately, there is no follow up to this tantalizing story, and it is unknown if Aguinaldo made any visit. Nevertheless, it speaks to the early interest in Canada of a Filipino political elite, which felt a least some affinity with the political dynamics of the former colony of England.

While trade and investment between Canada and the Philippines were “negligible before the [Second World] war,” there were significant hopes for trade to grow with the Philippines as its post-war economy grew and the Philippines became one of Canada’s prime political and economic partners in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>159</sup> Life insurance companies such as Sun Life, Manufacturers Life, and Crown Life companies represented significant Canadian interests in the Philippines.<sup>160</sup> Legal requirements had been largely simple and straight-forward, as the Philippines was interested in attracting foreign capital investment, but in April 1949 the

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<sup>158</sup> “Aguinaldo will visit Dominion,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 17 March 1912.

<sup>159</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. “Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations.” 7 October 1949.

<sup>160</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. “Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations.” 7 October 1949.

Philippine Congress presented a bill that would require foreign insurance companies to invest 125,000 pesos (USD\$62,500) plus 30% of their legal reserves into Philippine organizations.<sup>161</sup> Such Canadian business interests were important for the post-war development of the Philippines. This was demonstrated in October 1949 when the Philippines began looking to countries such as Canada as sources of capital investment because they were afraid of “economic imperialism,”<sup>162</sup> such as experienced with the United States. These moves towards closer economic, and later political ties, were part of the Philippines’ move to decrease its reliance upon the United States. Another significant presence during this period were Canadian missionaries who were active in the predominantly Catholic nation. As will be seen later, both groups’ interests would be endangered in 1949 as the Philippine government cracked down on foreign nationals whose countries did not permit Filipino immigration, leading to pressures upon Canada to reform immigration policies.

Direct political connections between Canada and the Philippines were not initiated until after the Second World War, when Canada congratulated President Manuel Roxas on the Philippines’ recent independence from the United States,<sup>163</sup> at which time the federal government officially recognized the Philippines as an independent state.<sup>164</sup> Following the end of the Pacific War in 1946 with the defeat of Japan, the Philippines was promptly given

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<sup>161</sup> Conversion is based upon data for 1950 from PACIFIC Exchange Rate Service, “Foreign Currency Units per 1 U.S. Dollar, 1950-2016,” <http://fx.sauder.ubc.ca/etc/USDpages.pdf>, accessed 31 December 2018.

<sup>162</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. “Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations.” 7 October 1949.

<sup>163</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. “Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations.” 1 June 1946.

<sup>164</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. “Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations.” 12 August 1946.

independence from the United States on 4 July 1946.<sup>165</sup> At the request of the United States,<sup>166</sup> Canada was one of the first countries to acknowledge and congratulate the sovereignty of the Philippines, thus beginning a long path to international friendship and co-operation between the two countries. This relationship would begin to flourish in the 1960s and 1970s, a period characterized by a steep increase in Filipino immigration to Canada. The period between 1946 and the 1967 liberalization of Canada's immigration policies, however, would put a strain on the relationship with the Philippines as the independent Southeast Asian country began exerting its sovereignty through restricting immigration policies against Canadian businessmen and missionaries in retaliation for Canada's own racially restrictive practices towards Asian immigration.

### **The "Philippine Question", 1946-1967**

Canada's restrictive anti-Asian immigration policies, first established in the 1880s, were an attempt to limit or halt the movement of Asians to Canada. While national borders, and the selective and restrictive policies that accompany them, might seem natural, critical geography reveals that this modern definition is one that has developed over time, and reflects ideologies of particular historical moments.<sup>167</sup> Indeed, the policies of Canadian immigration have reflected various imaginations of what the Canadian nation should look like. The restrictive policies that restricted Asian, as well as other racialized groups, from Canada reflected the racist, xenophobic,

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<sup>165</sup> The United States attempted to make this date the anniversary of Philippine Independence, coinciding with that of the U.S. However, later governments changed the date to 12 June 1896, when Emilio Aguinaldo declared the Philippine Republic and independence from Spain.

<sup>166</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. "Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations." 31 May 1946.

<sup>167</sup> Bauder, "Toward a Critical Geography of the Border."

and exclusionary beliefs of the Canadian government. These policies focused mainly on Chinese migrants who first appeared along the west coast during the 1858 gold rush.<sup>168</sup> While the British Columbian parliament released resolutions in 1872 to discourage Asians in the workforce, leading to further immigration restrictions in 1876 and completely preventing work in the public sector in 1878, the federal government hesitated from outright banning Chinese immigration, and on two occasions disallowed B.C.'s immigration restrictions. The construction of the Canadian National Railway, which was seen as beneficial to B.C., benefitted from Chinese labour. The Canadian government believed that after the railway was completed, and available labour shortages disappeared, Chinese migrants would leave Canada - a miscalculation the government would later attempt to rectify with the 1885 Chinese Head Tax.<sup>169</sup> The government also hesitated because of concerns of international diplomacy, in particular the United Kingdom's relations with China.<sup>170</sup> Indeed, growing racial restrictions on Chinese in Canada and the United States fueled anti-Western, and anti-colonial, Chinese nationalism.

Popular sentiments were that Chinese and other Asian immigrants were "unassimilable," a vague claim seeming to imply that they were incapable of adjusting to life in Canada. Because many Chinese men - who were often the initiators of Chinese migrations in search of labour - were prevented from bringing their families or partners to Canada, the community that developed in Canada were largely bachelors.<sup>171</sup> This created social anxiety in some Canadians who saw their bachelorhood as a state of uncontrolled sexual tension, that presented a threat to Canadian - that is, white - women. Further stereotypes, such as an inclination to opium and other drug abuse,

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<sup>168</sup> John Munro, "B.C. and the 'Chinese evil'," *Journal of Canadian Studies* (1971), 42.

<sup>169</sup> Munro, "B.C. and the 'Chinese evil'," 43-44.

<sup>170</sup> Lee, "The Canadian-Asian Experience," 222.

<sup>171</sup> James W. St. G. Walker estimates that there were 279 Chinese men for 1 Chinese female. (James W. St. G. Walker, "A Case for Morality: The Quong Wing Files," in *On the Case*, eds. Franca Iacovetta & W. Mitchinson (1998), 209).

were used by government officials to argue in favour of restricting Chinese immigration. James W. St. G. Walker has called this “common sense” racism, that such stereotypes “were not generalizations based on limited experience: they could actually precede any direct experience at all.”<sup>172</sup> Furthermore, these were not simply a social construct but “legal artefacts”<sup>173</sup> as demonstrated by the Female Labour Act (1920) in Saskatchewan, which stated that “No person shall employ a white woman or girl in any capacity requiring her to reside or lodge in or to work in any restaurant or laundry, without obtaining a special license for the purpose from the municipality in which such restaurant or laundry is situated”.<sup>174</sup> Because many Chinese in Saskatchewan operated restaurants and laundries<sup>175</sup> this Act was seen as protecting white women from the “immoral influence of Chinese men.”<sup>176</sup>

Tensions over the presence of Asians in British Columbia have been divided between issues arising from employment competition and from racial prejudice. John Munro argues that Chinese workmen were caught in between “competing white economic interests”<sup>177</sup> and that racial arguments against their inclusion were a smokescreen to protect the rights of white workers. The Chinese became a “demagogue’s dream” of scapegoats for labour strife and were exploited by those with political motivations in B.C.<sup>178</sup> Gillian Creese and W. Peter Ward, though, both argue that labour competition is not sufficient to explain why early labour movements did not include racialized minority groups like Asians. Creese argued that “much of the Asian exclusionary sentiment had to do with them being constructed as ‘foreign’ and thus not

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<sup>172</sup> Walker, “A Case for Morality,” 217.

<sup>173</sup> Walker, “A Case for Morality,” 217.

<sup>174</sup> Saskatchewan. *The Female Employment Act, The Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan* 1920, c.185. <http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/freelaw/documents/english/statutes/historical/1920-CH-185.pdf>. Accessed 10 July 2017.

<sup>175</sup> Marshal, *Bachelor on the Prairies*.

<sup>176</sup> Walker, “A Case for Morality,” 204-205.

<sup>177</sup> Munro, “B.C. and the ‘Chinese evil’,” 49.

<sup>178</sup> Munro, “B.C. and the ‘Chinese evil’,” 50.

part of the Canadian labour body.”<sup>179</sup> Ward states that “economic strains, while in many instances important sources of racial conflict and prejudice, ultimately were subordinate to psychological tensions as the central locus of racial animosity.”<sup>180</sup>

The Chinese Head Tax was first implemented in 1885, and other policy changes in the coming decades worked to limit, if not cease, wider Asian immigration to Canada. The Continuous Journey clause of 1908 was an amendment to the Immigration Act that required immigrants to come directly from their country of origin without any prolonged stopover.<sup>181</sup> This was intended to prevent Indian immigrants, often arriving through Britain, from landing in Canada without implementing an outright ban. The Immigration Act of 1910 gave further discretionary powers to Cabinet through orders-in-council to regulate the volume and character of immigration.<sup>182</sup> Canada had also entered into a Gentleman’s Agreement with Japan (1910), in which Japan endeavoured to prevent the emigration of their citizens to Canada.<sup>183</sup> To ensure that Japanese were unable to enter Canada, the government banned immigration from Hawai’i, from where many Japanese were arriving in Canada.<sup>184</sup>

Following the end of the First World War in 1918, sentiments towards immigration hardened, partly in fears of a “red” communist tide following the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (1917) and because the fear that too much unemployment - which was assumed would happen if too many immigrants took jobs from Canadians - would lead to socialism.<sup>185</sup> In 1923, the

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<sup>179</sup> Gillian Creese, “Exclusion or Solidarity? Vancouver Workers Confront the ‘Oriental Problem’,” *BC Studies* 80 (1988-1989): 24-51.

<sup>180</sup> W. Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Towards Orientals in British Columbia* 2nd ed. (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1990), ix.

<sup>181</sup> Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 121.

<sup>182</sup> Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 110-112.

<sup>183</sup> Gregory A. Johnson and Galen Roger Perras, “A Menace to the Country and the Empire: Perceptions of the Japanese Military Threat to Canada before 1931,” in *Contradictory Impulses: Canada and Japan in the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 65.

<sup>184</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 145-148.

<sup>185</sup> Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 131-32.

Canadian government issued the Chinese Immigration Act which completely forbade the immigration of Chinese, although many continued to find ways to bypass these restrictions.<sup>186</sup> Throughout the Depression of the 1930s and the Second World War, Canada's immigration policies remained closed, except to wartime British refugees and POWs, but the end of the war marked the beginnings of changes in Canada's policies.<sup>187</sup> In 1950, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship was established, and was given more defined powers in the Immigration Act of 1952. While this act was not necessarily a step towards liberalization, it marked a streamlining of bureaucracy that would be necessary to deal with immigration. In the postwar period (1946-1962), there were two forces that would eventually liberalize Canadian immigration policy. First, the booming Canadian economy saw various sectors expand, especially in urban centers, that saw an increase demand for skilled and semi-skilled labour. Second, Canada's involvement in the international environment, which itself was changing, faced Canada with new pressures to liberalize its policies.<sup>188</sup>

While different stakeholders in Canada were becoming more open to liberalizing immigration policies, there was still resistance at high levels of government. In 1947, Prime Minister Mackenzie King defended Canada's restrictive immigration policy, stating that it was not a basic human right, but rather a matter of domestic policy.<sup>189</sup> Further, he stated that "The people of Canada do not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population...Any considerable alteration in the character of our population...Any considerable Oriental immigration would...be certain to give rise to social and

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<sup>186</sup> Lisa Mar, *Brokering Belonging*.

<sup>187</sup> Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 135-136.

<sup>188</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 316-317.

<sup>189</sup> Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 226-263.

economic problems.”<sup>190</sup> Trade and labour unions, which were traditionally in favour of limiting immigration, continued to advocate restraint. Testifying to the Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour (1946-1952), Percy Bengough of the Trade and Labour Congress stated that “It must be recognized that there are citizens of other countries who may be good brothers and sisters, internationally, but would not be acceptable as brothers and sisters-in-law to Canadians.”<sup>191</sup> However, the Senate Committee itself was more open to liberalizing policies, as were an increasing amount of other trade and labour unions. Furthermore, the Canadian public to which King had appealed in 1947 was beginning to turn on the status quo, with church groups, ethnic and community organizations, transport companies, newspapers, and academics advocating for reform of immigration policies.<sup>192</sup>

Thus, while Filipinos never quite stoked the fears of the Canadian public and government as Chinese, Japanese, or South Asians, they were affected by many of the restrictions placed on these groups simply because they too were considered Asian. As a result, Filipinos could only enter Canada permanently if they were the husband, wife, or unmarried child under twenty-one of a Canadian citizen.<sup>193</sup> In 1949, however, this fact caught the ire of Filipino government officials who introduced the Reciprocity Bill in a retaliatory move against Canada’s immigration practices.

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<sup>190</sup> Canada, *House of Commons Debates*, 1 May 1947, 2644-2546.

<sup>191</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making the Mosaic*, 321.

<sup>192</sup> Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest*; Bangarth, “We are not asking you to open wide the gates for Chinese immigration,”; Carmela Patrias, and Ruth A. Frager. “‘This Is Our Country, These Are Our Rights’: Minorities and the Origins of Ontario’s Human Rights Campaigns,” *Canadian Historical Review* 82, no. 1 (2001), 1-35; Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 159.

<sup>193</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 26 April 1951.



## **Canadian Immigration Policy and the Reciprocity Policy, 1951-1962**

Until the OPEC oil price shock in 1973, which saw the drastic decline of the global economy,<sup>194</sup> the Philippines gained confidence on the international stage from the strength of its economic development as it increasingly attracted foreign business investment.<sup>195</sup> With this economic leverage, the Philippines began demanding immigration reciprocity as foreign nationals were able to obtain permanent residency visas in the Philippines, while Filipinos were denied the same privilege in many of these countries. Australia and the United Kingdom were included in what was called the reciprocity policy, but Canada was singled out as the initial target of Philippine lawmakers after the Philippine Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Felino Neri circulated a memo to the Philippine government that drew attention to the fact that the Canadian government did not extend permanent residency for Filipinos.<sup>196</sup> The policy created a crisis of sorts as Canadian government officials deliberated over their possible response, increasingly aware that they would have to make concessions to the Philippines. Furthermore, this issue put Canada and other Western nations in an awkward position. Canada increasingly looked to the Asia-Pacific as a region to expand its influence and economic activity and was working to build its image in the international arena as a human rights defender. The Department of External Affairs knew Canada risked losing legitimacy to the new claims it was seeking if it continued with racist exclusionary practices. While not directly the cause of the 1967 policy change to

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<sup>194</sup> Peter Gowan, *Global Gamble: America's Faustian bid for world leadership* (London: Verso, 1999), 19.

<sup>195</sup> James Tyner, *The Philippines*.

<sup>196</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 3 October 1952.

Canada's immigration, the "Philippine Question"<sup>197</sup> was one of the first indications that Canada could no longer openly pursue a "white Canada" policy if it wished to rise to prominence in the post-Second World War era.<sup>198</sup>

This issue pitted different segments of the Canadian government against each other. The more domestically minded Department of Citizenship and Immigration was firmly against a reciprocal quota system that would allow a capped number of Filipinos per year. The Department of External Affairs, entwined as it was in the ever-changing flows of global relations, promoted the consideration of such a policy, with some officials saying Canada needed to entirely rethink its policies. They foresaw that "an agreement with the Philippines must be regarded as a precedent upon which our general Asiatic immigration policy...is likely to be built,"<sup>199</sup> that is, one that would be required to liberalize. Those in External Affairs - and especially those stationed in Asia - saw that the end of the war had ushered in several newly independent national states in Asia, including the Philippines, which were eager to reclaim self-determinacy from the clutches of centuries of Western imperialism.<sup>200</sup>

In May and June of 1949, the Department of External Affairs reported that the Philippine Parliament was considering the Reciprocal Immigration Bill, a private member's bill that would forbid foreign nationals from being admitted to or staying in the Philippines unless it could be demonstrated that Filipinos shared the same privileges in their own country.<sup>201</sup> The bill had not

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<sup>197</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 24 November 1952.

<sup>198</sup> Canada faced similar pressures from Caribbean nations, whose Black citizens faced similarly restrictive policies. Christopher Stuart Taylor, "Flying Fish in the Great White North: The 'culture' of Black Barbadian migration to 1967," (PhD diss., Western University, 2013), 200-201.

<sup>199</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 24 November 1952.

<sup>200</sup> Canada's response to such movements in Indonesia is studied in David Webster, *Fire and the Full Moon: Canada and Indonesia in a decolonizing world*. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010.)

<sup>201</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 23 June 1949.

passed by the end of the Philippine Parliamentary session of 1949, but it became apparent that the Philippines would adopt the practice of denying foreign national applications along the lines of reciprocity. These changes were part of broader reforms being made to the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, which had been established under American tutelage before the Japanese invasion of 1942. A reform to the Act, passed in 1950 by the Philippine Senate, reduced the annual immigration quota of every foreign country to fifty from five hundred, with the exception of the United States, which was allowed a quota of 1,200.<sup>202</sup> While this bill was meant to apply to all nations, it was inspired by Canada's heavy restrictions on the entry of Filipinos, which stemmed from the fact that they were regarded as Asians under the Canadian Immigration Act and Regulations, and thus only permitted entry as permanent immigrants if they were the spouse or dependent child of a Canadian resident. As a Canadian government memo later noted in 1957, "The net result [of this policy] is the virtual exclusion of Philippines citizens as immigrants" since there were practically no Filipinos in Canada able to sponsor family members.<sup>203</sup> In the 1950s, the actual number of Filipino migrants in Canada was unknown. In the first months of 1956, sixty-three visas were issued to Filipinos from the Consulate-General in Manila, of which only four were immigrant visas. In 1955, fifty-five visas were issued, of which fifteen were immigrant.<sup>204</sup>

The Philippines was willing to enforce this policy of reciprocity.<sup>205</sup> In July 1950, the Philippine Consulate General in the United States - which acted as the official liaison to Canada

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<sup>202</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 13 June 1950.

<sup>203</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. "Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations." 15 August 1957.

<sup>204</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. "Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations." 15 August 1957.

<sup>205</sup> The Philippines does not seem to have denied the entry of every Canadian applicant for landing, as the government sources only raise a few instances of this occurring. It appears as if the Philippine government

at this time - sent an inquiry to Canadian Embassy stating that it had received the application of a Catholic nun wishing to establish a religious mission in the Philippines, and asked if Canada would grant permanent resident visas to a Philippine citizen in a similar circumstance, which he knew they would not.<sup>206</sup> A similar issue came up in February 1951 in the case of a businessman who had been denied admission to the Philippines because “Canada does not accord reciprocal privileges to Filipino citizens desiring entry into Canada as immigrants,”<sup>207</sup> as stated in a letter by Felino Neri, Acting Secretary of the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, to Frederick H. Palmer, the Canadian Consul General in Manila. Mr. Neri, who was responsible for the Reciprocity Bill, also drew attention to Canada’s refusal to grant permanent visas to Philippine immigrants, and that “under the existing laws of Canada, which limit immigrants to certain specified nationalities, visas for immigration into Canada cannot be granted to Filipino citizens.”<sup>208</sup> On 8 March 1952, Philippine Immigration Commissioner Vicente de la Cruz announced that the Philippines would no longer act on requests for visas from countries whose immigration practices violated their reciprocity policy. A *Sunday Times* report from Manila reported that this was “indicative of this country’s ‘awakening to its right’,” and that “the bureau has shown ‘teeth’ in the enforcement of its policy of reciprocation.”<sup>209</sup>

The reciprocity policy, and officials like Felino Neri and Vicente de la Cruz, forced Canada to face the uncomfortable truth that their immigration policies were not only unbalanced

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implemented the reciprocity policy at certain points to exert pressure upon Canadian officials, or for political capital in the Philippines.

<sup>206</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 25 July 1950.

<sup>207</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 21 February 1951.

<sup>208</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 21 February 1951.

<sup>209</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 9 March 1952.

and unfair, but indeed exploitative. While its citizens could enter the Philippines with permanent visas, Canada denied similar privileges to Filipinos. As was the case with Chinese, Japanese, and South Asian migrants, Filipinos were deemed unassimilable to Canadian society. Indeed, the Philippines was not the only nation to call Canada out on its racist practices, with the Negro Citizenship Association in Canada complaining in 1954 that British subjects from England, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa were being privileged over those from the West Indies.<sup>210</sup> Starting in 1911, the Canadian West Indian League also chastised the Canadian government on its immigration policies.<sup>211</sup> As E. H. Norman of the American and Far Eastern Consular Division stated in a memo from 17 April 1951, “Canada’s principal purpose in barring Asiatic immigration, is, I would think, to prevent the swamping of this country by masses of people pronouncedly different in appearance and culture from the people who already live here.”<sup>212</sup> There was no hiding this fact from the Philippine government, which was increasingly in a position to assert itself using its own immigration policy as leverage. While never explicitly calling these policies racist, the Philippine government’s message was clear: the issuance of visas to Canadians would no longer continue until such a time that the Canadian government was willing to accept Filipino immigrants.

The willingness of the Philippine government to act on its ultimatum to Canada, as well as growing pressure from Canadian businesses and religious groups, forced government officials, particularly in External Affairs, to realize that Canada’s restrictive immigration policies, once touted by Mackenzie King, were no longer tenable. Already in the 1950s, as a result of being part of the British Commonwealth, Canada had been pressured to let in Black West Indies’

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<sup>210</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 337.

<sup>211</sup> Taylor, “Flying Fish,” 199.

<sup>212</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 17 April 1951.

immigrants, and in the early 1950s had set up arrangements with India, Pakistan, and Ceylon to allow 150, 100, and 50 immigrants annually from each country respectively. In the same memo from E. H. Norman of 17 April 1951, he stated that although protests against Canada's discriminatory legislation is nothing new, "changed conditions in the Far East require...the abandonment of niggling methods of dealing with the problem."<sup>213</sup> Norman points out that Filipinos were fighting alongside Canadians in Korea, suggesting that Asia's post-colonial involvement in global politics meant that Canada had to deal with them differently.

The memo from E. H. Norman points to another reality that faced Canadian officials. As Angelika E. Sauer has pointed out, Canada's restrictive immigration policies were due to domestic concerns, mainly the protection of "Canadian" society as white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant. While the process of liberalizing these policies was slow, the stalemate with the Philippines indicated that Canada had to balance such domestic concerns with its postwar international ambitions, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. Throughout the postwar period, Canada increasingly engaged the international community by participating in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Canada also played a key role in the formation of the United Nations, as did the Philippines. This engagement with the international community, which included former colonies in Asia and elsewhere made it increasingly indefensible to restrict immigrants solely on racial grounds or country of origin. As Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock state, "Many of its former immigration policies [were made] increasingly anachronistic, and indeed an embarrassment" in this period.<sup>214</sup> Certainly, Frederick Palmer, Canada's Consul to the Philippines, noted in

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<sup>213</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 17 April 1951.

<sup>214</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 324.

September 1951 that “I am becoming somewhat embarrassed with queries as to why we prevent Filipinos from going to Canada”<sup>215</sup> as he attempted to encourage Filipino business in Canada. The indefensibility of Canada’s position internationally was not merely an issue of losing political face, but of damaging Canada’s growing economic interests in the Philippines through the barring of Canadian immigration. This pressure on Canadian business resulted in political stress on the government, with companies like the Singer Sewing Machine Company musing “whether Canada should continue to maintain the 1930 policy of exclusion and thereby create certain antagonisms and misunderstandings where international friendship is so important.”<sup>216</sup>

The restrictions upon Canadian immigration not only impeded Canadian interests in the Philippines but risked damaging its presence in the Asia-Pacific region which the government was increasingly prizing. A memo from 20 November 1953 summed up Canada’s position as wanting to “soothe Philippine susceptibilities” to facilitate the granting of visas to Canadians pursuing trade prospects, and to improve overall relations with the Philippines.<sup>217</sup> If Canada wanted to be a leader in the international arena, and if it wanted to expand its economic interests in the Asia-Pacific region, it would have to re-evaluate its restrictive policies. This was an opportune moment for Canada, E. H. Norman noted, because the Philippines was looking for Western allies other than the United States while Canada was looking for more influence in Asia. A move towards a quota system was in part a posturing act in opposition to other Western powers which traditionally held influence in Asia. As a draft memo for the Under Secretary of the Department of External Affairs on 17 July 1952 stated:

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<sup>215</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 10 September 1951.

<sup>216</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 29 October 1951.

<sup>217</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 20 November 1953.

Canada has been traditionally linked with Great Britain in the eyes of the Filipinos and thus with 'colonialism,' which signifies to them all the bad features of their fifty years' association with the United States and their three hundred years of Spanish rule. A unilateral move on our part in this matter would do much to disassociate Filipino thinking from this point of view.<sup>218</sup>

Norman felt that "the goodwill to be secured, particularly at this time, by concluding some such [reciprocity] agreement, would be one more contribution towards easing Asian animosity against the West." Norman did not go as far as to suggest what policy alternative there might be, but stated that "some plan [be] designed to modify the present policy of total exclusion of Philippine immigration into Canada."<sup>219</sup> As H. T. W. Blockey stated in a memo to E. H. Norman, "Filipinos ought not to be left with the feeling that their only white friends are the Americans."<sup>220</sup>

In a memorandum by G. A. Ronning for the Consular Division of External Affairs on October 23, he noted the dilemma that the Philippines posed: if a quota was granted to Filipinos, who were a very minor population in Canada, how could Canada continue to restrict other Asian nationals like Chinese or Indonesians? Ronning went on to query whether a quota system should be viewed negatively, "If then it is considered necessary to grant a quota to the Philippines to facilitate the entry of our businessmen and missionaries to that country, we must query whether the quota system is indeed bad. Under it we would still discriminate against Asians."<sup>221</sup> Canada thus wanted to maintain its discriminatory restrictions on Asian immigration, while benefitting on the international stage from the appearance of liberal policy changes. A further circular from

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<sup>218</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 17 July 1952.

<sup>219</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 17 April 1951.

<sup>220</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 17 April 1951.

<sup>221</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 17 April 1951.



22 November 1952 stated the issue more bluntly. The only possible solution to removing all accusations of racism from Canadian immigration policy was to implement free immigration. However, the free entry of Asians “could alter fundamentally our concept of Canada and cause internal dissension”.<sup>222</sup> What was at issue was a perceived tension between domestic and international needs.

The most favourable solution, in the opinion of External Affairs, was the formation of a quota system, similar to that which had been established with Commonwealth countries in South Asia, and which the Philippines itself adopted with other countries. Canadian academics like H.F. Angus supported such a move. In 1946, Angus advocated for a quota system similar to what the United States practiced.<sup>223</sup> These suggestions were received favourably by several government officials in External Affairs. However, one must not place too much altruism in a favourable reception for they represented a ‘minimum effort required’ mindset to protect Canadian interests in Asia. This view was demonstrated by Angus, who identified a quota system as being an ideal way to limit immigration from less desirable groups.<sup>224</sup> Therefore, even those favourable to a quota system did not advocate opening the doors wide to Filipinos.

Indeed, initial support for a quota system for the Philippines was met with concern at the speed to which such an agreement would be concluded, in part because of concern over public reaction. A hand-written margin reply to E. H. Norman’s memo of 17 April 1951 stated that “I have always had this in mind...we shall have to come to it someday but I believe it is a little too soon now - I suggest we await public reaction to India-Pakistan-Ceylon agreements. When they are in operation we could hardly conclude a similar agreement with the Philippines before the

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<sup>222</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 22 November 1952.

<sup>223</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 322-323.

<sup>224</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 323.

other 2 (Pakistan & Ceylon) are visualized/initialized.”<sup>225</sup> Even as Canada was engaged with the reciprocity issue and debating a quota system, the Canadian parliament passed the Immigration Act of 1952, the first such Act since 1910, with clear intentions of excluding non-white immigrants. This Act gave the minister in charge of immigration significant authority to limit the admission of applicants on the lines of several factors, including nationality, ethnic group, and perceived inability to adapt to Canada’s climate.<sup>226</sup>

Despite this caution, though, discussion continued on the merits and possible pitfalls of a quota system. Given the “importance now being attached to cherishing Asiatic friendship,” it was proposed that Canada should adopt a more conciliatory approach “than existing Canadian immigration policy permits.”<sup>227</sup> Furthermore, it was argued that easing immigration restrictions would enhance the prestige of Canada in the Philippines.<sup>228</sup> The thorn in this issue was the fact that in P.C. 2115 <sup>229</sup>Canada had “chosen to regard Filipinos as Asiatics”.<sup>230</sup> In a letter to the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs from September 1951, the Canadian Consul General in Manila questioned the tenability of barring Asian immigration. He claimed that the decision to allow 150 immigrants a year from India “rather knock[s] into a cocked hat our determination to bar Asiatics, or are Indians not considered to be Asiatics[?]”

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<sup>225</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 17 April 1951. The hand-written note is only signed “T.W.W.” Although he signs other documents similarly, his full identity remains unknown.

<sup>226</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 330; Knowles, *Strangers at our Gates*, 170.

<sup>227</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 17 April 1951.

<sup>228</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” c. June-July 1952.

<sup>229</sup> This appears to be an erroneous reference, and most likely refers to P.C. 2115. Order-in-Council P.C. 2115 of 16 September 1930 prohibited the landing of anyone of Asian ethnicity in Canada.

<sup>230</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 10 September 1951.

The situation, as noted previously, caused significant embarrassment for the Consul General, Frederick Palmer, in Manila. Canada had recently been petitioned by Armenia that their migrants should not be treated as Asian, and many External Affairs officials saw a similar question with the Philippines, and it was suggested in July 1952 that P.C. 2115 no longer be applicable to Filipinos.<sup>231</sup> As Trevor Hogan explains, “Because of its history of colonizations...,and the lack of a unified or prestigious pre-modern religious, political or economic order, the Philippines is frequently positioned as ‘in but not of Asia’.”<sup>232</sup> Many of the characteristics that were felt to make other ‘Asian’ immigrants undesirable - notably Chinese, Japanese, and Indian - were not an issue with Filipinos who were, for instance, skilled in English, largely Catholic, and more Westernized than other Asian societies. Indeed, the works manager of the Singer Sewing Company stated that their skill in English and familiarity of Western culture and values made the Philippines a “principle outpost” of Western civilization in Asia.<sup>233</sup>

Considering Canada’s international aspirations, and potential for friendly relations with the Philippines, it was noted that more meaning would be attached to a Canada-Philippines deal than with Asian or West Indies Commonwealth countries.<sup>234</sup> When Canadian officials were faced with the reciprocity issue, immigration policy remained entrenched in a “White Canada” stance, with aversion to any influx of Asian populations. Musing on the impact of a small annual quota, H. T. W. Blockley revealed the influence of this belief when he wrote “the addition of a

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<sup>231</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 17 July 1952.

<sup>232</sup> Trevor Hogan, “In but Not of Asia: Reflections on Philippine Nationalism as Discourse, Project and Evaluation,” *Thesis Eleven* 84 no.115 (2006), 115.

<sup>233</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 29 October 1951.

<sup>234</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 12 August 1952.

score or so Filipinos would hardly be calculated to imperil the ‘White Canada’ policy.”<sup>235</sup> Those wary of a quota system with the Philippines pointed out that while it may not endanger a White Canada policy, it might take a different meaning internationally and “create more interest in other Asiatic countries”<sup>236</sup> as the Philippines was not a Commonwealth nation like India, Pakistan, or Ceylon. G. A. Ronning of the Far Eastern Division was certainly aware of the discomfort this might cause, stating that “Certainly the prospect of [a quota system] must be faced.”<sup>237</sup> Ronning made it clear that even while faced with the hypocrisy and unacceptability of their racist policies, government officials clung to these views, justifying their exclusion along lines of “colour and facial contour” and suggesting any changes, such as a modicum quota system, should be accepted with gratitude by Philippine officials.<sup>238</sup> He concluded that a quota system might be the best solution because it would control the movement of Filipinos, enhance the esteem of Canada in Asia, and might prevent other Asian nations from taking similar steps as the Philippine Reciprocity Bill. Finally, as Ronning reminded others, “Under it [a quota system] we would still discriminate against Asians”.<sup>239</sup>

Even though opinion was increasingly favourable to establishing a quota system with the Philippines, the opposition encountered, and even some of the arguments in support of a quota, indicated the deep-rooted racism of Canadian officials. One of the most common arguments in defence of preventing Asian immigration to Canada was that they were inassimilable to

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<sup>235</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 17 April 1951.

<sup>236</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” c. June-July 1952.

<sup>237</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 23 October 1952.

<sup>238</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 23 October 1952.

<sup>239</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 23 October 1952.

Canadian society, but also that the Canadian environment was too inhospitable. Officials assumed that Filipinos would not be able to tolerate Canadian winters as they came from a tropical region, and it was argued that this would mitigate the numbers that would want to reside in Canada. The Consul General in Manila argued that a small quota would not affect Canadian immigration noticeably because “few Filipinos would care to remain in Canada...during our winter season.”<sup>240</sup> A memorandum summarizing the issue stated that “It has also been noted that it would be unlikely that Filipinos would accept Canadian climatic conditions readily, even in British Columbia, where the Canadian winter is mildest.”<sup>241</sup>

It is clear, too, that within various departments there were opposing opinions on the matter. While the Department of External Affairs seemed to be looking for an approach that would require the least amount of compromise, their views were still more liberal than that of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and acknowledged the international repercussions of Canada’s policies. In a memo indicating a recommendation for a quota system be made to Lester Pearson, who was then the Minister of External Affairs, a hand-written notation states “I wonder whether we’re not leading the government straight into a secretly dreaded and critical quota system!”<sup>242</sup> Clearly, there were apprehensions about how committed elected officials would be to significant changes to Canada’s immigration policies. After all, it had only been six years at that point since Prime Minister King reaffirmed the undesirability of Asian immigration.

This resistance became most clear in a preliminary meeting on 22 June 1953 between External Affairs officials and Colonel Laval Fortier, the Deputy Minister of Citizenship and

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<sup>240</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 10 September 1951.

<sup>241</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” c.June/July 1952. This climate of discrimination is also discussed in Taylor, *Flying Fish* (fn600, p221 in diss).

<sup>242</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 22 October 1952.

Immigration, on the question of Asian immigration. A memo to Chester A. Ronning of External Affairs stated that, “As was anticipated...[we] received a rather chilly reception from the Immigration authorities.”<sup>243</sup> The frankly racist position of the Immigration officials is reflected by the caution External Affairs took not to “scare the Immigration Department with the prospect of ‘Yellow hordes,’ by focusing on the ‘Philippine Question’.” Robert Edmonds stated that the Immigration officials were disinterested in the discussion, and that Colonel Fortier’s “armour” was not penetrated by the point that the majority of the Philippines was Catholic. A “slight glimmer of interest” was expressed when told that “many Filipinos [were] of pure Spanish extraction.”<sup>244</sup> Fortier was impressed with the amount of annual trade between Canada and the Philippines, but not impressed with the suggestion of a quota system.

The Department of Immigration refused in principle to discuss a quota system for the Philippines because they felt that “every other Asian country would want to negotiate a similar agreement.”<sup>245</sup> Three years later, in 1956, it was believed that sentiments in the Department of Immigration still had not warmed. Colonel Fortier had argued in 1953 that Filipinos could enter Canada so long as they complied with regulations that they were “the wives and unmarried children, up to the age of 21, of Canadians resident in this country.”<sup>246</sup> This was taken by External Affairs as a “façade,” given the lack of potential sponsors in Canada, although Fortier did admit that he would consider an *ad hoc* system where one Filipino might be admitted per one Canadian admitted to the Philippines. Colonel Fortier was shown with a news item from Manila

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<sup>243</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 29 June 1953.

<sup>244</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 17 July 1952.

<sup>245</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 3 October 1952.

<sup>246</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 29 June 1953.

slamming the racist policies of Canada's immigration, which made Fortier visibly uncomfortable. At that point, he responded that there was a misunderstanding about "permanent residency."<sup>247</sup>

In the Philippines, anyone who entered and stayed for longer than six months were considered permanent residents, while in Canada prospective immigrants could get this status immediately upon arrival if previously approved. Fortier emphasized that someone could easily stay in Canada on a temporary visa for six months, after which time the visa could potentially be renewed. In the Philippines, "temporary residents" referred to those who were staying the Philippines for less than six months, while in Canada it referred to those permitted to stay in Canada for an indefinite time, as long as their entry permits were regularly revalidated.<sup>248</sup> However, the degree of dissatisfaction became clear to Canadian officials in 1953 when Philippine officials "declined in somewhat forceful terms" an invitation to the Canadian International Trade Fair in 1953 out of "resentment" for how Canadian immigration policy discriminated against Filipinos.<sup>249</sup> While Canada argued that Filipinos could obtain temporary resident status (e.g. for employment), it was undeniable that it was virtually impossible to attain immigrant status, which seemed to irk Philippine officials the most. In December 1953, a memorandum seeking to explain the differences in terminology between Canada and the Philippines was left with the Vice Consul of the Philippine Embassy in Washington. He was

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<sup>247</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. "Philippine Legislation and Regulations." 29 June 1953.

<sup>248</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. "Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations." 19 February 1953.

<sup>249</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. "Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations." 27 October 1956.

reported to have been “most interested in the explanation given to him,” and was impressed by the greater degree of flexibility for temporary migrants than the United States offered.<sup>250</sup>

It was clear, though, that the Departments of External Affairs and Citizenship and Immigration viewed this issue from different perspectives. External Affairs was motivated by international political pressures and Canada’s external relations and argued that Filipinos who came to Canada would not want to stay anyway. The Department of Citizenship and Immigration, however, was motivated by purely domestic concerns, and remained uninterested in setting quotas for fear that other Asian countries would push for such agreements and endanger ‘White Canada.’ They were of the mind that “most Filipinos would wish to come to Canada...to secure permanent residence and eventual citizenship.” External Affairs, wishing to engage more with the Asia-Pacific region, pushed to reach a compromise on small-scale immigration they felt would not alter Canada’s ‘character,’ while Citizenship and Immigration, focused on domestic concerns, saw Asian immigration as a fundamental threat.

Underlying the discussions surrounding the “Philippine Question” was the fact that Canadian officials were willing to relent only as much as necessary to secure their own interests. Colonel Fortier only considered an *ad hoc* one-to-one ratio after learning of the significant trade relations with the Philippines and that there was a significant European descended population. Two of the most often cited arguments from External Affairs in favour of the quota system was that it would give the appearance of liberalizing policies while still retaining control of Filipino immigration, and that Filipinos would likely not wish to settle in Canada’s harsh climate anyways, “bearing in mind Canadian climatic and other conditions which are alien to the

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<sup>250</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. “Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations.” 26 April 1951.



Filipinos way of life.”<sup>251</sup> In 1951, it was believed that a “modicum of goodwill” would continue to allow Canadians entry to the Philippines, but the extent of that goodwill was not clear as it was felt that only temporary work visas were necessary for potential Filipino migrants.<sup>252</sup> A memo from H. F. Clark of External Affairs stated it more bluntly: “Our object, of course, is to soothe Philippines susceptibilities so that the Philippine authorities might become more co-operative in granting Canadians entry to the Philippines, Canadian trade prospects in the Philippines might not suffer injury, and in order to improve Canadian-Philippine relations generally.”<sup>253</sup> Indeed, more than one official interpreted the issue as being one of self-image and pride for the Philippine government, one that needed just the right amount of placating, revealing a demeaning and infantilizing view of Philippine demands for equality. Numerous External Affairs communications explained the determination of the Philippine government as “a reaction from the many years of colonial status”<sup>254</sup>. Introducing a modicum of change “would give them a feeling of greater national equality, which appears to be the primary reason for the restrictive measures they have adopted.”<sup>255</sup>

It is not explicitly clear what tangible results this issue brought about, although in 1960 reciprocity remained an issue. In November, it was reported that the Singer Sewing Machine Company was having trouble securing a visa extension for an employee due to Canada’s lack of reciprocity. In the same report, mention was made of a life insurance company employee who

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<sup>251</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 30 September 1952.

<sup>252</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 9 October 1951.

<sup>253</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 20 November 1953.

<sup>254</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 2. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” 22 November 1952.

<sup>255</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 515-40, vol. 1. “Philippine Legislation and Regulations.” c.July-October 1951.

was going to be denied entry for the same reason.<sup>256</sup> It appears that, despite the interest in setting a quota system for Filipino immigration, none was achieved; at least, the settlement is not documented in archival sources. The degree to which this issue affected Philippine-Canadian relations is also difficult to gauge, because as Philippine officials at times got heated on the issue of reciprocity, negotiations for an exchange of diplomatic missions also began in the early 1960s.<sup>257</sup> Records from 1964, two years after initial reforms were implemented to Canada's immigration, which would have appealed to Philippine demands, indicate that Canadian businessmen were having little trouble entering the Philippines.<sup>258</sup>

It is likely that the significant changes to Canada's immigration system allowing entry to independent, skilled immigrants initiated by the 1962 reforms, and which found full realisation in the 1967 Points System, eased relations with the Philippines. More importantly, they also would have made possible the beginnings of what would come to be Canada's most significant source of immigration in the twenty-first century. As this process of reform began in 1957,<sup>259</sup> it is not unrealistic to argue that the "Philippine Question," and the issues surrounding Asian immigration which it made Canada face, as well as Canada's labour needs, and political and economic goals in the Asia-Pacific region, had a significant role to play in this policy repositioning. The "Philippine Question" represented a formative period in Canada's immigration policy, as well as the history of Philippine foreign policy. Despite the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's adamant refusal in the 1950s to consider a quota system, the

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<sup>256</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 552-1-611, vol. 1 "Immigration from the Philippine Islands." 16 November 1960.

<sup>257</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 6809-40. "Canada-Philippine Commercial Relations." 7 August 1962.

<sup>258</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 1. "Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL." 8 December 1964.

<sup>259</sup> Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 338-339.

reciprocity issue generated much discussion that made it clear that continuing Mackenzie King's policy as stated in 1947 would alienate Canada internationally. The Philippines, furthermore, successfully used its leverage as a growing postwar (and postcolonial) economy to force Canada to face its racist and exclusionary immigration policies. The "Philippine Question" was the result of a confluence of different factors, including Canada's radical economic growth that began following the Second World War and continued well into the 1970s, as well as the international environment in which Canada sought an enhanced role. The "Philippine Question," an exertion of Philippines' post-war influence, was emblematic of the new international realities in which Canada found itself.

Relations between Canada and the Philippines improved considerably following the controversy surrounding the reciprocity of Canada's immigration policy with the Philippines. Diplomatic relations between Canada and the Philippines had been initiated in October 1949 when Canada appointed a Consul-General to Manila - its first in Southeast Asia - with official offices opening on 26 January 1950.<sup>260</sup> The Consul-General also acted as an informal political link with the Philippines, and often provided the Department of External Affairs with reports on the Philippines and advice for policy development, until the opening of a Canadian embassy in 1972. As stated in a press release, the move marked the growing importance of the Philippines to

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<sup>260</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 8600-E-40, vol. 1. "Requests for Opening of Consular Offices in Canada - Philippines."

Canada in terms of commercial affairs, being the fourth largest export market in Asia, and of people, offering Canada nearly 3,000 immigrants a year according to a press release in 1972.<sup>261</sup>

While the controversy over the Reciprocity Bill engaged Canadian officials, moves were made between Canada and the Philippines towards official diplomatic links. The establishment of a Philippine consulate in Canada was initiated in February 1954 when Frederick Palmer reported that Felisberto Serrano, a Special Adviser to the President, advised him that the Philippines was interested in opening a mission. As Palmer stated, “This would appear to fit in well with the plans of Foreign Secretary and Vice President Carlos P. Garcia, who, since the new administration has taken over, has advocated several times ‘vigorous promotion of Philippine exports through foreign market surveys and the foreign services abroad.’”<sup>262</sup> Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto were considered as possible sites for the consulate, although the former was preferred due to its proximity to the Philippines and the amount of trade that transited through the port.

The Canadian government was very favourable to the proposition. Arthur Menzies of the Far East Division stated that “In fact we might welcome this Philippine decision as strengthening the ties between our two countries, providing facilities that will be helpful to Canadian businessmen, travellers [sic] in their contacts with the Philippines.”<sup>263</sup> The consulate began its operations in Vancouver on 1 March 1956, with Gauttier F. Bisnar as the Consul, and Pacifico Evangelista as the Vice-Consul. Shortly after the consulate opened, Consul Bisnar suggested establishing an honorary consul in Montreal or Toronto to deal with affairs in Eastern Canada.

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<sup>261</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 3. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” 28 July 1972.

<sup>262</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 8600-E-40, vol. 1. “Requests for Opening of Consular Offices in Canada - Philippines.” 4 February 1954.

<sup>263</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 8600-E-40, vol. 1. “Requests for Opening of Consular Offices in Canada - Philippines.” 19 August 1955.

The Philippines had originally proposed that the United States take care of its interests in Eastern Canada, however as of February 1956 the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa had relinquished this protection, which it had taken up in 1946. Toronto would receive an honorary consul, as would Winnipeg, Edmonton, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia. The consulate in Vancouver was elevated in 1962 to a Consulate-General, bringing the Philippine mission to the same status as Canada's in Manila, with Toronto also becoming a Consulate-General in 1978.

According to the Department of External Affairs, Canada's long-term intention was to establish an embassy in the Philippines. However, when reports began circulating in the 1960s that the Philippines was considering a mission in Ottawa, Canadian officials reported they could not commit to reciprocating for at least two years. The establishment of the Philippine mission in Ottawa was scuttled by the Philippine Senate denying funding to the establishment of an embassy. Officially, this was because the Philippines was going through a period of austerity, but there were rumours that the Senate refused to permit the mission because Canada was not prepared to reciprocate.<sup>264</sup> A memo on the status of a Philippine mission from November 1963 indicated that "the repeated deletions by the Congressional Finance Committee resulted from Canadian failure to express a reciprocal desire."<sup>265</sup> At this time, while there remained a desire for an embassy in Manila, Myanmar - which had recently experienced a socialist revolution - was identified as a higher need. In May 1966, though, the Consul General in Manila reported that "Others have voiced the opinion that there is a now a real need for Philippine representation in

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<sup>264</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 1. "Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL." 7 November 1963.

<sup>265</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 1. "Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL." 7 November 1963.

Canada at Embassy level to protect the interests of the already large and steadily increasing number of Filipinos living there.”<sup>266</sup> In the same report, the Consul-General suggested that Canada consider establishing an embassy in Manila, as there had been a significant upsurge in visa applications to Canada, and the consulate staff were providing services usually offered by an embassy. However, continued austerity in Philippine budgets halted the opening of an embassy, and Canada remained reluctant to open offices for the foreseeable future.

Those who supported establishing an embassy in the Philippines were envisioning a larger role for Canada in the Pacific, especially as the Philippine national policies began turning away from a reliance upon the United States, processes that were both active during the reciprocity issue. In December 1964, it was reported that “after the refusal of the United States Congress in May 1962 to pass a bill for payment to the Philippines of remaining war damage claims, the Philippines seemed to become much more anxious to adopt an international position independent of the United States.”<sup>267</sup> Furthermore, this was a crucial period for the Philippines, which had not yet experienced the economic downturn of the 1970s and was in the midst of building as an independent nation. The same letter of December 1964 stated that

The Philippines is still to some extent uncertain of its identity and the international role it should play but nevertheless increasingly concerned to use its influence in world affairs. Canada is, of course, interested in, and sympathetic towards, this Philippine attempt to win greater acceptance as an Asian nation and to play a larger part in the politics of southeast Asia. We regard the Philippines’ strong attachment to the principles of liberty

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<sup>266</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 1. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” 11 May 1966.

<sup>267</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 1. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” 8 December 1964.

and democratic institutions, coupled with the relative stability of the country, as a hopeful element for the future in the politics of this area.<sup>268</sup>

Since 1946, Canadian government officials had viewed the Philippines with positivity, but in 1960s global politics, supporting one of the only Asian nations that adopted Western-style liberal democracy and capitalism was a matter of Cold War politics.

The final moves towards opening a Philippine embassy in Ottawa were initiated in October 1970 when a Philippine official approached the Canadian ambassador to the United States about opening an office, with the understanding that Canada could not yet reciprocate.<sup>269</sup> It's clear that in the 1970s, the interests of the Philippines and Canada in each other were diverging. Canada had hesitated to elevate the Consulate General in Manila to an embassy due to "Canada's modest political interest in the Philippines."<sup>270</sup> Canada's interests were largely economic, and what diplomatic concerns were necessary were often carried out by the Consul General or through the British Embassy in the Philippines, despite the insistence of successive Consuls General to elevate to an embassy. Throughout the 1960s, applications of Filipinos for immigration had increased, although many of these were handled through the Canadian Embassy in Hong Kong until a visa office was opened in Manila. The Philippines' interest, however, was increasingly domestic as growing numbers of Filipinos resided in Canada. It was estimated in September 1970 that nearly 10,000 Filipinos lived in Canada and establishing an embassy would

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<sup>268</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 1. "Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL." 8 December 1964.

<sup>269</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. "Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL." 2 October 1970.

<sup>270</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. "Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL." 2 October 1970.

be a means of protecting their interests, while also maintaining strong ties to the Filipino diaspora in Canada, an action that would be part of President Ferdinand Marcos' broader attempts to use the diaspora for economic vitality. As was seen with the state migratory apparatus in the Introduction, maintaining strong ties with the diaspora was a strategic means of benefitting from remittances. The Philippines opened an embassy in Ottawa in late 1970, with P. G. Jimenez appointed as the first ambassador. While Philippine officials stated that it did not expect Canada to do the same immediately, Canadian consular officials reported that there was pressure on Canada to reciprocate. Indeed, many consular officials expressed confusion over why Canada had not yet elevated the Consulate General to an embassy, given the strong trade relations with the Philippines - Canada's most significant partner in Southeast Asia - and the growing relationship made through immigration.<sup>271</sup>

The increasing numbers of Filipino immigrants, and their positive reception by government officials, prompted heightened discussions of opening an embassy. The visa office in Manila had been established by 1970 by the Department of Manpower and Immigration "since the Philippines, with its generally English-speaking population, has become a significant source of immigrants, particularly trained nurses."<sup>272</sup> With nationwide shortages of healthcare professionals, English speaking nurses were an attractive possibility, as will be discussed in Chapter 2. Moreover, government officials noted that "Education in the Philippines is of a relatively high level and nursing colleges and technical schools are graduating more students than the local economy can absorb." This advanced education, based upon American nursing

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<sup>271</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. "Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL." 25 April 1972.

<sup>272</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. "Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL." 17 November 1952.



school curriculum,<sup>273</sup> inculcated Filipino youth with a strong sense of Western values, and “since in many respects the Philippines is the most Westernised of all the Asian countries,” it was believed that “Filipinos [will] adjust readily to life in Canada.”<sup>274</sup> This was a drastically different opinion from two decades previous, when it was assumed Filipinos would not acclimatize to Canadian weather. There was little doubt that Canada benefitted from Filipino immigrants, “particularly from the services of Filipino doctors and nurses,”<sup>275</sup> and establishing an embassy in the Philippines could assist in processing applicants, while also improving Canada’s image in the country. Just as the Philippine government was beginning to diverge from its political and economic reliance upon the United States, so too was the Filipino psyche beginning to imagine countries other than the United States as lands of better opportunity.<sup>276</sup>

Canada’s international image in the Philippines, and the Asia region more generally, were also at stake. The Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, A. Edgar Ritchie, gave support for the eventual elevation of the Canadian mission to an embassy, noting that excluding Manila while expanding to Beijing and Seoul would be a clear slight to the Southeast Asian nation.<sup>277</sup> In a memorandum to the Cabinet regarding diplomatic status in the Philippines from J. M. Harrington, it was argued that “The continued absence of representation at Embassy level is becoming increasingly inconsistent with Canada’s growing interests in the Philippines particularly in the commercial sphere, and places Canada in a relatively unfavourable position

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<sup>273</sup> Choy, *Empire of Care*.

<sup>274</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” c.November 1970.

<sup>275</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” c.November 1970.

<sup>276</sup> Aguilar Jr., “Transnational Shame.”

<sup>277</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” 2 February 1951.

vis-a-vis other countries having comparable or lesser interests.”<sup>278</sup> Further appeals, referring to the “apparent anomaly” of maintaining only a Consulate-General in Manila, meant that Canada was one of the only countries in the Philippines to not have an embassy, and that upgrading the mission would incur minimal cost. The decision to upgrade Canada’s mission to an embassy was finally approved by the Cabinet Committee on Government Operations on 14 July 1972 and began operations on 28 July 1972.

### **Conclusion**

While the “Philippine Question” surrounding immigration and reciprocity caused tension and embarrassment among Canadian officials, it does not appear to have tarnished the relationship with the Philippines as other diplomatic discussions occurred as this issue was being resolved. If anything, the negotiations surrounding reciprocity, which would have been resolved with the 1962 immigration reforms, would have strengthened Canadian-Philippine relations. As was noted by officials in External Affairs, removing barriers to Philippine immigration would be interpreted positively, and could potentially recommend Canada as an attractive political and economic ally for a nation looking to weaken its reliance on the United States. When the Philippine government instituted the reciprocity agreement in 1950, thereby limiting or outright excluding foreign nationals of countries who denied permanent residence to Filipinos, the Canadian government’s tradition of racial exclusion was turned on its head. In a strong

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<sup>278</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” 26 April 1972.

expression of national sovereignty, the Philippines demonstrated to Canada (and other countries) that it had considerable leverage to exert on the international stage.

In 1950, Canada not only had significant economic and missionary interests in the Philippines but was also investing considerable energy on presenting itself as a Pacific power. The reciprocity issue made it clear that if Canada wanted to engage in an international arena that increasingly operated on a foundation of human rights and equality, and that included new post-colonial nations in Southeast Asia, it not only had to change the way it policed immigration, but completely reevaluate what values would inform its domestic policy. Government officials were forced with the uncomfortable reality that the 'White Canada' policy was outdated and would prove detrimental to Canada's position politically and economically. Initially, officials attempted to mitigate the effects of allowing more non-whites into Canada by placing a cap on Filipino immigration, although into the 1960s this was clearly not an acceptable practice as it clearly disadvantaged nations outside of Europe and the United States. Furthermore, as will be seen in Chapter 2, Canada in the 1960s was experiencing significant labour shortages in fields such as healthcare, education, and the garment industry, all of which the Philippines happened to have a ready work force available. This confluence of pressures - mainly, Canada's international image, its economic interests in the Philippines, and domestic labour needs - contributed to Canada's decision to liberalize immigration policies with the adoption of the Points System in 1967. Within five years, the Canadian embassy in Manila would open and allow for a more streamlined process of Filipino immigration, coinciding with the rapid rise of the Philippine state migratory apparatus.

## Chapter 2: The Pearl of the Prairies: History of the Filipino Community in Winnipeg

### Introduction

After decades of limiting and restricting Asian immigration, Canada began fundamental changes in 1962, culminating with the 1967 Points System. The removal of race and geographic origin as considerations in immigration laid the way for a grading scheme which ranked applicants on a universally applied scale that emphasized potential contributions to Canada. After these changes, the number of Filipino immigrants increased significantly, specifically in regard to labour needs in Canada. In 1963, 166 Philippine residents took on landed immigrant status; by 1969, that had increased to 3001.<sup>279</sup> In 1972, the government indicated that nearly 3,000 Filipinos immigrated to Canada annually, and in 1979 it was stated that the presence of 100,000 Filipinos in Canada “[made] quite a difference to the relationship” with the Philippines.<sup>280</sup> The immigration of Filipinos to Canada has strengthened relations between the two countries, the close bonds between Winnipeg and Manila being recognized in the twinning of the cities in 1979.

This chapter traces the early decades of immigration to Canada until the 1970s, with some reflection on the period afterward. A community project in 2009, *From Manila to Manitoba*, was vocal in its criticism of histories of Filipino immigration to Winnipeg that

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<sup>279</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 2. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” November 1970.

<sup>280</sup> Canada, Department of External Affairs. RG 25, 20-1-2-PHIL vol. 5. “Political Affairs - Reports and Statistics - Periodic Reports - PHILIPPINES Affaires politiques - Rapports et statistiques - Rapports périodiques - PHIL.” 26 October 1979.

focused on the early waves of immigrants to the neglect of Filipino Canadian youth and more recent generations of Filipinos.<sup>281</sup> These criticisms are well received, and I agree with the argument that more work needs to be done on these streams of immigrants. Recent work has begun to address younger, more recent immigrants. Given these critiques, though, it must be pointed out that not much is really known about these early waves. While scholarship has been revealing more about the Filipino community in Canada, Winnipeg in many ways remains unknown. Existing work has not begun to respond to the question of *why* Winnipeg became home to a community of 73,880 Filipinos,<sup>282</sup> the third largest in Canada.<sup>283</sup> Historical work done on the community has largely relied upon oral histories of community members, which draw upon the experiential side of immigrants, but do not necessarily explain the larger processes of immigration within which those experiences occurred.

This research project has been driven by a fundamental belief that structural forces are crucial to understanding how and why immigration happens and how they are experienced. To this end, I have relied heavily upon government archives to lay out the contexts of the Canadian labour market which were responsible for much of the early immigration of Filipinos and laid the foundations for immigration through family sponsorship. After describing the early years of Filipino immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, I focus on the healthcare profession and garment industry to examine how shortages in labour led both

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<sup>281</sup> The specific histories are not specifically referenced, but other than popular narratives within the community the only history in the community is Gemma Dalayoan, Leah Enverga-Magsino and Leonnie Bailon, *The First Filipino Migrants in Manitoba (1959-1975)* (Winnipeg: Published for the Manitoba Filipino Writers Guild, 2009).

<sup>282</sup> Statistics Canada. 2017. Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-404-X2016001. Ottawa, Ontario. Data products, 2016 Census.

<sup>283</sup> In the 2016 Canada Census, the Vancouver (123,170) and Toronto (254,480) Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) have larger populations than the Winnipeg CMA (73,880). However, if the three cities (not CMAs) are compared, Winnipeg (73,365) comes in second, above Vancouver city (36,455). A CMA is constructed of one or more municipalities surrounding a core settlement area of at least 50,000. Inclusion of surrounding municipalities is based on a high integration with the area, based upon data such as commuting flows tracked by previous census data.

employers and government to look abroad to alleviate shortages and why the Philippines in particular became a major source country. It will be seen that this early history of the Filipino community is largely a result of these two factors converging. Healthcare and garment workers figure prominently in the narratives of community history, including *The First Filipinos in Manitoba* and the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit, and so uncovering the historical contexts of these movements will also contribute to wider community histories.

This approach has had a few consequences on the historical narrative that developed. The first is that this chapter focuses on the early years of Filipino immigration to Winnipeg from the perspective of labour to understand why healthcare and garment workers were such an important component of the early community. As will be seen, both cases present a confluence of events that resulted in significant immigration. This aspect of Filipino immigration is largely the result of local, national, and transnational forces coinciding: local labour needs occurred during drastic changes to Canada's immigration system, while socio-economic changes were gripping the Philippines leading to the growth of a Filipino diaspora. In this way, the local has been tied to the transnational, but there is no real way of appreciating this without understanding the structures that connected these levels.<sup>284</sup>

The second consequence of this structural approach is that the narrative has tended to be top-down, and this is at once a benefit and drawback. On the one hand, it presents a rather in-depth account of the context in Canada that precipitated the immigration of healthcare workers and garment workers, while referencing concurrent developments in the Philippines. Community oral history projects often reference shortages in the healthcare and garment industries, leading to

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<sup>284</sup> This focus on the immigration of healthcare and garment workers has also meant that the family sponsorship flow of Filipinos has been largely left out. This is significant because these garment workers sponsored the immigration of family members to Winnipeg, starting a steady stream of Filipinos to the city.

the recruitment and immigration of Filipinos. What has been less known is what those shortages were like and what caused them. Also unknown, and perhaps of more interest, is why Canadian employers and government turned to Filipino labour, almost exclusively in the case of garment workers. On the other hand, the sources for this analysis have largely been from the Canadian federal government, and thus the narrative has been somewhat silent on the experiences of Filipinos, of which this analysis is more conscious. The work presented here is preliminary research on this community and is crucial to future study of this history which should include the experiences and testimonies of Filipinos themselves, especially through oral histories`. In terms of this dissertation, the context provided by this chapter - which is itself contextualized by Chapter 1 - has been necessary for the following thematic chapters on memory, identity, and transnationalism.

### **Early Filipino Immigration to Canada**

Filipino immigration to the Americas has a long history, beginning in the sixteenth century in the context of Spanish colonialism and trans-Pacific voyaging.<sup>285</sup> These early *Indios* crossed the Pacific on the Manila Galleon, a regular maritime link between the Philippines and Nuevo España. The Manila Galleon not only moved goods, but also communications and people such as royal administrators and clergy. As adept sea-farers, Filipinos often manned these vessels, sometimes staying abroad instead of sailing back to the Philippine colony. The immigration of Filipinos to the United States in the modern era has been well documented by

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<sup>285</sup> Rudy P. Guevarra Jr., "Filipinos in Nueva España: Filipino-Mexican Relations, Mestizaje, and Identity in Colonial and Contemporary Mexico," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 14 no.3 (Oct. 2011), 389-416; Floro L. Mercene, *Manila men in the new world: Filipino migration to Mexico and the Americas from the sixteenth century* (Manila: University of the Philippines Press, 2007).

Filipino American scholars. Following the Spanish-American war and seizure of the Philippines in 1898, Filipinos became American nationals, allowing this group to bypass increasingly racist and xenophobic immigration laws meant to prevent Asian immigration to the U.S. These migrants first worked sugar plantations in Hawai'i, and then moved on to the American west coast to work in farms, fisheries, canneries, and other odd-jobs that were available. These Filipinos worked alongside other racialized groups that were 'Othered' by American society, such as Mexicans, Chinese, and Japanese.

The latter two groups migrated to Canada from the United States to work along Canada's western frontier, with Chinese working alongside white miners in 1858 gold rush in British Columbia.<sup>286</sup> This influx of Asian migration set off Canada's Exclusion Era, when immigration policies were meant to prevent the immigration of Asians to Canada. Patricia Roy's three volume series on the subject demonstrates the intense xenophobia of policy makers and the irrational belief that "Asiatics" were unassimilable to Canadian society.<sup>287</sup> Lisa Mar and Alison Marshall's research on the Chinese community demonstrates the various means that Canada's immigration system was manipulated or circumvented to allow some freedom of movement for Chinese male labourers, sometimes with the collaboration of government officials.<sup>288</sup> This is significant, as it was likely along these movements of Chinese and Japanese that early Filipino migrants followed, leading one to speculate that Filipinos were migrating to Canada in the late nineteenth century. Eventually, these migratory flows would merge with the growing demand in the Canadian labour market. It is within these global migratory patterns that the early decades of the Winnipeg Filipino community are situated and should be kept in view when analyzing immigration to

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<sup>286</sup> Roy, *A White Man's Province*, 71.

<sup>287</sup> Roy, *A White Man's Province*; Roy, *The Oriental Question*; Roy, *The Triumph of Citizenship*.

<sup>288</sup> Mar, *Brokering Belonging*; Marshall, *Bachelor on the Prairies*.



Winnipeg. This single community is tied to multiple nodes of the Filipino diaspora through migration chains and personal networks, and shares in the history of the Canadian diaspora that began by at least 1890.

The family of Benson Flores is an early example of how Filipinos were received by local British Columbians. Benson resided on Bowen Island in B.C.<sup>289</sup> with a woman only identified as Matilda, who was likely his wife, and son William. According to sources in the Bowen Island Archives, Benson and his son were “beachcombers and fishermen,”<sup>290</sup> were well liked by community members, and were already settled on the island in the 1890s. Bowen Island at this time was fairly mixed, ethnically: descendants of Hawai’ian Islanders who travelled with Sir James Douglas lived among Chinese who worked in the brickyards, and Japanese who worked in shingle bolt camps. British Columbia was an ethnically diverse frontier at the turn of the twentieth century, and it is unsurprising to find Filipino settlers among the mix.

While the sources in the Bowen Island Archives confirm the expectation that Filipinos were in Canada by the 1900s, Benson Flores’ presence is noteworthy for its date, which is earlier than may be expected. While there is evidence that Filipinos migrated to the Americas since the seventeenth century, the volume of Filipino migration did not pick up until after 1898 when the United States annexed the Philippines as a colony in the Spanish-American War.<sup>291</sup> Thus the inclusion of Filipinos like Benson Flores in the movement of Asians along North America’s west coast into Canada suggests that Filipinos were following Chinese and Japanese migrants in the

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<sup>289</sup> Many thanks go to Joseph Lopez who first alerted me about this information, and for Jean Barman and Roderick J. Barman for providing me with further documentary leads. Joseph Lopez discusses this in his blog, <http://jlopezmb.blogspot.ca/2016/03/first-filipinos-in-canada.html> (Published 22 May 2016, Last accessed 22 July 2016).

<sup>290</sup> Irene Howard, *Bowen Island, 1872-1972* (Bowen Island, B.C.: Bowen Island Historians, 1973), 36.

<sup>291</sup> Catherine Ceniza Choy, “‘Exported to Care’: A transnational history of Filipino nurse migration to the United States,” in *Immigration Research for a New Century: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, eds. Nancy Foner, Rubén Rumbaut, Steven J. Gold (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000), 114; Tyner, *The Philippines*, 21.

late nineteenth century. Beyond his presence in Bowen Island, however, little else is known of Benson Flores. The few accounts of his life do not give a sense of his networks, why they settled on Bowen Island, or exactly how he got there.<sup>292</sup>

While it seems likely that Matilda and William were Benson's wife and son, it is not clear if they were from the Philippines. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Canadian immigration law limited Asian immigration to men who often had to leave their families at home. It is possible that Benson married a local woman, although existing photos do not indicate whether she was Filipino or not, but it may also be that he married a local Filipina. There is evidence that Filipinos were marrying other Filipinos in B.C. after 1900, suggesting that there was an early Filipino community developing.<sup>293</sup> One record indicates that a Filipina bride was born in B.C.; being 17 at her marriage in 1911 would mean that her family lived in B.C. by at least 1894.<sup>294</sup> Furthermore, marriage records for the period suggest that Benson Flores was not the only Filipino living on Bowen Island at the time. The marriage record for Andrew Ballendo, born in the Philippines, indicates his bride, Flora Lorienzo, was eighteen years old when she married in 1908, and was born in Vancouver. Flora, who resided on Bowen Island at the time of her marriage, would have been born around 1890, the same date that Benson Flores' presence is first recorded. Andrew Ballendo, furthermore, immigrated to Canada in 1898, the year the U.S. took possession of the Philippines, although the route he took is unclear.

These early records give tantalizing hints regarding early Filipino life in Canada, including marriage with other Filipinos and the forging of an early community, and acceptance

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<sup>292</sup> A search of the 1901 census does not record Benson or his family, suggesting he was either not enumerated or that he had moved on from Bowen Island.

<sup>293</sup> Canada. British Columbia. Division of Vital Statistics. Data searchable online at <https://www.familysearch.org/>.

<sup>294</sup> Certificate of Marriage, Carlos Alcala to Potencianna Alcala, 29 July 1911, South Westminster, British Columbia, Canada. Division of Vital Statistics, British Columbia. Thanks to Jean Barman for this citation.

in the wider community, at least in the case of Benson Flores, at a time when racial tensions in Canada were increasing. We are left wondering where these Filipinos came from (i.e. along the coast from the U.S. or directly from the Philippines), why they came, and early community dynamics. We do know enough to confidently state that a community existed. Government officials knew that Filipinos were entering via the U.S., as one letter from 1929 indicates. While discussing an outbreak of spinal meningitis in Chinese and Filipino migrants to the United States, the Chief of the Division of Quarantine mused whether or not a tightening of America's border would result in an influx of Filipino migrants. As the letter stated, Filipinos already "furnish[ed] a cheap type of labour to the canneries and restaurants of British Columbia," but that they tended to settle in dense ethnic enclaves "under unhygienic conditions."<sup>295</sup> This early community remained small due to difficulties immigrating to Canada. Few Filipinos would enter Canada in the coming decades, one being a clerk in 1924 destined for Quebec from the United States,<sup>296</sup> until labour demands in the late 1950s forced Canada to look for immigrant labour from sources traditionally banned.

### **First Waves of Immigration to Manitoba**

The 1950s and 1960s saw the confluence of events that made Filipino immigration to Canada increasingly possible. Attitudes to immigration, as well as the condition of labour markets in post-war Canada, changed as Filipinos began looking beyond the U.S. for employment opportunities as the economic and political situation in the Philippines began to

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<sup>295</sup> Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration - Immigration Branch. RG 76, 552-1-611, vol. 1. "Immigration from the Philippine Islands." 18 September 1929.

<sup>296</sup> Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration. RG 26, 9. "Monthly Arrivals at Ocean Ports and Rejections." September 1924.

deteriorate in the late 1960s. The first waves of Filipino migrants to Manitoba were health professionals, educators, and garment workers that came from the 1960s to the mid-1980s. In the context of this chapter, the first wave of Filipino immigrants is defined as those who came to Winnipeg to fill acute labour shortages. These early waves had considerable class elements. The first labour group, healthcare professionals, were generally well-educated; garment workers brought a more blue-collar group who used their experience in garment factories to enter Canada.

### **Making Exceptions for the Restricted: Filipino Healthcare Professionals**

Filipino immigration to Canada in the 1960s and into the 1970s had close connections to Canada's healthcare system. It was a time when the nursing profession was changing, more demands were being placed upon the system, and the supply of healthcare professionals in Canada was low. There has been very little historical research into this formative time of the Filipino community in Canada, apart from Valerie G. Damasco who examines a recruitment scheme orchestrated by the Ontario government and CP Air in 1965 to hire Filipina nurses for Riverdale Hospital in Toronto. Her research in the Ontario provincial archives indicated that the movement of Filipino healthcare workers began as a result of this scheme, although the process began in the late-1950s. B. F. Cunnings of CP Air had initiated the entire scheme, after learning from an agent in Manila that there was surplus of Filipino nurses in the Philippines. In getting support for the scheme, Cunnings approached various hospitals in the Toronto area as well as the Ontario Health Minister Matthew Dymond.<sup>297</sup> Damasco rightly points out that Filipino

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<sup>297</sup> Canada. Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. "Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions." 9 June 1965.

migration in the 1960s was facilitated by “Canadian and Philippine governmental, healthcare, and educational institutions, Canadian nursing regulatory bodies, and Canadian travel agencies”.<sup>298</sup> To be added to this list of stakeholders are the third-party recruiters, whose role will be discussed.

There were two medical professions in particular that experienced labour shortages in Manitoba, and Canada more widely: medical doctors (MDs) and registered nurses (RNs). Practical nurses (PNs) and nursing assistants (NAs) were also in demand across the country.<sup>299</sup> Filipino professionals willing to immigrate and work in Canada were attractive to hospital employers, but also presented licensing bodies with the problem of vetting foreign education credentials as licensing became a clause of employment in the late 1960s and 1970s. Applicants for PNs and NAs were especially difficult, as many applicants were trained as midwives in the Philippines, and were lacking much necessary theoretical training.

For many Filipinos, an education in healthcare was a guarantee of immigration abroad. As Catherine Choy has shown, significant numbers of Filipinos entered nursing schools in the Philippines during this time period,<sup>300</sup> and Canadian officials reported that new nursing schools were often opening, producing more nurses than the Philippine labour market could absorb. These schools were based upon an American model introduced during the colonial period (1898-1946) to train Filipinos for work in the U.S. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. remained

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<sup>298</sup> Valerie G. Damasco, “The Recruitment of Filipino Healthcare Professionals,” in *Filipinos in Canada: Disturbing invisibility*, ed. Roland Sintos Coloma et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 104-105.

<sup>299</sup> LPNs are a classification of nurses who perform practical skills, freeing RNs for other tasks. RNs receive more education and training than a LPN, and are able to perform a wider range of skills. A nursing assistant provides basic care to patients and routine activities they may have trouble doing on their own, such as bathing. Both LPNs and NAs were crucial to the function of medical facilities in this period. (Gooloo S. Wunderlich, Frank Sloan, and Carolyn K. Davis, eds., *Nursing Staff in Hospitals and Nursing Homes: Is it adequate?* (Washington (DC): National Academies Press, 1996), n.p. Available online: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK232670/>. Accessed 23 October 2018.

<sup>300</sup> Choy, *Empire of Care*.

popular for emigrating Filipino nurses and doctors. The American Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) allowed Filipinos to enter the U.S. for training and work experience, and many would apply for landing after their tenure in the program. Policy changes in the 1960s, however, made this last step more difficult, and led to a rise in Filipino healthcare workers applying to enter Canada on a non-immigrant basis (i.e. temporary). After a period of training in the EVP, Filipinos were required to leave the U.S. for two years before applying for landing, which had to be done outside of the country. Instead of returning to the Philippines, many secured employment in Canadian hospitals, including in Winnipeg, and applied for a two-year temporary visa. Most intended to re-apply to the U.S. after their visas expired, but many opted to remain in Canada, which was willing to extend permanent landing status to these needed workers throughout the late 1950s and 1960s. The migration to Winnipeg became so intense that some hospital wards were staffed almost entirely by Filipinos, with the Misericordia Hospital at one point being dominated at all professional levels by Filipinos.<sup>301</sup>

Concurrent to the movement of Filipino health professionals from the U.S. EVP, Canada was experiencing a growing number of applications from nurses in the British West Indies, which revealed the racist ideologies that still informed Canada's labour migration schemes.<sup>302</sup> These "colored nurses"<sup>303</sup> presented unique problems to a country that was in need of their labour but reluctant to host these non-white professionals. There was concern over the

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<sup>301</sup> Dalayoan, Enverga-Magsino and Bailon, *The First Filipino Immigrants in Manitoba*, 24-25.

<sup>302</sup> Agnes Calliste, "Women of Exceptional Merit: Immigration of Caribbean Nurses to Canada," *Canadian Journal of Women & Labour* 6 (1993); Agnes Calliste, "Canada's Immigration Policy and Domesticity from the Caribbean: The second domestic scheme," in *Race, Class, and Gender: Bonds and Barriers*, Jesse Vorst et al., eds. *Socialist Studies* 5 (Winnipeg, MB: Society for Socialist Studies, 1989); Karen Flynn, "Experience and Identity: Black immigrant nurses to Canada, 1950-1980," in *Sisters or Strangers? Immigrant, ethnic, and racialized women in Canadian history*, Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta, Frances Swyripa, eds., 381-398 (Toronto: UTP, 2004).

<sup>303</sup> "Coloured nurses" was the common means of referring to these nurses, and seems to have applied directly to Black nurses. Indeed, in the Library and Archives of Canada there is an entire file called "Colored Nurses" reflecting the racialized means by which these nurses were seen (Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 553-110, vol. 1-2. "Coloured Nurses- General File.")

credentials of foreign trained nurses, as well as their ability to assimilate into Canadian culture, with one government official querying provincial nursing associations in 1956 if they would accept “coloured nurses” in their groups.<sup>304</sup> Again in 1961, a memo to W. R. Baskerville, Director of Immigration, queried whether hospitals knew what they were “getting in to with hiring black nurses, stating “I can't imagine coloured male psychiatric nurses going down too well on [sic] a mental hospital ward.”<sup>305</sup>

Even though these Black British West Indies women, well trained in healthcare, caused a number of xenophobic and racist concerns in Canadian officials, they were pressed to accept their labour because of the Canadian need, as well as the fact that the British Commonwealth forced the government’s hand.<sup>306</sup> Filipino immigrants through the EVP presented a much different problem though; indeed, in the case of this movement, officials seemed willing to manipulate regulations to grant entry and even permanent landing. As was seen in Chapter 1, Filipinos in this period were still perceived as Asian and their assimilability was questioned, which raises questions why Filipino healthcare workers raised so little concern. One reason is that these workers came through the EVP, which ensured that their qualifications were already tested in the U.S., but also that they had experienced working in an Anglo-dominated society. A second reason is that Black West Indies workers were viewed as being promiscuous,<sup>307</sup> and were strong willed with their employers; Filipinos, being largely Christian and similarly capable in

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<sup>304</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 553-110, vol. 1-2. “Coloured Nurses - general file.” 26 January 1956.

<sup>305</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 3. “Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions.” 15 May 1961.

<sup>306</sup> Calliste, “Canada’s Immigration Policy and Domestic from the Caribbean,” 133.

<sup>307</sup> Calliste, “Canada’s Immigration Policy and Domestic from the Caribbean,” 142.

English, were cast quite differently as “personable, attractive, and integrate easily with other Canadians.”<sup>308</sup>

Before the Points System of 1967, training and experience in the healthcare profession could mean entry into Canada for those who might not otherwise qualify for landing. Filipinos typically were restricted from permanent residence in Canada unless they were the spouse or dependent child of a Canadian citizen. Increasingly throughout the late 1950s and 1960s, though, exceptions were made individually based upon a nurse’s offer of employment from a Canadian employer and assurances that they would be able to register with a provincial nursing association. Shortages across Canada meant that Filipino nurses and doctors were settling across the country, and many recruitment schemes by government agents, Canadian Pacific Airways, and other third-party agents targeted the need. Government officials at various levels nevertheless realized the importance of filling vacancies in Canadian hospitals which could not be filled with local nurses, and worked to cut down processing times. M. D. Dymond, the Ontario Minister of Health, wrote to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on 21 October 1966 that “Some of our hospitals...have had to look to immigrant nurses for the solution to their staffing problems. Because of population and demand and the fluidity of the nursing profession, we are going to have to continue to look to outside sources for some time to come. Anything that might upset this flow would cause us a great deal of concern.”<sup>309</sup>

All these discussions surrounding the hiring and placement of “coloured” nurses was necessitated by a drastic need for healthcare professionals following the Second World War. The causes for the growing demand of healthcare professionals include demographic changes,

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<sup>308</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 26 March 1974.

<sup>309</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-3-611, vol. 1. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Immigration from the Philippines.” 21 October 1966.



technological developments, changes in medical practice, and increasing access to healthcare.<sup>310</sup> Following the war, new technologies and nursing practices were being implemented, and newly developed procedures increased the workload for healthcare facilities. At the same time, a change in nursing philosophy came to emphasize progressive, preventative healthcare rather than emergency, reactive treatments. This led to a growth in hospitals, clinics, and privately-run medical homes which required a growing body of health professionals. Finally, movements toward a universal healthcare insurance system for Canadians promised to surge the demand on the medical profession. In the 1950s, several provinces implemented provincially funded programs - starting with Saskatchewan in 1947 - and in 1957, the federal government introduced a scheme that would fund fifty percent of such programs. The demands for skilled labour put nursing schools across Canada in a challenged position to produce the needed labour, and hospitals and other employers filled these gaps with foreign nurses whose credentials and training could not be easily verified, putting pressure on provincial nursing associations' resources.

In a brief in the minutes for 27 November 1958 for the Manitoba Association for Registered Nurses (MALPN), it was noted that demands on the nursing labour force in Manitoba had become increasingly strained in the last ten years and was having trouble finding licensed practical nurses (LPNs) to fill positions. The Manitoba Association for Registered Nurses (MARN) was also having trouble finding RNs to work the hospitals. In 1957, it was reported in the MALPN meeting minutes that the general hospital in Altona, Manitoba, was unable to replace RNs who had resigned, indicating a growing strain on the RN profession. This had a trickle-down effect on the LPNs, as four students had to be withdrawn from the course in

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<sup>310</sup> Manitoba Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (MALPN), *Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974*, vol. 1, P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. 27 November 1958.

Winnipeg because there had to be a certain ratio of RNs to LPNs in accordance with the Manitoba Licensed Practical Nurses Act.<sup>311</sup> This period of acute demand for nurses coincided with increasing applications of foreign trained nurses for licensure, who were seen as an option for the province. For example, a recommended \$10 fee in 1973 for all foreign trained nurses requesting to have their credentials reviewed was rejected because it would “definitely be a deterrent in trying to recruit nurses for this province.”<sup>312</sup>

The first reference to Filipino applicants to the MALPN were a group of five Filipinas in 1966 who had taken midwifery in the Philippines, and were noted as being required to take the full one-year LPN course.<sup>313</sup> In the case of Filipino applicants (see Fig. 2.1) who had nursing education in the Philippines, they were allowed to sit the licensing exam, potentially saving them a year of study and clinical work. Those who came through the midwifery program were required to take the full course. However, given their training, this route of employment would likely be less difficult than a different profession, and would guarantee a decent salary.

By 1968, Philippine midwives were being viewed with less approval as applicants. It was claimed in April 1968 that “Midwives are generally unkempt, have poor command of the English language, make a poor impression, and come from poorer class families”, apparently making them more likely to have criminal records.<sup>314</sup> These moves did little to stem the flow of midwife applicants, though, and this is likely due to the worsening economic conditions in the Philippines that began in the late 1960s, but became acute in the early 1970s. An opportunity to work in

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<sup>311</sup> MALPN, *Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974*, vol. 1, P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. 12 September 1957.

<sup>312</sup> MALPN, *Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974*, vol. 1, P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. 3 January 1974.

<sup>313</sup> MALPN, *Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974*, vol. 1, P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. 1 September 1966. These were applicants to have credentials recognized. There are no records that indicated whether Filipinos were also enrolling in the LPN course as the Barbadian students had done.

<sup>314</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines.” 3 April 1968.

Canada would have been, for many of these women, a way out of what were worsening living conditions. Even as a NA or PN in Canada, the potential wages would have been more than they could hope to earn as a midwife in the Philippines.

In June 1975, J. B. Bissett, the Director of the Foreign Service Branch, stated that this “deluge” was overwhelming the Manila office. They found it necessary to remove all Canadian newspapers and government telephone books from the waiting room of the Canadian embassy because people were searching for any telephone number or mailing addresses they might find to inquire about employment in Canada.<sup>315</sup> Even as the Canadian Embassy attempted to hide contact information, midwives still found information through their personal networks, including family and friends working in Canada and travel agencies. The MARN reported in July 1975 that it, too, was “besieged” with letters from Philippine midwives seeking employment. Each was told that they did not qualify for registration, and the MARN registrar, Marlene Caldwell, felt that they were being given misleading information in the Philippines about their eligibility.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines.” 10 June 1975.

<sup>316</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines.” 28 July 1975.

<b>Education attained in the Philippines<sup>317</sup></b>	<b>Required for Licensure</b>	<b>Number (total of 25)</b>
Midwifery	Full course (pre-clinical and clinical) & final Exam <sup>318</sup>	10
Midwifery	Total pre-clinical, clinical to depend on performance	10
Nursing (R.N.)	Write licensing exam <sup>319</sup>	2
Nursing (R.N.) – failed licensing exam	One-three month(s) clinical experience	2
Nursing (R.N.) – No license or ward experience	Full course (pre-clinical and clinical) & final Exam	1

Fig. 2.1. Educational attainment of Filipino applicants and decisions regarding licensure between 1956-1974.<sup>320</sup>

Some of the earliest Filipino nurses and doctors entered Canada from the United States, where they had been studying and working under the Exchange Visitor Program (EVP). The EVP was the latest iteration of what had been a long relationship with Filipino nurses beginning in the American colonial period. Scholarship programs sponsored by the American government, as well as individuals and philanthropic organizations, allowed Filipino nurses to study in the U.S.<sup>321</sup> The EVP, begun in 1948, was one of the most successful programs. Between 1956 and 1969, over eleven thousand Filipino nurses, mostly women, took part in the EVP.<sup>322</sup> The program gave considerable opportunities, including the opportunity to earn U.S. dollars, which converted to a significant in the Philippine peso when remitted, and gave them valuable

<sup>317</sup> Based on applications for licensure to the MALPN from 1966 to 1974. MALPN, Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974, vol. 2, P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

<sup>318</sup> Those who had taken the midwifery program in the Philippines were often exempted from taking Obstetrics.

<sup>319</sup> After 1 January 1961, such applicants also had to pass a written English language exam. MALPN, Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974, vol. 2, P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. 19 August 1960.

<sup>320</sup> MALPN, Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974, vol. 2, P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. Note that this table only includes applicants who were explicitly stated as attaining education in the Philippines. It is not possible to accurately determine those of Filipino ancestry by family name, or to determine if a Filipino received education in a different country before applying to Manitoba.

<sup>321</sup> Choy, "Exported to Care," 121

<sup>322</sup> Choy, "Exported to Care," 122.

experience which was valued in the Philippines, and carried with it considerable social capital.<sup>323</sup> Participants in the EVP were provided with opportunities to study and work with a monthly stipend, and were intended to return to the Philippines and improve the healthcare system with their enhanced skills and education. The EVP allowed Filipinos to remain in the United States for two years, but by the 1960s more were attempting to extend their stays in the U.S. indefinitely. After 1961, the U.S. required that Filipinos return to the Philippines for at least two years before applying for permanent residency, and it was in this context that Filipino nurses, doctors, and interns began applying for non-permanent entry into Canada with the intention to return to the U.S. after two years.<sup>324</sup> As the EVP program developed, and more Filipinos found their desires to remain permanently in the U.S. temporarily frustrated, Canada was in the midst of its nursing crisis. The “professional skills and historically shaped desires to work abroad”<sup>325</sup> of Filipino nurses, mixed with the level of education they received, especially through the EVP, made this group an attractive source for Canada’s healthcare profession.

The first discussion of these healthcare workers in government sources occurred on 22 January 1959 in a letter from the Department of Citizenship and Immigration indicating that a group of Filipino nurses were requesting temporary visas from the U.S. In July 1959, it was reported that this practice of Filipino nurses and doctors applying from the U.S. for non-permanent entry was increasing. Many of these were coming from Chicago,<sup>326</sup> and it was believed that they were being coached by some source on what to say to immigration officials to avoid suspicion. It was stated that “Although these nurses and doctors, who are in the United

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<sup>323</sup> Choy, “Exported to Care,” 126.; Cleto M. Buduhan, in his study on Filipino garment workers in Winnipeg, notes the degree of prestige that comes along with working abroad. Cleto M. Buduhan, “An Urban Village: The effect of migration on the Filipino garment workers in a Canadian city” (M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba 1972), 53.

<sup>324</sup> Choy, “Exported to Care,” 125.

<sup>325</sup> Choy, “Exported to Care,” 127

<sup>326</sup> Choy, “Exported to Care,” 125.

States under the exchange program, are needed in Canada, we strongly suspect that the majority of them desire to enter Canada for the sole purpose of waiting out the two year requirement, after which they will apply for permanent admission to the United States.”<sup>327</sup> Students in these cases often claimed that, at the end of their EVP period, they wanted a few more years of education and experience in Canada before returning to the Philippines. Given the recent tensions with the Philippines over reciprocity, and that these applicants had pre-arranged employment in Canada, which was a requirement for temporary immigration visas, these nurses were approved. In addition to the concern that these applicants, who were numbered at thirty, were visa-seekers, it is noteworthy that, even amidst the reciprocity issue and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration’s refusal to consider a quota system, there is no mention of the racial background of these healthcare professionals, but rather Canada’s dire need for their labour - a conversation of a much different tone than that which pertained to the Black West Indies nurses.

The context of the reciprocity issue, discussed in Chapter 1, was frequently referenced in discussions of these applicants. In the beginning of 1959, it was suggested that accepting Filipino EVP participants would help smooth relations with the Philippines.<sup>328</sup> In noting the acute demand for medical professionals, it was pointed out that “The Philippine government has already been hostile when their nationals have not been admitted for any reason.”<sup>329</sup> However, as the cases of applications from EVP participants increased, officials became somewhat concerned that accepting these medical professionals could create an embarrassing situation in the future, as the Philippines relied upon the EVP for trained medical staff, and Canada’s recruitment might

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<sup>327</sup> Canada. Department of Citizenship and Immigration - Immigration Branch. RG 76, 552-1-611, vol. 1. “Immigration from the Philippine Islands.” 2 July 1959.

<sup>328</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 555-20-611, “Philippine Exchange Visitors from U.S.” 22 January 1959.

<sup>329</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 555-20-611, “Philippine Exchange Visitors from U.S.” 4 August 1959.

cause further hostility.<sup>330</sup> These applications were referred to by W. R. Baskerville, director of immigration, as a “deluge,” and he presumed that most of these doctors and nurses applied to Canada after having their permanent admission to the U.S. denied. There was also evidence that Filipino nurses in Canada were writing to their friends in the U.S. informing them of opportunities and conditions in Canada.<sup>331</sup> Baskerville expressed concern that these nurses had no intention of returning to the Philippines, “although they at least have a moral commitment in this respect,”<sup>332</sup> and did not want Canada to contribute to the failure of the EVP, which was intended to enrich the nursing system of the Philippines. The Filipino applicants, however, provided a temporary stopgap to the nursing supply problem; as Baskerville noted, Canada had to “consider the need for [medical] interneers and nurses in Canadian hospitals”.<sup>333</sup> In a handwritten response to Baskerville’s letter, it was mused that “if they are not under objection to return to their own country and we are desperately in need of [...] nurses why not take advantage of the situation[?]” Once again, the desire of immigration officials to limit the entry of Filipinos to Canada was beginning to yield to the demands of the labour market, and the hostility to Filipinos as Asians demonstrated by Colonial Fortier in Chapter 1 is absent. Fortier made it clear in a letter to Baskerville in August 1959 that the approvals given to specific cases had been done on an individual basis by Minister Ellen Fairclough due to hospital demand and they did not represent a policy shift.<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 555-20-611, “Philippine Exchange Visitors from U.S.” 30 March 1960.

<sup>331</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 3. “Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions.” 29 November 1961.

<sup>332</sup> Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration - Immigration Branch. RG 76, 552-1-611, vol. 1. “Immigration from the Philippine Islands.” 28 May 1963.

<sup>333</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 555-20-611, “Philippine Exchange Visitors from U.S.” 4 August 1959.

<sup>334</sup> Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration - Immigration Branch. RG 76, 552-1-611, vol. 1. “Immigration from the Philippine Islands.” 31 August 1959.

By 1965, Canadian Pacific Air (CPA) was becoming increasingly involved in the movement of Filipino nurses to Canada, as it was with garment workers. Agents of the company would work with Canadian hospitals to arrange the recruitment of Filipinos in the Philippines. They would do this for no charge, and clearly their motivations were to secure the flight fares of those Filipino recruits. This scheme was met with some annoyance from federal officials, who stated surprise that the company “did not appear to understand that Federal Immigration would have an interest [in the affair], other than in the visa function,”<sup>335</sup> especially when it came to initiating schemes or group movements. Soliciting letters from CPA to hospitals in Toronto indicated that they could “assist in providing staff in a minimum amount of time simply and efficiently as follows.”<sup>336</sup> In these offers, CPA was specifically targeting Filipino nurses from the Philippines.

B. F. Cunnings, the CPA agent responsible for initiating the 1965 scheme, indicated to government officials that a Filipino associate had informed him of nurses who were interested in immigrating to Canada. Initial queries reportedly attracted responses from seventy-five Canadian hospitals for a total of 520 nurses. The government expressed concern about the prospects of these nurses if they made it to Canada. While Cunnings had arranged for the Ontario College of Nurses to screen applicants in the Philippines, there was no guarantee they would be accepted by Immigration, or that they would be guaranteed employment.<sup>337</sup> As it was, however, many nurses who participated in this scheme received offers of employment from hospitals in Ontario. This type of scheme was also reported active in Winnipeg. The first venture by CPA, which was

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<sup>335</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. “Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions.” 8 January 1965.

<sup>336</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. “Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions.” March 1965.

<sup>337</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. “Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions.” 9 June 1965.



endorsed by the Ontario Department of Health and the Ontario College of Nurses, occurred over the summer of 1965, with upwards of 35-40 nurses being screened a day in Manila.<sup>338</sup> The visit was deemed a success, with around 250 nurses' credentials approved.<sup>339</sup>

The changes to Canada's immigration policies embodied in the Points System, and the considerable interest it generated in the Philippines, put a strain on the overall system when it came to assessing applicants and their credentials. Canada's overseas offices struggled to process documents and security clearances, provincial professional organizations struggled to vet the credentials and experience of applicants, and government officials attempted to strike a balance between the needs of Canadian employers and the time needed to process applications.

Foreign applicants to accrediting nursing associations were subjected to a suspicious, policing gaze that was based solely on their origin. In the MALPN, discussions surrounding these foreign trained applicants often took on strong tones of nativism. In July 1969, the MALPN Advisory Council noted that foreign applicants who had to take the full course were preventing those trained in Canada from taking the course. The suggestion seems to be that they were wasting resources, as it was stated that "Most completers [those who need to complete the course] require a lot of theory and there is a high failure rate on the licensing examination." The MALPN felt the failures resulted from problems with language approached the issue from an authoritarian, rather than pedagogical viewpoint, suggesting that "out of country applicants" take English language exams. It was even suggested that such students be subject to *two* separate exams to "compare results."<sup>340</sup> One member of the MALPN Qualifications Committee stated that

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<sup>338</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. "Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions." 9 June 1965.

<sup>339</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. "Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions." 27 July 1965.

<sup>340</sup> MALPN, Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974. Vol. 2. P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. 10 June 1971.

“we seem to be doing so much for those who have trained elsewhere,”<sup>341</sup> apparently forgetting that the healthcare system was in demand for such foreign trained labour. In addition to having an academic standing equivalent to that required by Manitoba’s program, such students were penalized by having to pay a fee to have their academic records evaluated.<sup>342</sup> As these practices extended beyond the implementation of the Points System in 1967 and the apparent removal of racial discrimination, it is clear that the larger system of Canadian immigration was still discriminating based upon geographic backgrounds. Furthermore, the burden on the LPN class space caused by these stringent requirements led to further discrimination by blaming out-of-country applicants for needing the space.

As the 1970s progressed, there was less of a need for medical professionals as their availability across Canada reached appropriate levels, however the number of applications remained high. One case that officials used to demonstrate the problem was a doctor who had reportedly been refused by thirty hospitals for an internship, necessary to practice medicine independently in Canada.<sup>343</sup> Concerned that doctors and nurses would gain landing in Canada only to find that they could not find employment, immigration officials began counselling applicants that they would likely have difficulty finding employment in their profession, and gave doctors zero occupational points on their applications if they did not have pre-arranged employment. However, a trend that had been developing throughout the later 1960s was that medical professionals were immigrating to Canada as sponsored relatives, meaning that their

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<sup>341</sup> MALPN, Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974. Vol. 2. P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. 23 January 1969.

<sup>342</sup> MALPN, Advisory Committee Minutes, 1956-1974. Vol. 2. P4562/3, Provincial Archives of Manitoba. 23 January 1969.

<sup>343</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-12, vol. 1. “Selection and Processing - General Series - Occupational Selection - Doctors and Interns.” 3 September 1974.

occupation did not factor as much as it would for an independent immigrant. All these barriers that were being placed resulted in a dramatic decrease in the immigration of healthcare professionals from the Philippines. In 1973 and 1974, there had been fifty-nine and fifty-four doctors admitted, respectively; that had fallen to eighteen by 1975, and thirteen by the next year.<sup>344</sup>

This sharp decline, caused by the confluence of the changing labour market, increasingly demanding registration requirements of nursing and physician associations, and government attempts to limit medical professional immigration, marked the end of a formative period in Filipino immigration to Canada. In this period, Filipino communities developed in Winnipeg, as well as Toronto and Vancouver. Furthermore, these communities were of educated professionals who, for the most part, found work in their profession. This had distinct effects in the class composition of early Filipino Canadian communities, which would gradually shift in balance as the garment industry became a major pull for Filipino immigration, as well as family reunification.

### **“The ‘Infamous’ Question”<sup>345</sup> of Garment Workers**

As the demands for healthcare professionals dwindled throughout the 1970s, the garment industry in Canada was facing chronic labour shortages. Archival records indicate that the situation was at its worst in Manitoba, and particularly Winnipeg factories. While Montréal and Toronto had 39,864 and 15,047 people respectively employed in the garment industry in 1966,

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<sup>344</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-12, vol. 3. “Selection and Processing - General Series - Occupational Selection - Doctors and Interns.” 24 May 1977.

<sup>345</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” c.May/June 1973.

Winnipeg had 5,200; however, Winnipeg's labour shortage was nearly equal to Toronto.<sup>346</sup> It was estimated in July 1968 that hundreds of workers were needed, and that the demand would likely continue to grow.<sup>347</sup> Winnipeg-based companies such as Peerless Garments and Silpit Industries claimed that the lack of labour meant they were increasingly unable to fill domestic and international orders. Peerless Garments stated they were operating at fifty percent of capacity and were losing approximately \$250,000 a year in lost export orders. Silpit similarly claimed that a deficit in labour was translating to a loss of about one-million dollars in exports to the U.S., and two-million dollars lost to domestic sales, as orders could not be filled. Manitoba had a historic reliance upon immigrant labour to keep its garment factories running, owing to lack of local interest due to low wages and poor working conditions. The movement of Filipinos as garment workers began in 1968, and over the next few years, group movement schemes brought thousands of Filipinos to Winnipeg. These movements were foundational in the development of the Winnipeg community, and indicated a shift in the class makeup of the city's Filipino community as lesser skilled workers settled and sponsored their family members.

Following the Second World War, Canada had been recruiting garment workers from Europe. In the late 1960s, these sources of European workers were becoming scarce. In 1967, there had been a successful recruitment of women from Italy, however the following year interest had decreased significantly. Of the 293 Italian garment workers that came to Winnipeg in July 1967, only 162 remained in the industry a year later, with the others either moving on to other employment or returning to Italy.<sup>348</sup> Reportedly, these women did not find the pay or

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<sup>346</sup> Canada. Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers." 26 July 1968.

<sup>347</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers." 3 July 1968.

<sup>348</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers." 24 July 1968.

working conditions acceptable. Other problems such as restrictions placed upon the migration of single-women in Italy led to employers looking elsewhere for labour, in areas such as Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and the Philippines. There were poor prospects in Japan and South Korea, and the Hong Kong immigration office was too backlogged to offer any assistance, so in 1968 the Manitoban garment industry turned to the Philippines to solve their labour needs.<sup>349</sup> This began what would be one of the most important immigration streams in the Winnipeg Filipino Community.

In April 1966, an unnamed Filipino doctor in Winnipeg approached the owner of Young Ideas garment company with the suggestion he recruit workers from the Philippines, where he claimed there were many qualified garment workers. Although the movement was not initially endorsed by the government, the industry embarked on small-scale recruitment missions to the Philippines at this time, and in 1968 were willing to focus all their recruitment energies on the Asian nation.<sup>350</sup> The first Philippine garment worker scheme, referred to as the “Special Manitoba Garment Worker Scheme,” was met with some hesitancy within the federal government, although the garment industry and Manitoba provincial government were willing to assist in any way they could.

On 22 July 1968, D. S. Kaufman, president of Silpit Industries, submitted a proposal to the federal government that outlined the labour needs of the wider industry in Manitoba, and how their suggested recruitment scheme in Manila would operate.<sup>351</sup> The short-term project was “designed to avoid over-taxing your existing facilities,” realizing that resources were probably

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<sup>349</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 3 July 1968.

<sup>350</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 4 October 1968.

<sup>351</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 22 July 1968.

the largest impediment to the proposed movement's success. Kaufman proposed that the Manitoba Garment Association (MGA) and representatives from the Government of Manitoba would conduct initial interviews and the screening of applicants in Manila from the period of August 1-23 of the same year, little more than a week after the letter was written. There would be an assessment of their skills, including testing on a sewing machine, and an initial review of their eligibility for immigration. To avoid stressing the resources of the Canadian Consulate-General, space would be rented in a local hospital; this would allow medical testing to be done on the same date as the initial interview. Applicants who were approved would then be extended an offer of employment and be sent for processing with the federal government. Those workers who were granted entry to Canada would be given a \$120 relocation loan, which would be written off over a twenty-four month period. The Manitoba government and MGA would share the repayment to the federal government of all Assisted Passage Loans, a federal government program to assist immigrants to purchase airfare. The goal was to have the first immigrants arrive by the third week of August and, while this seemed ambitious, the first group of Filipino garment workers arrived in Winnipeg on 1 October 1968 on CPA flight 002, six weeks after Kaufman's proposal was initially submitted.<sup>352</sup>

While government officials wanted to assist the garment industry, they had a number of reservations regarding large-scale recruitment schemes. A longstanding concern which this proposal recalled was that the industry was too dependent upon immigration schemes to fill chronic labour shortages. While the MGA claimed it had attractive wages and working conditions, the federal government repeatedly pointed out that there was a rapid turnover of employees, which the Canadian Manpower Centre in Winnipeg attributed to low wages and poor

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<sup>352</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers." 27 September 1968.

supervisory capabilities.<sup>353</sup> While the government eventually cooperated with the scheme, it was with the provision that the garment industry in Winnipeg would have to address those root problems. Immigration officials were also concerned of the chain-reaction this scheme might initiate. Most of the applicants were anticipated to be “single girls,” who would likely sponsor their family members who, it was emphasized, would be unskilled.<sup>354</sup> As the Consulate-General in Manila summed up in its report of the August 1968 movement, “It should not be forgotten that most Filipino families are very large. A family of twelve is not unusual here.”<sup>355</sup>

After arriving in Manila on August 26, Meyer Klapman dropped the declared need from 200 to 166.<sup>356</sup> The CPA, responsible for identifying potential applicants, had forwarded 786 for testing, of which 210 passed; Klapman, however, expressed doubt that all could be absorbed in Winnipeg.<sup>357</sup> The Officer-in-Charge in the Manila office wrote that the “industry did [not] need these people as badly as we thought.”<sup>358</sup> The process appeared to be working smoothly until reports that Klapman and his team “left many applicants with bad feelings” when they suddenly abandoned the interview rooms in the morning, leaving about 40-50 applicants in the waiting room.<sup>359</sup> It was never made clear why Klapman left, as he had not yet reached his quota of 150, although officials discovered that he spent the following two days touring Tokyo.<sup>360</sup> It is most

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<sup>353</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 23 July 1968.

<sup>354</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 10 July 1968.

<sup>355</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 4 October 1968.

<sup>356</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 4 October 1968.

<sup>357</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 4 October 1968.

<sup>358</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 30 August 1968.

<sup>359</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 5 September 1968.

<sup>360</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 4 October 1968.

likely that before he left for Manila, he realized the need for immigrant labour had been overhyped, as indicated by the immediate reduction in numbers from 200 to 166. The first group of thirty Filipino garment workers began arriving on 1 October 1968, and subsequent groups were capped at thirty to allow employers time to properly absorb and settle the workers.

The overall experience of the movement left a bad taste with the government, made worse by the “extremely casual behaviour of Mr. Klapman.”<sup>361</sup> Other issues drew the concern of the Consulate-General, such as the high costs for Filipinos to secure documentation, opening them up to exploitation by shady money lenders. There was also clear concern about the class of immigrants being admitted. Many applicants came from lower-class families, making a wage of ₱6 a day (\$1.65 CAD),<sup>362</sup> barely enough to provide food and other essentials, and at many stages of this movement officials were reminded that they would be sponsoring their (unskilled) family members as soon as possible. Furthermore, the consul in Manila predicted some visas would not be acted upon if the applicants could not provide their documentation. In addition to costs estimated around ₱300, items for life in Winnipeg, such as winter clothing, were necessary, meaning that many immigrants would arrive in Canada already indebted. Those who could not afford to finalize their immigration might find themselves in tight positions, as many were losing their jobs when it was discovered they had applied for immigration.<sup>363</sup>

Group movements of garment workers from the Philippines for the Manitoba garment industry continued into the 1970s, as the industry experienced substantial growth. In August 1973, it was reported that there was a “heavy expansion” of the garment industry in Winnipeg,

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<sup>361</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 11 October 1968.

<sup>362</sup> CAD rate based on historical currency conversion by <http://fxop.com> for 1 October 1968.

<sup>363</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 3. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 4 October 1968.



which would only put more demand for fresh sources of labour.<sup>364</sup> The growth was not just in terms of contracts and business, but actual physical expansion of plants. Since the beginning of 1972, it was stated that there had been one million square feet of expansion in the thirty-nine companies which responded to a survey questionnaire by Manitoba Fashion Institute (MFI) (see Fig. 2.2).<sup>365</sup> The MFI, which was a new group independent of the MGA, insisted in a position paper on immigration that such growth could not be maintained without foreign labour, calling it a “fact of life in Manitoba.”<sup>366</sup> Foreign Service officials in the Manila embassy agreed with this, surmising that “the bulk of [the] Winnipeg clothing trade would have to shut down” if not for immigrant labour from the Philippines.<sup>367</sup> The paper claimed that a five-year forecast, taking into account projected expansion in business and the size of plants, called for at least 8,200 workers, with some estimates going as high as 10,000. Responding to the fact that other active garment industries in Toronto and Montreal did not rely on immigration, the MFI stated that Manitoba was different because its rural areas were not as densely populated, and that there were fewer sites for apparel factories. Situating the bulk of Manitoba’s industry in Winnipeg meant that the local pool of labour was constantly dry, even as the Winnipeg industry grew at “an unbelievable rate” and was “bursting at the seams.” The MFI viewed Filipino labour, as had officials in Manila, as a stabilizing force similar to that of Ukrainian settlers in Manitoba’s early history.<sup>368</sup>

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<sup>364</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 23 August 1973.

<sup>365</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 7. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” March 1974.

<sup>366</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” September/October 1973.

<sup>367</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 5 December 1972.

<sup>368</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” September/October 1973.

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Additional Space Added (sq. ft.)</b>	<b>New Structures</b>
Silpit Industries Ltd.	155,000	2
Tan-Jay Ltd.	70,000	1
Winkler Apparel, Junior Wear Ltd.,	57,500	1
Miami Fashions, CeeGee Ltd.		
Rice Sportswear Ltd.	70,000	1
S. Stall & Son, Ltd.	10,000	1
National Cloak Ltd.	50,000	1
Panther Pant Ltd.	35,000	1
Freed b Freed Ltd.	40,000	1
Kaplan's Mfg. Co. Ltd.	15,000	1
Mid West Garments Ltd.	32,000	1
Park Leather Ltd.	20,000	1
Lantry Leathers Ltd.	32,000	1
Wescott Fashions Ltd.	125,000	1
Monarch Wear of Canada Ltd.	25,000	
G.W.G.	10,000	
Century 21 Apparels Ltd.	35,000	1
United Garments Ltd.	8,000	
Victoria Leather Jacket Co. Ltd. Reiss Fur Company Ltd.	45,000	1
Reiss Fur Company Limited	5,500	
Gemini Ltd.	81,000	2
Manitoba Fashion Institute Inc.	4,000	1

Fig. 2.2. Reported Expansions in Manitoba Garment Industry from mid-1971 to 1974.

Even if there was sympathy for the needs of the Manitoba garment industry, questions of the efficacy of such a strategy came to be increasingly scrutinized as group movements continued throughout the early 1970s. Federal and provincial government officials noted that, despite the high numbers of recruits each year, the garment industry in Manitoba still had significant gaps in employment resulting from high turnover of workers due to an increasing

trend of Filipina workers leaving their employment once better opportunities were found. In May 1974, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration was told that the garment industry claimed to be in urgent need of 1,000 workers, but that the Canadian Manpower Centre stated that if even 250 arrived in Winnipeg, they would not find jobs.<sup>369</sup> The Canadian Embassy in Manila was constantly suspicious of MGI demands, stating it was “surprised [that the] dep[artment]t considers [the] industry so ingenuous” given its tendency for over-exaggeration in the past.<sup>370</sup> Indeed the past behaviour of the industry, including sudden changes in the number of workers needed or the sudden disappearance of Meyer Klapman in 1968, led to little sympathy with the embassy, which was called a “self-centred attitude industry.”<sup>371</sup>

By 1974, the government began to acknowledge that relations between stakeholders were no longer as simple as they were from 1967 to 1972 and that conditions surrounding group movement had changed. A joint provisional and federal task force had decided in October 1973 that group recruitment should be avoided, and that both levels of government could do more to support the development of local workers. This relationship was part of the reason for the ending of these schemes, with concern among federal officials that “a substantial, high-profile movement into the garment industry from the Philippines would be treated as a betrayal of the principle of joint federal-provincial manpower planning [by Manitoba].”<sup>372</sup> Complications remained in the fact that the only way the industry’s independent recruitment of workers could

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<sup>369</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 9. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 27 May 1974.

<sup>370</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 13 July 1973.

<sup>371</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 7. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 22 November 1973.

<sup>372</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 21 May 1974.

be curtailed was if the Philippine government put a stop to such emigration, which was unlikely due to its reliance upon remittances.<sup>373</sup>

The issue was summarized in a memo to the federal Minister of Manpower and Immigration which began by indicating that Mayer Klapman was requesting the “usual courtesies” for a planned trip to the Philippines. As the memo stated, this was not a routine request as the situation had become “complicated” since 1972. First, Leonard S. Evans, Manitoba Minister of Industry and Commerce, was strongly against the recruitment of offshore labour for the garment industry.<sup>374</sup> In a letter to Robert Andras, federal Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Evans stated that the province will not “participate in, and cannot condone” immigrant labour and requested that “all efforts to recruit overseas workers for the fashion industry in Manitoba cease” in favour of developing provincial labour sources.<sup>375</sup> A *Globe and Mail* article on garment workers in Winnipeg from April 1974 focused on the NDP’s distaste for immigrant labour in the industry. It reported that “The labour-oriented Government simply doesn’t see continuing immigration as a solution,” and reported Industry and Commerce Minister Leonard Evans as stating, “that if the industry paid decent wages, it wouldn’t have any trouble getting workers.”<sup>376</sup>

A second changed context was that the Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos was attempting to institute “New Society” policies to rapidly redevelop the economy and society, and this process was threatened by the brain-drain that the hiring of Filipinos often constituted.

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<sup>373</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 21 May 1974.

<sup>374</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 9. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 27 May 1974.

<sup>375</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 7. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 12 December 1973.

<sup>376</sup> Egon French, “Manitoba: Garment Worker Dispute Like Upset Hornet’s Nest,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 April 1974. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

Complaints were made to the Philippine government by a Levi-Strauss plant in Manila that programs to train locals in the industry were being set back by having “[workers] siphoned off by the Winnipeg garment industry.”<sup>377</sup> In a letter to Amado Gat Inciong, Secretary of the Philippine Department of Labor, the company reported that “We have invested substantially under our in-plant training program as we have been tapped...to generate employment opportunities in the export sector.” They pointed to the assistance the Philippine government was giving to Canada, and that they were “reeling at the impact of the pirating...by the Canadian Embassy”.<sup>378</sup> To this the Canadian ambassador in Manila had some sympathy, stating that the recruitment of garment workers in the Philippines had come to be “a sordid affair for an embassy operation, reminiscent of the slave trade in years gone by.”<sup>379</sup>

Such concerns were brushed aside by officials in Ottawa, stating that if the Philippine government did not object, they had no obligation to react to Levi-Strauss’ complaints. Given that the Philippines was increasingly becoming reliant upon overseas remittances in the 1970s, it remained highly unlikely that such complaints would be acted upon, even if it meant sabotaging attempts to improve the domestic labour condition, which created the economic conditions that drove out-migration in the first place. And while Ottawa expressed appreciation over the “international dimension” of the longstanding problem, the embassy was informed that the Department of Manpower and Immigration was beholden to its responsibility.<sup>380</sup> That responsibility meant that the department would do anything it could, and utilize any source that

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<sup>377</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 9. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 27 May 1974.

<sup>378</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 7. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 11 February 1974.

<sup>379</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 26 March 1974.

<sup>380</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 13 May 1974.

presented itself, to alleviate shortages in Canadian labour markets, regardless of the fallout in sending countries. This was admitted as such by Jean W. Edmonds, Assistant Deputy Minister in charge of immigration, when she referred to the “‘elitist’ conception of the selection system” that skimmed only the best applicants.<sup>381</sup>

A third factor contributing to the new context in 1974 was the growing discomfort with the activities of recruitment agencies which were becoming increasingly unscrupulous and aggressive in their attempts to bypass government restrictions and regulations. Even companies that were legitimately licensed in the Philippines were considered to have “very low” professional standards,<sup>382</sup> and, with Canadian employers reportedly giving blanket employment offers without skill testing, workers of poor skill and capability were entering the industry. A report from the Manila embassy in February 1975 told of an unnamed Filipino priest in Winnipeg that had been forwarding sponsored Filipina applicants to garment factories, of whom “not one has passed the test.” The same communique stated that Ralph King of Gemini Fashions in Winnipeg complained that one in nine Filipina sewing operators failed their test, which was the basic requirement to work in the factory.<sup>383</sup> In addition to musing that only Philippine government intervention would stop the flow of Filipino immigrants to the Manitoban garment industry, officials hinted that the only saving grace may be that Manila was “one of our most heavily backlogged offices.”<sup>384</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 21 May 1974.

<sup>382</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 7 May 1974.

<sup>383</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 9. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” February 1975.

<sup>384</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 21 May 1974.

Further to this third point was the increased influx of ‘unskilled’ immigrants that the garment industry was attracting. One of the major goals of the 1967 Points System was to limit immigration to those who were educated, wealthy, or otherwise had needed skills in Canada. Under the group movement scheme, the professional skills of the applicants were tested; as practice moved towards independent immigration, applicants whose skills were not being tested by industry representatives were entering the industry. While recruitment agencies claimed to test applicants, many found ways around this, as will be seen later in this chapter. Furthermore, as garment workers - either skilled or not - landed in Canada, they were known to sponsor relatives that the government feared were largely unskilled.<sup>385</sup> This sponsorship was often brought up in arguments against immigration for the garment industry and indicates one of the fundamental properties of the Points System, and Canadian immigration more generally, that was geared towards skimming top talent from other countries in a way that was exploitative to nearly all parties involved, including the Canadian industry that was meant to benefit.

In the 1970s, as the growing presence of recruitment agencies were interfering with the process of hiring garment workers, the industry in Winnipeg heard of Filipino workers in the Netherlands whose contracts were coming to an end. In the summer of 1974, Silpit, which had been a major company in Manitoba for years, received fifty-six applications from a Bergaus N.V. plant in Ulft, Holland.<sup>386</sup> The federal government first became aware of the movement of

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<sup>385</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 31 August 1973

<sup>386</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 9. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 26 July 1974; Mercy Palpallatoc, “Filipino Residents in the Netherlands,” FFON. <http://www.docsford.com/document/1038384>, accessed 20 February 2018; Malu D. Padilla, “In the Service of our *Kababayans*’ - Bayanihan Philippine Women’s Centre,” in *De Olde Worlde: Views of Filipino Migrants in Europe*, ed. Filomenita Mongaya Hoegsholm (Quezon City: Philippine Social Science Council and Philippine Migration Research Network, 2007): 206.

Filipino garment workers from the Netherlands in the middle of 1970.<sup>387</sup> There existed a bilateral agreement between the Netherlands and the Philippines where such workers could attain residency after two or three years, however many were choosing to move to Canada. Since 1970, there had been a regular flow of Filipino garment workers from the Netherlands who came to Canada following their contractual obligations, most destined to Winnipeg (Fig. 2.3). While this reflects the labour demand that existed in Winnipeg, it also indicates the transnational ties which had developed by the early 1970s that brought Filipinos to the city. These workers in many cases were more attractive than those applying in Manila, as they were not targeted by recruitment agencies, had two to three years of experience working in modern garment factories, and had exposure to living outside the Philippines.<sup>388</sup> While the number of garment workers who came from the Netherlands was relatively small, it reveals how valued Filipino garment workers had become in Winnipeg as industry and government officials were willing to facilitate the immigration of these small groups.

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<sup>387</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 9. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers." 16 August 1974.

<sup>388</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 9. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers." 16 August 1974.



<b>Contract Expiry Date</b>	<b># of workers</b>	<b>Destination</b>
Nov. 1970	26	Winnipeg
Nov. 1971	47	Winnipeg
May 1972	56	Winnipeg
Nov. 1972	45	Winnipeg
Nov. 1972	6	Toronto
Nov. 1973	50	Winnipeg
Nov. 1973	12	Toronto
Feb. 1974	45	Winnipeg
Feb. 1974	17	Toronto
Feb. 1974	1	Montreal
<i>Total</i>	<i>305</i>	

Fig. 2.3. Filipino garment worker contracts from the Netherlands.<sup>389</sup>

While the immigration of Filipino garment workers to Winnipeg continued, the period of group movements was over. These movements had placed too much burden on the resources of Canada's embassy and processing centers in Manila. From the first group movement in 1968, government officials worried that any reliance upon group movements prevented needed reforms to the industry in Manitoba. This stream of Filipino immigration, though, had many consequences for the Winnipeg community. Not only did it increase the population by thousands - even more so when family reunification was considered - but it also affected the class makeup of the population in a relatively short period, a topic examined in Chapter 3. The garment industry, especially from 1968 to 1974, provided numerous opportunities for Filipinos to immigrate to Canada. Those who came during this period of group movements were experienced

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<sup>389</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 9. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers." 16 August 1974.

sewing machine operators and were well extolled for their labour. Indeed, one result of the shift away from group movements was that those destined for the garment industry could gain landing without demonstrating their skill on such machinery, which had been a requirement in the group movements. As was apparent from the continued turnover of Filipino garment workers, though, many did not remain in the industry once other opportunities in Winnipeg were identified, a fact which also led to the decline of group movements. Over the six years of group movements, and the years that followed, this industry brought thousands of Filipino families to the Winnipeg community.

Many of the Filipina women who applied to work in Canada in the healthcare and garment industries were vulnerable to various modes of exploitation. As third-party recruiters became more prevalent, the opportunities for misinformation, false expectations, and the collection of fees could put women - whom many of the immigrants were - in difficult and sometimes vulnerable positions. These applicants were expending considerable resources in submitting necessary documents, receiving health clearances, and security screening to be considered for immigration. Some who were offered letters of employment directly from Canadian hospitals had offers rescinded or visas cancelled because of changing labour needs in Canada or inflated labour needs. These women would have been left in a very difficult situation, having resigned from their positions in the Philippines and in some cases even lost their residence. Employment did not guarantee registration in provincial nursing associations, either, and nurses whose jobs were contingent on registration could find themselves out of work and indebted for the costs associated with immigrating.

While the CPA's activity in the recruitment of Filipino workers was done in consultation with the Canadian government, it was only a matter of time before less scrupulous third-party individuals and companies became involved in the potentially lucrative process. While not all were nefarious in their dealings, others were less than competent in their ability to manage the many factors involved in recruitment and processing. An individual prominent in government records was an excommunicated Catholic priest, Reverend Captain Domingo Nebres of the Philippines, who had been travelling to hospitals in Toronto attempting to line up jobs for nurses with substandard qualifications, from whom he collected service fees.<sup>390</sup> The movements of Nebres in Canada were tracked due to "several disturbing patterns [that] ha[d] developed" in relation to the quality of applicants he was bringing forward to hospitals.<sup>391</sup> In November 1965, there were about fifteen applications from such Filipinos who were not nurses in the Philippines, but rather midwives. They had received offers of employment as Nurses Assistants (NAs), however most did not have any hospital experience. In the Philippines, midwifery was a popular profession, with programs taking about six months. While some did work in Philippine hospitals, many, especially in the provinces, did not, and instead tended to women in their own homes. As hospital experience was a requisite for Canadian hospitals, these midwives were largely unemployable.

Nebres' work in Canada began on 24 October 1963 when he arrived at the Toronto airport and, during a two-hour stopover, was involved in a motor vehicle accident. This led to hospitalization and civil proceedings that kept him in Canada until 23 October 1964, at which time he left for the U.S. Apparently, the Catholic arch-diocese in Toronto was "relieved" to see

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<sup>390</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. "Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions." 17 November 1965.

<sup>391</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. "Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions." 18 November 1965.

him leave Toronto, and expressed some alarm that he had returned to the country once more. In discussions with government officials regarding his activity, Nebres was described as vague and evasive. While he claimed that he was required to stay in Canada due to continued medical treatments and civil proceedings, doctors and lawyers involved in his case said there was no reason for him to remain.<sup>392</sup> In April 1966, the department came into possession of an undelivered letter from Mr. Nebres to a contact in the Philippines who seemed to be assisting him in recruiting Filipino nurses. In this letter, Nebres directs his contact to deal only with a certain individual from Allied Travel in Manila because, in Nebres' words, he "knows what I like." More concerning to the department was that this letter was sent using an envelope from Riverdale Hospital in Toronto, to which he had no formal affiliation.<sup>393</sup> Another more reputable third-party Filipino recruiter, R. C. Ramos, said of Nebres that "he was more of a liability than an asset to the Philippine people."<sup>394</sup>

Individuals like Nebres and Ramos worked from extensive business and personal contacts in the Philippines. In fact, Canadian government officials eventually came to trust R. C. Ramos because he had several legitimate businesses, in which he had significant standing. These individuals and agencies, however, remained a source of concern for the government, such as the North American Immigration Consultants which operated in the Philippines. In March 1969, this company was reported as offering services such as advising potential immigrants on their applications, and pre-testing their files as a means of screening them for the immigration

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<sup>392</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. "Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions." 23 March 1966.

<sup>393</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. "Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions." 21 April 1966.

<sup>394</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. "Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions." 6 June 1966.

process.<sup>395</sup> The idea, it seems, was that they would assist clients in creating strong applications, and caution those who might not qualify for admission into Canada. What created unease was that this agency charged ₱150, and that the agency was claiming to provide updated information on Canadian government regulations. The government saw no need for potential applicants to go to a third-party agency as they were the only party able to offer up-to-date information, such as labour market needs, and that they provided these services for free.

Concern over the North American Immigration Consultants also related to the business ties of the company to the CPA. Officials were content with the previous operations of the CPA, who provided information and facilitated immigration, in conjunction with government agents, and the CPA was content to provide such services for free as they would benefit from the purchase of regular fare tickets. The fear, as expressed by the consulate in Manila, was that the CPA would become a front for the North American Immigration Consultants. Both companies shared the same building in the Philippines and shared the same telephone lines.<sup>396</sup> The general manager of the consultation firm, William Pendarvis, had the same role in Columbian Philippines, which was a sales agent for CPA, and was an abuser of Filipino applicants as will be seen. Officials believed Pendarvis wanted to use the existing connections between the consulate and CPA to his own ends. Instead of being referred from the CPA, which was the first point of contact for potential immigrants, officials feared people would be referred to the North American Immigration Consultants, which were literally just down the hall from the CPA office. As a memorandum on the company stated, they could claim that potential immigrants literally “went

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<sup>395</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-3-611, vol. 1. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Immigration from the Philippines.” 27 March 1966.

<sup>396</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-3-611, vol. 1. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Immigration from the Philippines.” 27 March 1966.

through the wrong door,” and while this was a “comfortable arrangement” for Pendarvis, the government did not “want to have any part in it.”<sup>397</sup>

It was the increased involvement of Manila-based recruitment agencies that worried officials. While they were willing to work with the CPA, which was a Canadian company and, in the past, had worked in conjunction with government officials, the other third-party companies lay outside the purview and control of the government. All of this was an unforeseen consequence of the formalization of Canadian immigration. Since the process had been standardized with universally required documents, background checks, and sets of credentials, it became possible to make a business of advising potential immigrants. When immigration from the Philippines had been controlled on a case-by-case basis before the immigrant reforms of 1962, based upon exceptions and labour shortages in Canada, this level of advising was not necessary. As the 1967 changes became well known, third-party agencies began profiting from the growing number of Filipinos that could qualify for immigration. In the eyes of officials, the business was becoming a “cut-throat competition” in the Philippines with a growing “unsavoury reputation.”<sup>398</sup> These companies operated by using agents not directly employed “to do the dirty work,”<sup>399</sup> and should they fall amiss, the agency would disclaim them.

The immigration process itself was expensive, and the additional fees that these travel agencies collected were often exorbitant. It was noted in October 1969 that some nurses were being forced to pay up to \$150 for these third-party agents, which would have been half a month’s wage *if* they managed to get a higher-end pay scale. Regardless, the fee would have

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<sup>397</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-3-611, vol. 1. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Immigration from the Philippines.” 27 March 1966.

<sup>398</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-3-611, vol. 1. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Immigration from the Philippines.” 27 March 1969.

<sup>399</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines.” 27 March 1969.

consumed a significant portion of their funds. Fr. Nebres reportedly collected ₱150 for his services, a far smaller fee than \$150, but the requirement of the midwives involved with Nebres, who likely did not have access to much disposable income, to take loans for travel might become a messy situation if their employment plans were scuttled. Midwives were in a particularly vulnerable position with these recruiters, as they were most likely to have their applications or employment rejected. It was reported in June 1975 that one agent was making unrealistic promises to both Canadian hospitals and Filipina midwives about the services he could provide. He had misinformed clients that he could secure them a year-long visa, when in fact they would only qualify for six-months. Such unscrupulous practices that jeopardized the future and well-being of these Filipino women were no doubt encouraged by the \$200 payment agents received per nurse to whom Canada granted landing.<sup>400</sup>

These recruitment agencies were predatory actors in Filipino immigration, preying upon both the desperation of Winnipeg companies to find workers, and on Filipinos fleeing worsening economic conditions in the Philippines. They had “plagued departmental operations at Manila over the years” so that the movement of garment workers had come to have “many unsavoury characteristics,”<sup>401</sup> which the embassy had referred to as reminiscent of the Atlantic slave trade. Recruitment agencies would offer Canadian companies the service of identifying potential applicants, testing their abilities, and preparing their papers to immigrate to Canada. These services generated double profits from both the Canadian firms that would pay for each applicant received and the Filipinos utilizing the agencies. One particular racket reported by the embassy

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<sup>400</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines.” 23 June 1975.

<sup>401</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 7 May 1974.

in Manila reported that the agency received a ₱150 payment from an applicant upon initial contact, “and whatever the traffic will reap” from the employers in Winnipeg.<sup>402</sup>

The agencies were becoming increasingly unscrupulous because their profits came from the process of application and the securing of immigration, and not the performance of their clients. It was possible for an immigrant to score fifty points on the immigration points system - having received ten points for secured employment, which was sometimes given out in a blanket manner by employers - and not be capable to operate a sewing machine at the level expected. Eventually, immigration officials began refusing the testing scores of these agencies and instead began working with the Philippine Department of Labor, which provided a sewing machine and testing space.<sup>403</sup> From the Philippine perspective, involvement in this process was crucial, not only to ensure a body of overseas workers who could remit their earnings, but also as a means of protecting their own citizens from exploitation from recruitment agencies. It was also in their interest to ensure skilled candidates were being forwarded for employment because they were building a reputation internationally for supplying overseas workers.<sup>404</sup>

The period of garment worker immigration to Canada took place under the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos, who declared Martial Law in the Philippines in 1972. As was discussed in the Introduction, this period also saw the economic collapse of the Philippines amid an increasing reliance upon the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Both organizations advocated for a formal labour export system that would provide a temporary stop-gap to declining

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<sup>402</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 16 November 1972.

<sup>403</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 28 June 1973.

<sup>404</sup> Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 20.



economic opportunities for Filipinos at home.<sup>405</sup> Marcos also adopted this program as a means of reducing social pressure upon his presidency, and to this end developed what has been called the State Migratory Apparatus (SMA).<sup>406</sup> The SMA, a collection of government agencies and regulatory bodies engaged in facilitating the emigration and collection of remittances of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) included government and private recruitment agencies. While it was in the state's interest to observe these agencies, the realities of the Marcos era – rampant corruption and poor government oversight – meant that many of these private agencies flew under the radar of regulation.

The most egregious case of recruitment agency abuse was likely that of Colombian Philippines, which had served as CPA's agent for years in Manila. On 29 January 1973, Wilfrido Zafra, a sales representative for Colombian Philippines, wrote to the Canadian embassy in Manila to expose certain practices he had witnessed. He reported that Filipino applicants were being overcharged for processing their passports, receiving tax clearance, and handling fees for payment plans of flight fares. Applicants were paying extra money to expedite the process and to receive preference for referral, upwards of ₱1,000, and were being placed ahead of those who scored higher on the sewing machine tests. As a result, applicants who failed the test, but could produce the bribe money, were being sent forward to immigration officials with an offer of employment.

Zafra also reported that "certain abuses" had been committed to a few garment workers - that is, women - stating that "It has been the talk in the office that so and so girl had been dated

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<sup>405</sup> Christina Siracusa and Kristel Acacio, "State Migrant-Exporting Schemes and their Implications for the Rise of Illicit Migration: A comparison of Spain and the Philippines," *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 5 No.3 (Summer 2004), 333

<sup>406</sup> James Tyner, *Made in the Philippines* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 54.

or had to give herself so that she may be included in the list to be recommended for the visa.”<sup>407</sup>

While the government records do not detail these allegations, Cleto Buduhan, in his study of Filipino garment workers in Winnipeg, relayed testimonies of some in Winnipeg: “They were considered in the beginning as helpful patrons, as one immigrant recalled: ‘At first they were my idols, quick to help.’ This positive impression became negative when the earlier applicants spread their knowledge that these agents were ‘extorting money and after beautiful virgins.’”<sup>408</sup> One of Buduhan’s participants reported she was told “Be careful. Do not go alone. One of us has a child. There are many more who were fooled. But they are lucky not to get pregnant. Take care during the flight. The agent who will be the tour guide will try to select the most beautiful to room with.”<sup>409</sup>

The embassy in Manila forwarded the Zafra report in February 1973 to the Director-General of the Foreign Service, reporting that Ralph Bradley, Division Manager of CP Air based out of Tokyo, was “more anxious to paper over the cracks” than deal with the issue. Bradley clearly had some knowledge of the “lifestyle and method of operation” of Gil Pelegrin, who was responsible for many of the abuses, but had little disposition to do anything about him as he worked for little pay and generated profit. With minimal development and cost, the Manila office of CPAir came to generate about one million dollars profit a year from the actions of Columbian Philippines.<sup>410</sup> Pelegrin would be given the chance to resign “as quietly as possible” with a cash incentive. The Attaché in Manila called this very generous, given that he had likely been

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<sup>407</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 29 January 1973.

<sup>408</sup> Buduhan, “An Urban Village,” 62-63.

<sup>409</sup> Buduhan, “An Urban Village,” 63.

<sup>410</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 23 February 1973.

operating this scheme for Winnipeg-based garment workers since the first movement.<sup>411</sup> In June 1973, it was reported that Pelegrin had associated himself with two or three travel agencies in a “placements in Canada” venture, and was currently in the country seeking to line up jobs for garment and hotel workers.<sup>412</sup>

To the embassy in Manila, Pelegrin was an indication that the garment industry needed to sever its reliance on immigration and such recruitment agents, however, to officials in Ottawa such as C. M. Shaw, all that could be said was “I believe there is little we can do.”<sup>413</sup> In a way, the government was powerless in stemming the actions of these recruitment agents and agencies that aggressively advertised their services in the Philippines and to Canadian companies, promising either immigration abroad or a body of ready workers. After these reports of Colombian Philippines - which had been heavily involved since the movement of 1968 - relations were cut with the company and other arrangements were made, such as using Philippine government services.<sup>414</sup> While Canada could refuse applicants known to come from disreputable agencies, they could not limit the extensive advertisement these companies carried out in their aggressive recruitment as the agencies lay under the control of the Philippine government. It’s not known exactly how many Filipina applicants, most coming to Winnipeg, may have suffered or been exploited by these recruitment agencies and men like Gil Pelegrin, but it remains a fact that many who came to live in Winnipeg undoubtedly experienced what Wildrido Zafra described.

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<sup>411</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 23 February 1973.

<sup>412</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 1 June 1973.

<sup>413</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 6. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 26 June 1973.

<sup>414</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-18, vol. 8. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Garment Workers.” 7 May 1974.

Migration is a precarious state and even with the standardization of Canada's immigration policies and regulations, those wanting to come to Canada still found themselves in difficult and vulnerable positions. While Canada's 1967 immigration reforms removed overt racist exclusions, it instituted a neoliberal, neocolonial form of exploitation, often referred to as 'brain drain' where a country such as the Philippines devotes resources to the rearing of children and youth in the hopes that they will contribute to the development of the nation in adulthood.<sup>415</sup> Because immigration to Canada only allows those who have significant credentials, it can be said that the 'cream of the crop' are harvested by Canadian immigration, after decades of developing these individuals in their homelands. In the end, Canada benefits from the skill and expertise of these immigrants - having invested nothing in their development - and the Philippines suffers by losing this talent and labour. The brain drain in the Philippines was only exacerbated by the worsening economic situation in the Philippines and the growing role of the SMA in exporting the labour of its citizens, and while Canada did not have as direct a role in this as the United States did through imperialism, it does partake in the same global economic order that saw the gaps between the north and south grow exponentially.

This exploitation is demonstrated by the issue of Filipino healthcare professionals under the Exchange Visitor Program coming to Canada from the U.S., as well as the fact that most garment workers were recruited from Philippine-based factories. The EVP was meant as a method for Philippine nationals to gain additional training that would benefit themselves and their home communities upon their return to the Philippine labour market. For this reason, participants in the EVP were initially required to promise to return to the Philippines however,

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<sup>415</sup> Harald Bauder, "'Brain Abuse', or the Devaluation of Immigrant Labour in Canada," *Antipode* 35, no. 4 (2003): 699-717.

Canada worked towards recruiting these individuals and finding them employment in Canada. When this movement began in the late 1950s, officials expressed some concern about what their entry to Canada might mean for the Philippines. The Director of Immigration, W. R. Baskerville, wrote to the Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration that these participants had “at least a moral commitment” to return to the Philippines, although Canada nevertheless remained happy to accept these applications, asking “why not take advantage of the situation?”<sup>416</sup> The same attitude was expressed in response to complaints from Levi-Strauss in Manila.

In the case of nurses and doctors, it was justified by Canadian officials through pointing out that there was a saturation of nurses in the Philippines. In a December 1971 memo, it was stated that “nursing colleges and technical schools are graduating students beyond the numbers which the local economy can absorb.”<sup>417</sup> A 1965 report claimed that 2,000 nurses graduated from thirty-seven schools annually in the Philippines.<sup>418</sup> There is little doubt, as Catherine Choy has shown in *Empire of Care*, that nursing education became an industry in this period, relying upon the fact that many would find employment abroad.<sup>419</sup> However, what the claims made by Canadian officials did not make clear was that there was a surplus of nurses in the Philippines because the availability of healthcare facilities was exceedingly poor, especially in the urban areas of the Philippines. There was a surplus, but there was also a lack of healthcare services in general. These claims of surplus were refuted, furthermore, by the sentiment of President Ferdinand Marcos’ pledge in May 1968 to stop the exodus of Filipino nurses abroad when he

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<sup>416</sup> Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration - Immigration Branch. RG 76, 552-1-611, vol. 1. “Immigration from the Philippine Islands.” 31 July 1959.

<sup>417</sup> Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-3-611, vol. 1. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Immigration from the Philippines.” 6 December 1971.

<sup>418</sup> Canada. Department of Manpower and Immigration. RG 76, 553-105-611, vol. 2. “Nurses Philippine Only - Policy & Instructions.” c.August-October 1965.

<sup>419</sup> Choy, *Empire of Care*.

acknowledged that there was a lack of opportunity for nurses,<sup>420</sup> Marcos pointed out that the issue of brain drain was not the only issue, and that when a nurse left their position in a hospital, it cost about ₱400 to replace them. As numbers were increasing - the number of emigrants jumped from 583 to 1,214 from 1966 to 1967 - these costs would be a further drain on Philippine society.

This statement of Marcos also reveals a case of double-speak because as the 1970s arrived, the Marcos government became more engaged with the export of Filipino workers. This included identifying opportunities for OFWs, negotiating with foreign states, training Filipinos for work overseas, and assisting in their processing. The Philippine state certainly had as much as role in the emigration of Filipinos as did the Canadian state. The role of individual Filipinos must not be lost amidst this discussion of state actors, as it is their agency that ultimately decides whether they apply abroad for work. For example, immigrating to Canada provided opportunities not available elsewhere. Under the Exchange Visitor Program agreement with the United States, many Filipino healthcare professionals could hone their skills, but when it came time to apply for permanent residency, barriers in the system led many to turn to Canada, where the local labour climate allowed them to practice their profession. Many of those Filipino garment workers who came to Winnipeg stayed in the industry,<sup>421</sup> but many others left as soon as other opportunities opened, leveraging the demand within the industry as a means of entry to Canada. Clearly, there were many agents and motivations in this system of labour migration from the Philippines to Canada.

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<sup>420</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines." 21 May 1968.

<sup>421</sup> One such case is Danny Sevilla, part of the original 1968 movement, who has remained in the industry for fifty years. Carol Sanders, "Filipino garment worker still on the job after 50 years," *Winnipeg Free Press*, 9 August 2018, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/business/filipino-garment-worker-still-on-the-job-after-50-years-492758391.html>.

This aspect of brain drain may also explain some of the tensions that had developed between Canada's nursing associations and hospital employers, the latter of which were more than pleased to accept large numbers of Filipino nurses. In 1968, the CNA released an official statement disclaiming the brain drain. They recognized that there were shortages of nurses across the world, and that being able to travel as a nurse can be attractive. And while the CNA wanted to recognize the freedom of mobility,

CNA realizes that a high mobility of practitioners adversely affects the efficiency of the agencies and institutions using their services. Shortages in high priority services are exaggerated by high mobility. Recognizing the social influences precipitating the mobility of nurses, CNA opposes activities which exaggerate it. The active recruitment of nurses from countries that are critically undersupplied cannot be condoned.<sup>422</sup>

The statement further claimed that, as a member of International Council of Nurses and a proponent of assisting "less privileged countries," the "CNA regrets and opposes the recruitment activities of Canadian hospitals, governments, transportation and placement agencies, etc., through whose enticements nursing shortages in other countries are affected adversely."<sup>423</sup> The CNA argued that Canada had the population and education facilities needed to meet its own nursing demand and, instead of syphoning some of the best talent from countries abroad, Canada should be assisting in the development of healthcare systems. As with the MALPN records examined earlier in the chapter, there is a degree of nativism hidden in these pleas to stop exploiting other countries.

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<sup>422</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines." 1968.

<sup>423</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. "Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines." 1968.

The CNA position was circulated among government officials, and was largely dismissed by stating that Canada must admit those who meet immigration regulations, resting once again upon the banality of government policy that created a prism turning exploitation into responsibility.<sup>424</sup> The Assistant Deputy Minister of Immigration, furthermore, stated that “one must consider that our Immigration Regulations make no geographic distinction and are universal and non-discriminatory [sic] in their application,”<sup>425</sup> effectually invoking bureaucratic blindness to the heart of CNA’s statement. He continued, shifting blame away from Canada: “the onus is really on the developing countries, or any country, to do their own policing in respect to the seepage of its needed technical and professional manpower.” However, Canada had already demonstrated that it was willing to be party to undermine any such efforts by accepting EVP applicants in the late 1950s and early 1960s, or by recruiting garment workers trained by foreign-investors like Levi-Strauss. The argument ends on an invocation of the U.N.’s Declaration of Human Rights’ defence of the right to migrate, and that “we must be circumspect in our dealings with all countries, lest we be accused of discrimination.” By contributing to the underdevelopment of the Philippine labour market and draining some of its top talents, all while denying any moral culpability, Canada has been complicit in a colonial exploitation of the Philippines.

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<sup>424</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines.” 20 June 1968.

<sup>425</sup> Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration. RG 76, 5850-6-24-611. “Selection & Processing - General Series. Occupational Selection - Nurses - Philippines.” 25 June 1968.



## **Conclusion**

This chapter has had two goals. The first, by presenting new research on early Filipino immigration to Canada, has been to argue that this ethnic community deserves more space within Canadian historiography. Their immigration in the nineteenth century places them alongside Chinese and Japanese migrants, which suggests that the broader literature on Asian Canadians should become more inclusive of this group. As with the discussion in Chapter 1 on the immigration reciprocity issue in 1949, demands in Canada's healthcare system led Canadian officials to make numerous exceptions to restrictive immigration policies to allow Filipino doctors and nurses landing in Canada. What stands out is the lack of concern over the race and origin of these immigrants, but rather their skills and potential contributions to Canada. This is in stark contrast to how Black West Indies immigrants were discussed. The movement of Filipino garment workers beginning in 1968 was an early test of the new Points System and occurred as the economy in the Philippines began a steady decline, leading to a large sustained growth of the Filipino diaspora. As will be seen next in Chapter 3, the Winnipeg Filipino Community saw itself as a part of that diaspora, even as it saw itself as Canadian.

The Winnipeg Filipino community places significant importance on the immigration of healthcare and garment workers in the 1960s and 1970s - as well as other professions - in its history, tying this group to Winnipeg's labour history. It has thus been necessary to understand the contexts of these professions and what structural forces were operating to allow these early immigration streams to flow, which has been the goal of both Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. The contexts, stories, and experiences of subsequent flows of immigration - including family sponsorship - are equally important to know, and merit further study. This focus on labour and

immigration in 1960s-1970s emphasizes how important Filipinos were to Winnipeg's labour economy. In many ways, Filipinos were attractive as English language speakers with exposure to Western culture, and demonstrated a desire to integrate in and contribute to Canada. The following chapters continue the narrative of this community during and beyond this period of initial immigration to Winnipeg by examining community development.

Furthermore, these findings give support to arguments by Henry Yu for recognizing Canada as a Pacific nation,<sup>426</sup> not only because of the added presence of an Asian ethnic group early in Canada's history, but also because of Canada's demonstrated interests in the Asia-Pacific region, which has been seen to have pressured a change in immigration policies. For too long Canada has been portrayed as a "White" nation, built and imagined by European descended cultures. While these groups have traditionally seized political power in Canada, Asian populations have contributed significantly to the creation of the Canadian nation, and these findings should not only impart this upon wider Canadian society, but also emphasize to Filipino Canadians themselves that they have a longstanding place in the Canadian national project.

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<sup>426</sup> Yu, "Global Migrants and the New Pacific Canada."

### **Chapter 3: Overcoming Colonial Mentalities in the Great White North: Ethnic Media, Community Development, and Filipino National Identity in the Diaspora**

#### **Introduction**

Having described the history of the Winnipeg Filipino community's foundation, this dissertation now examines the development of the community itself. Intrinsic to the discussions in this chapter and in Chapter 4 is the theme of transnationalism, including the multiple ties and the conceptual spaces which Filipinos in Winnipeg occupied as they built their community networks and negotiated their identity. These ties were also present in Chapter 2, such as the sharing of labour information throughout networks linking Filipinos in the Philippines and abroad. This chapter details how connections to the Philippines and an acute national awareness drove the development of a Filipino Canadian identity, and how this discussion drove developments in major Filipino community organizations.

In February 1977, three members of the Filipino community in Winnipeg published the first issue of the *Silangan*, the first Filipino newspaper in Western Canada. The *Silangan* claimed to be the first Filipino newspaper in Canada,<sup>427</sup> and served Western Canada during its publication run. From 1977 to 1982, the *Silangan* ran columns from Canada's western provinces, and for a period had a correspondent in Los Angeles, California. The mission of the paper was to link the Filipino diaspora in Canada with news items and discussion of issues facing the community. Letters to the Editor indicated a wide readership that extended beyond North America to Europe,

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<sup>427</sup> This is difficult to independently confirm, however the other major Canadian Filipino publication at the time, *Balita*, published from Toronto, first appeared in 1978. Certainly, the *Silangan* was the first in Western Canada.

Australia, and the Philippines.<sup>428</sup> The content of the paper ranged from community politics, ethnic identity, and public controversies to social life, sports, and business. In addition to providing a news outlet, the paper's goal was to fill what was seen as a communication gap within the Canadian Filipino community, a "'void' in our community that can be best served by the written word".<sup>429</sup> Quickly becoming a dominant voice in the community, the *Silangan* acted as a vehicle for community development by providing a forum for discussion and debate, but also through a vocal criticism of the Philippine Association of Manitoba (PAM), the organization which claimed leadership of the community.

This chapter is primarily focused on the dynamics of community and identity and the role that the *Silangan* newspaper had in those dynamics. There are thus three major themes throughout this chapter. The overall theme is the role of ethnic media in the Filipino community. At times, the paper may fade into the background as other themes in the community are explored, however the paper's role in these discussions nevertheless remain central, and the sections on voice and ethnic media are meant to ground the following analyses in that context. The paper ceased publication in July 1982 when its editor, Ted Alcuityas decided to step away from the paper. He had been embroiled with PAM's support of the United Council of Filipino Associations in Canada, which Alcuityas protested because of what he felt was an egregious use of tax dollars through government funding. It was revived shortly after under the leadership of Rod Cantiveros, who had been a regular columnist under the name *New Silangan*, later renamed the *Filipino Journal*. Much of the editorial opinion presented in this chapter belonged to Ted

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<sup>428</sup> This was not through an international circulation but rather the result of Filipinos travelling either to the Philippines or elsewhere, and bringing copies of the paper with them. Sometimes, people also wrote in to the paper requesting sample issues.

<sup>429</sup> "Editorial: A Paper is Born," *Silangan*, February 1977.

Alcuitas and to maintain cohesion in the analysis this examination has focused on the six-year run of the paper.

The other two themes are the dynamics of community development and the negotiation of a Filipino national identity in the Canadian diaspora. Combining these two is at first glance an ambitious task, but the underlying role of the *Silangan* unites both sections. Furthermore, the initial theme of community development brings up issues surrounding the election of the PAM's executive committee, issues which raised questions of Filipino cultural practices which lead naturally into discussion of national identity. This final theme focuses on discussions within the *Silangan* that at the same time criticized practices of Filipinos in Canada while putting forward the image of a reformed Filipino in a post-colonial context.

The choice of the name *Silangan* was, according to the paper's editor, intentionally chosen over other common names such as the "Philippine Tribune" or the "Philippine Forum". The name *Silangan* "came in a 'flash' and I became attached to it – maybe because of the feelings it evoked in me,"<sup>430</sup> wrote the editor. *Silangan*, which can mean "the East," "where the sun rises," or "sunrise," was chosen because the editor wanted a distinct Filipino word to represent the Filipino newspaper. The paper's name was also meant to represent the collective experience of the young Filipino community in Winnipeg: "SILANGAN seems to embody the Filipino's dream to reestablish himself in a foreign land...with all its attending struggles. It is my hope that it will serve as a beacon for all of us to continuously renew ourselves and have a 'nostalgia for the future and not of the past'."<sup>431</sup> The conjunction of this title, which appealed to a distinctly Filipino heritage, with the title's logo suggests there was nativism to the paper (see Fig. 3.1). The first logo of the *Silangan* seemed to harken to a tribal artistic tradition, and, at a time of

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<sup>430</sup> "From the Publisher," *Silangan*, March 1977.

<sup>431</sup> "From the Publisher," *Silangan*, March 1977.

post-colonialism and Martial Law, it may have been a statement on the importance of Philippine heritage to a modern Filipino identity. At the very least, this represents the value that the paper placed on Filipino identity and heritage.<sup>432</sup>



Fig. 3.1. Logo used on the first edition of the *Silangan*.

While this chapter focuses largely on Filipinos in Winnipeg, this community's issues were tied to and shared by other Filipino communities across Canada and the world. Broader, macro-processes affecting Filipinos were experienced within a unique, local context.<sup>433</sup> Thus, when controversy arose surrounding the election of the PAM's executive board in 1980, writers in the paper not only tried to explain the controversy in the context of Philippine political

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<sup>432</sup> My gratitude goes to Yuria Furusawa for pointing this out to me at the Institute for Philippine Culture International Summer School for Doctoral Researchers held at Ateneo de Manila University (Manila, the Philippines) in 2015.

<sup>433</sup> John Walsh and Steven High, "Re-Thinking the Concept of 'Community'," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 32, no. 64 (1999), 268.

practice but sought out guidance from Philippine election law. The fallout of this election involved Filipinos from other Canadian communities in a shared conceptual space that bonded Filipinos together through issues that were understood in broader Filipino contexts. On a national level, these debates were part of a larger discussion about what it meant to be Filipino Canadian. Two phenomena spawned from the debates within the *Silangan* surround the “1980 Crisis.” The first was the degree of community development that occurred following the election, including the creation of a new community organization and attempts to reach out to a wider base of Filipinos in Canada. The second was a discursive creation of an ideal Filipino identity, here referred to as the “Filipino Self.” This debate took on a transnational perspective as it included discussion from around the country and placed cultural practices in the Philippines front-and-center of discussion. In this way, the *Silangan* as both a form of communications technology and a forum for community engagement provided the space and freedom of expression needed for this community’s period of development.

The inscription of meanings given to community activities arising out of the 1980 PAM election are interrogated through the lens of “thick description”<sup>434</sup> in the process of analyzing community development. The idea of thick description by Clifford Geertz suggests looking beyond outward appearances to try to understand the meanings and understandings behind actions. Geertz’ notion of thick description, for whatever shortcomings to which others point,<sup>435</sup> emphasizes the importance of trying to understand actions from the perspective of the actor.<sup>436</sup> This complements Pierre Bourdieu’s idea of habitus as providing the context for the valuation

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<sup>434</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>435</sup> Aletta Biersack, “Local Knowledge, Local History: Geertz and Beyond,” in *The New Cultural History*, ed. by Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989): 72-96.

<sup>436</sup> Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3-30.

and meaning of different forms of capital, including economic, social, and cultural circumstances.<sup>437</sup> Bourdieu's notion of capital - not merely economic, but the "accumulated assets of various kinds which, through ownership, permit further accumulation"<sup>438</sup> - is tied to the power associated with having capital and the power to influence its meaning. The discursive mobilizations of power in the Winnipeg Filipino community were often in response to discussions about how the community should progress and how, as Filipino Canadians, members should behave in Canadian society. The notion of thick description and habitus help to conceptualize how behavioural patterns inherited from the Philippines interacted with different cultural norms in Canada to create a distinct identity. The meanings and understandings that encompassed Filipino Canadian identity were part of community dynamics that were driven by personal networks, business competition, community politics, and resulting internal divisions.

This chapter is thus interested in not only providing a "thick description" of actions and events that seeks to understand them as community members did,<sup>439</sup> but also aims to map the various personal networks that bound Filipinos in Winnipeg, and tracing the consequences of these relations on community development.<sup>440</sup> As we saw in Chapter 2, Filipinos immigrated to Winnipeg with established networks that were only widened in Canada. The mapping of networks of connectedness and meaning are important, as Craig Calhoun states, because "perhaps even more important to the study of community is the question of how, and how much, they [networks] tie their members to each other."<sup>441</sup> As will be seen, these networks not only

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<sup>437</sup> Philip F. Kelly and Tom Lusi, "Migration and the Transnational Habitus: Evidence from Canada and the Philippines," *Environment and Planning A* 38, no. 5 (2006), 833.

<sup>438</sup> Kelly and Lusi, "Migration and the Transnational Habitus."

<sup>439</sup> Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 12-13.

<sup>440</sup> The second section of the chapter will examine how these community networks debated and defined a wider Filipino national identity.

<sup>441</sup> Craig Calhoun, "History, Anthropology, and the Study of Community: Some problems in Macfarlane's proposal," *Social History* 3 (1978): 363-373, quoted in High and Walsh, "The Concept of Community," 368.



bound people together, but also put some in opposition to others and led to internal conflict. Furthermore, it will be seen that these networks are the building blocks of community, and that they give meanings to physical spaces.<sup>442</sup> As these networks are sometimes exclusionary and other times overlapping, the consequence will be a shifting image of the Filipino community in which multiple iterations might exist at once.

## Voice

This chapter traces the construction of the Filipino Self through the exercise of voice in the *Silangan*. The Filipino Self is the ideal Filipino identity created within the pages of the *Silangan* as writers discussed and debated which values, practices, and beliefs composed that identity, and which did not. Voice here is not conceived as merely the utterance of language through speech or text. Voice is often theorized in this way, as a means to express one's opinion, to create self through speech acts, and attempt to alter surrounding reality through experience.<sup>443</sup> However, recent theorizing on voice perceives it as a dialogic event, a happening that is only "actualized by public acknowledgment, by the attendance of a genuine rhetorical audience (reader)."<sup>444</sup> Thus, voice is not owned by the speaker, but rather is public as it must engage an audience.<sup>445</sup> In this conceptualization, "a speaker can [only] be endowed with voice as a function of the public *hearing/reading*".<sup>446</sup> There are a range of responses, however, and an intended audience (an individual, institution, or other group) can either acknowledge potentially

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<sup>442</sup> Talja Blokland, "Bricks, Mortar, and Memories: Neighbourhood and Networks in Collective Acts of Remembering," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25 no.2 (June 2001): 268-283.

<sup>443</sup> Ananda Mitra and Eric Watts, "Theorizing Cyberspace: The Idea of Voice Applied to the Internet Discourse," *New Media and Society* 4, no. 4 (2002), 482.

<sup>444</sup> Mitra and Was, "Theorizing Cyberspace," 483.

<sup>445</sup> Mitra and Was, "Theorizing Cyberspace," 483.

<sup>446</sup> Mitra and Was, "Theorizing Cyberspace," 483. Emphasis in original.

controversial or undermining statements,<sup>447</sup> or they can ignore the call and risk revealing a “moral bankruptcy,” especially for those in a dominant position.<sup>448</sup> Voice in this conception emphasizes that group membership comes with certain rights and responsibilities; because community is constructed along lines of personal relationships, refusing to respond is a failure of responsibility. In this way, studying voice emphasizes that public discourse, as that carried out in the *Silangan*, is the means by which a community invents, imagines, and negotiates itself.<sup>449</sup> As a media outlet targeting the Filipino community, the *Silangan* extended the right to discourse and gave responsibility by expecting responses on community issues, thus driving community development. As previously stated, these issues surrounding development became tied up with the Filipino Self; through the exercise of voice in the *Silangan*, community members were able to engage each other in discussions and arguments about how a Filipino should live in Canada.

### **Ethnic Media**

The study of ethnic media can bring new dimensions of understanding to the development of ethnocultural communities in Canada<sup>450</sup> by supplementing various archival sources and oral history methods. The literature on oral history recognizes that interviews are situational reconstructions of past events, subjective to the speaker’s willingness to speak and share, and, as historical narratives, have a degree of performativity.<sup>451</sup> Oral testimony is often

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<sup>447</sup> Ananda Mitra, “Marginal Voices in Cyberspace,” *New Media and Society* 3, no. 1 (2001), 31.

<sup>448</sup> Mitra, “Marginal Voices in Cyberspace,” 33.

<sup>449</sup> Mitra and Watts, “Theorizing Cyberspace,” 484.

<sup>450</sup> This has recently been demonstrated by Royden Loewen, “Competing Cosmologies: Reading Migration and Identity in an Ethno-religious Newspaper,” *Histoire sociale/Social history* 48 no. 96 (2015): 87-105.

<sup>451</sup> Alexander Freund, “A Canadian Family Talks about Oma’s Life in Nazi Germany: Three-generational interviews and communicative memory,” *Oral History Forum d’histoire orale*, 29 (2009); Ayukawa, “Japanese Pioneer Women”; Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (University of Wisconsin Press Madison, 1997); Alessandro Portelli, “Oral History as Genre,” *Narrative and Genre* (1998): 23-45;

mediated by years of personal growth, reflection, and even personal censorship.<sup>452</sup> From a methodological standpoint, this is the appeal of oral history, as it decenters normative narratives and privileges the unique experiences of individual community members. The personal anecdote, sometimes shunned by other methodologies,<sup>453</sup> is seen as a reflection of the human experience. Such methods, though, may not represent thoughts, feelings, or discussions as they occurred. While ethnic media are mediated and edited, they are formed and created within the immediacy of an event or time period. In this sense, ethnic media can expand the source base for historical researchers; for communities whose archival materials are scattered, unorganized, or in private hands, such media take on added value. In particular, for newspapers with active editorial and comment forums, critical discussions on ethnic identity and questions of integration can be especially open, raw, and grounded in the immediacy of an event. Thus, ethnic media provide an innovative source for understanding and interrogating the dynamics of community development.

### **Gender and Class**

As a popular medium of the Filipino community in the 1970s and 1980s, the *Silangan* offers a unique view of the community makeup. However, one must question what elements were left out when discussing community. For the most part, the contributors to the paper were

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Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1991); Alessandro Portelli, *The Order has been Carried Out: History, Memory, and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (Macmillan, 2003); Jenéa Tallentire, "Strategies of Memory: History, Social Memory, and the Community," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 34 no. 67 (2001): 197-212.

<sup>452</sup> Pamela Sugiman, "Passing Time, Moving Memories: Interpreting Wartime Narratives of Japanese Canadian Women," in *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History* 5th ed., eds. Mona Gleason and Adele Perry (Toronto: OUP, 2006): 242-263.

<sup>453</sup> Steven High, "Sharing Authority in the Writing of Canadian History: The Case of Oral History," in *Contesting Clio's Craft: New Directions and Debates in Canadian History*, eds. Christopher Dummitt and Michael Dawson (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London, 2009a), 23.

male, and came from either a professional (e.g. medical, academic) or business background. Indeed, the paper kept itself close to the pulse of the Filipino business community in Winnipeg, as expressed by its decision to move its offices to “Filipino Town” on Notre Dame Avenue, near the Health Sciences Centre, where several businesses had opened by 1981 (see Fig. 3.2). This move expressed “*Silangan’s* desire to be near the economic centre of the Filipino community.”<sup>454</sup> Many of the personal networks that created the community were based upon business ties, and these were not always positive relationships. In response to the controversy surrounding the PAM in 1980, one letter to the editor stated “it is no secret” that the issue arose from a “running feud which is personal and business in nature.”<sup>455</sup> Not only did business competition and personal egos lead to community cleavages, but these battles were fairly open and well known. What this emphasizes, though, is that male businessmen and professionals dominated the Filipino media scene in Winnipeg. Not only were most PAM leadership roles filled with men, but it was these men who often engaged in discussions regarding Filipino Canadian identity, and the directions that the community should take in its future within *Silangan*. This is not a complete reflection of the community at the time, but rather of those who exercised voice in the paper. Female leaders were not uncommon, including Cecilia Yuthasastrakosol, a successful businesswoman who was profiled in the second issue of the paper, and various board members of the PAM.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> “*Silangan* moves to ‘Filipino Town’,” *Silangan*, October 1981, 1.

<sup>455</sup> “More replies,” *Silangan*, April 1980, 15.

<sup>456</sup> “The Filipina in Business,” *Silangan*, March 1977, 4.

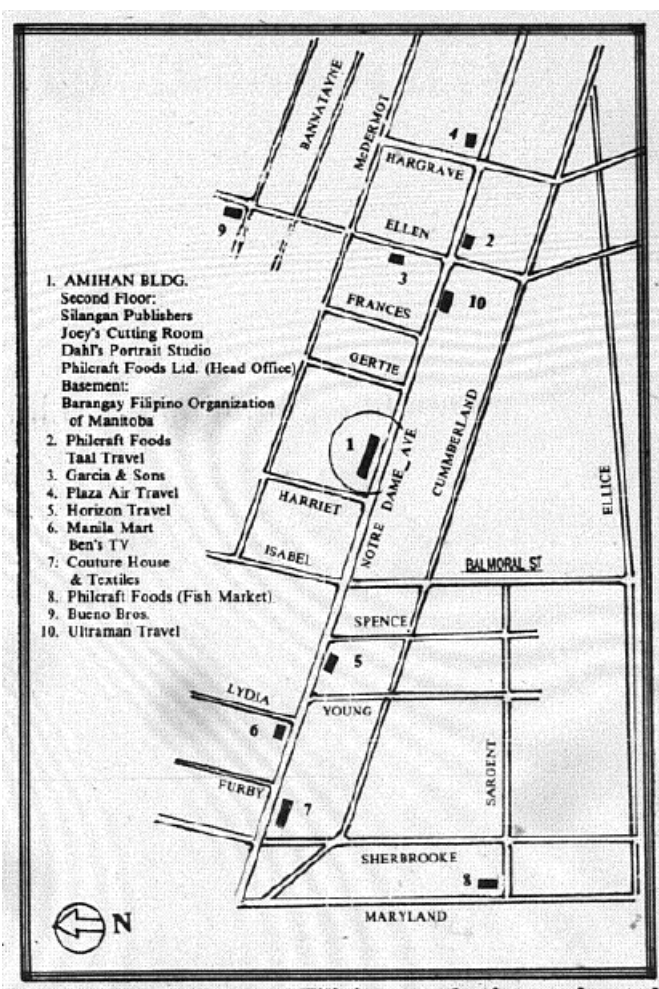


Fig. 3.2. "Filipino Town" in Winnipeg along Notre Dame Avenue, near the Health Sciences Centre.<sup>457</sup>

The class element of the voices in *Silangan* also warrants attention. As examined in Chapter 2, the 1970s and 1980s saw the rapid growth of Filipina<sup>458</sup> workers in Winnipeg's burgeoning garment industry.<sup>459</sup> This group is indirectly alluded to by the profusion of advertisements for seamstresses in the paper, but very rarely factor into any columns, and

<sup>457</sup> "Silangan moves to 'Filipino town'," *Silangan*, October 1981, 1.

<sup>458</sup> In the Filipino language, distinction is made between the male Filipino and female Filipina, as a result of Spanish linguistic influences.

<sup>459</sup> Annalee Lepp, David Millar and Barbara Roberts, "Women in the Winnipeg Garment Trade, 1950s-1970s," in *First Days, Fighting Days: Women in Manitoba History*, ed. Mary Kinnear (Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, 1987); Cleto M. Buduhan, "An Urban Village"; (M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba 1972); Shirley Camia, "Stitching History: Filipina garment workers in Winnipeg" (M.A. Thesis, Ryerson University, 2012.)

certainly do not merit the attention of editorial pieces. When the paper closed temporarily in 1982 after an intense disagreement with the PAM,<sup>460</sup> the editor of *Balita*, a Filipino newspaper published in Toronto, criticized the *Silangan* for not taking a stance in defence of Filipino garment workers during a strike in Winnipeg.<sup>461</sup> Indeed, if one were to map out the personal networks of the paper's editors and columnists, most of the nodes on that map would be community leaders with public profiles. A node here is conceived as points around which the bonds of community form, whether they be individuals, organizations, places, or events in the community's history. While this in itself may not be surprising, it does indicate the degree to which this class of educated individuals affiliated with the paper affected community development.<sup>462</sup> However, the exclusion of garment workers' experiences and opinions was a wider community issue, as the PAM was also criticized for not engaging this significant element of the community.<sup>463</sup> This silence, though, speaks to the makeup of the Filipino community in Winnipeg, and suggests that a major dynamic was one along class lines. The lack of involvement of working-class Filipinos might have been as much a result of a lack of motivation to become engaged as it was of exclusion by groups like the PAM. An editorial cartoon from March 1977 seems to suggest that the uninvolved Filipino - referred to as a UFO (Unidentified Filipino Object) - is "the majority yet minority who is not committed to the organization [PAM]" (see Fig. 3.3).

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<sup>460</sup> The issue focused around the revival of the United Council of Filipino Associations in Canada (UCFAC), which claimed

<sup>461</sup> Ruben Cusipag, "Ed gives up paper over UCFAC issue," *Balita*, August 1-5, 1982, 4.

<sup>462</sup> This group of leaders predominantly appear to be the 'pioneers' of the community, having significant educational attainment.

<sup>463</sup> "Election News Analysis: Philippine Association of Manitoba," *Silangan*, February 1980, 2.



Fig. 3.3. The “Unidentified Filipino Object”.<sup>464</sup>

In critiquing the so-called unidentified Filipino object, though, Filipino leaders, who held privileged status in the community, were not asking *how* to get these members involved. John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald note that there is a difference between a “hearts and minds” approach to social activism that highlights the causes driving civic engagement, and the “resource mobilization” perspective that considers how movements are made possible.<sup>465</sup> Leadership should not merely ask what if anything motivates a group, but also consider how to encourage that engagement. It appears the community leaders were stalling at the first question, seeming to assume a lack of motivation. It has been well documented that groups like garment

<sup>464</sup> *Silangan*, March 1977, p. 8.

<sup>465</sup> John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, *The Trend of Social Movements in America: Professionalization and Resource Mobilization* (Center for Research on Social Organization, University of Michigan, 1977), 1-2.

workers struggled in their position,<sup>466</sup> and the critique of the PAM in 1980 centred around the inability of the organization to create a participatory space for this group. Literature has demonstrated that leisure activities that promote social engagement such as sport, festivals, and volunteering are conducive to democratic participation, arguing that such social leisure activities promote democratic participation rather than representation.<sup>467</sup> Thus, what the PAM was being pushed towards was a community organization model that would better include not only the interests of garment workers, but also their participation.

### **Community Development and Negotiation in the *Silangan***

In migration studies, the meso level - in this case, community organizations - is increasingly recognized as integral in the migration and integration process as a link between individual immigrants (micro) and the state or larger civil society (macro).<sup>468</sup> Individuals - the micro-level of society - can engage with the larger community through the meso-level, which also acts as a representative to the macro-level of society more generally. Given the importance of community organizations, they have the power to both bring segments of the community together and to be sites of contention. In Winnipeg during the 1970s and 1980s, the PAM claimed to represent Filipinos in Manitoba and at times brought the community together. However, the PAM was a particular site of contention as the organization had a number of critics, including the editor and publisher of the *Silangan*, Ted Alcuityas. This resistance to PAM

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<sup>466</sup> Lepp, Millar, and Roberts, "Women in the Winnipeg Garment Trade"; Buduhan, "An Urban Village"; Camia, "Stitching History."

<sup>467</sup> J. L. Hemingway, "Leisure, Social Capital, and Democratic Citizenship," *Journal of Leisure Research* 31 no.2 (1999): 150-165; Susan Arai and Alison Pedlar, "Moving Beyond Individualism in Leisure Theory: A critical analysis of concepts of community and social engagement," *Leisure Studies* 22 (July 2003): 185-202.

<sup>468</sup> Thomas Faist, "The Crucial Meso-Level," in *Selected Studies in International Migration and Immigrant Incorporation*, eds. Jan Rath and Marco Martiniello (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 2010): 59-90.



leadership was often in regard to the Association's governance and the clique-nature of its executive board. Through analyzing these dynamics through the meso-level, we can witness several processes within the community, such as dissent, the workings of personal networks and social spaces, potentials for collaboration, and the coming together of the community.

As an important communication medium in the community, the *Silangan* linked various nodes in the social networks of Filipinos, and not just the leaders discussed previously. Other networks bound the Filipino community, as well. Many had shared bonds based on the region or town of origin in the Philippines, and burgeoning Filipino businesses and business persons were forging complex networks. These links were not always positive, however, and competing business interests could spill over into community politics. Of course, family and friendship ties also characterized the dynamics of the community. A Filipino trait known as *utang na loob*, a debt of gratitude to another,<sup>469</sup> played an important rule. In a more positive sense, *utang na loob* is a cultural practice that emphasizes gratitude and creates a social net in which community members help others. However, and particularly in a political sense, *utang na loob* in practice can result in political clientelism, whereby individuals with power (e.g. money, position, influence, etc.) assist other members in their community in exchange for political support. Charles J-H MacDonald notes that traditional definitions of *utang na loob* were as one between a superior and inferior status individual, with the latter always in debt to the former but not the other way around. It is like a tenant who owes and a landlord who grants.<sup>470</sup> In Philippine

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<sup>469</sup> Francis Dancel, "Utang na Loob: A Philosophical Analysis," in *Filipino Cultural Traits: Claror R. Ceniza Lectures*, ed. Rolando M. Gripaldo (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2005), 111.

<sup>470</sup> Charles J-H MacDonald, "The Filipino as Libertarian: Contemporary Implications of Anarchism," *Philippine Studies: Historical & Ethnographic Viewpoints* 61 no.4 (Dec. 2013), 426-427.

politics, this has resulted in rich political families maintaining control for generations, while at the community level can result in community cliques and divisive politics.<sup>471</sup>

These various networks, many of which crisscrossed and overlapped with each other, are to be understood as forming the bonds of the Filipino community in Winnipeg, and it is along these bonds of connectedness that power is embedded and the community itself contested. Thus, it is not the physical boundaries of Winnipeg that made the community, rather it was the social relationships and actions that happened within and over space that gave the Winnipeg community definition and meaning. While these social networks defined the communal boundaries, they also extended beyond those same boundaries to connect the community to others across the world. These social networks defined the communal boundaries and, because these networks extended beyond Winnipeg, also connected the community to others across Canada and the world. As a result of community being created within spaces of social interaction, not only must community “be seen as an exercise in power, of authority, legitimacy, and resistance,”<sup>472</sup> but also one defined by changes and fluctuations.

The PAM, as a cultural organization claiming to represent all Filipinos in Manitoba, attempted to influence or define the community in several ways, such as cultural preservation, community representation, and community goals. It performed these actions through events such as organizing a conference in 1977 that discussed challenges facing Filipinos in Manitoba.<sup>473</sup> In this sense, the PAM *attempted* to wield symbolic power, which, to be effective, must be

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<sup>471</sup> A 2016 community event hosted by the Philippine Heritage Council of Manitoba in Winnipeg geared towards determining the future course of Winnipeg Filipinos pointed to this sort of personal politics as a barrier, something which Filipinos in the 1970s and 1980s did as well. (*Envisioning Community Project*, Community event held in the Philippine Cultural Centre of Manitoba, 6 June 2016).

<sup>472</sup> Walsh and High, “Rethinking the Concept of Community,” 258-259.

<sup>473</sup> Conrado R. Santos and Erlinda E. Thomson, eds., *The Proceedings of the First Provincial Conference of the Philippine Association of Manitoba on the Theme ‘The Role of Filipinos in the Manitoba Mosaic’*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2-4 September 1977. Winnipeg: In cooperation with the Department of Secretary of State.

recognized by members. While many did support the organization, other segments - such as the *Silangan* - vocally criticized the organization. This pressure against the PAM had been apparent since the paper began in 1977 but became enflamed after controversy followed the election of six new members to the board of directors in 1980.

### **The PAM “Crisis”**

The front page of the *Silangan* in February 1980 proclaimed a “New Era” for the PAM as the organization elected five new members to the twelve-member board of directors. Of the five, four were identified in the paper by their business affiliations, while the fifth was a senior editor with the *Silangan*. At the time of the *Silangan*’s initial reporting of the election, the tense competition between the incumbent president and his rival had resulted in a tie, leaving the leadership of the organization unclear. The campaigning for this election brought up the contentious issue of the perceived elitism of the PAM and exacerbated personal rivalries. During the campaign, one candidate criticized the existing board for refusing to make the financial records of the organization public, calling it “paranoia.”<sup>474</sup> The elitism was also challenged by another candidate who claimed he would tap the “sleeping giant” of the city’s growing number of garment workers “who until now, has shun [sic] the PAM.”<sup>475</sup>

The issue of elitism within the PAM was as much about leadership as it was how the Filipino community conducted itself in Canadian society. This was demonstrated in the critique

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<sup>474</sup> “Election News Analysis: Philippine Association of Manitoba,” *Silangan*, February 1980, 2.

<sup>475</sup> “Election News Analysis: Philippine Association of Manitoba,” *Silangan*, February 1980, 2.

of the presence of security guards at the ballot boxes (see Fig. 3.4).<sup>476</sup> Expressing his worry over the behaviour of the PAM in a Canadian context, the unnamed author stated:

Whoever suggested the idea [of security guards at the ballot box] must still be living in the dark ages of Philippine politics of the 1940's and 1950's. Nowhere in Canadian politics, whether it is municipal, provincial, or federal, do you see uniformed guards guarding ballot boxes. To perpetuate this fear in a country like Canada is a disgrace to its democratic institutions and should not be tolerated in the future.<sup>477</sup>

The guards were later explained by the PAM as being merely “symbolic”.<sup>478</sup> The security, which appears to have been placed to ensure the privacy of voters, as well as an expression of legitimacy by the PAM, was understood by some community members within the context of the contested political landscape of the post-war Philippines, which was characterized by cronyism, intimidation, and violence. An unspoken comparison was the lack of freedoms currently in the Philippines under Martial Law (1972-1982). Canada in this context presented a contrast to the clientelism, bullying, and cronyism that were current in the Philippines. These guards were interpreted as being figures of fear and intimidation, a style of politics seen as incompatible with Canadian values. In terms of governance, guards and security officials are expressions of the state’s symbolic power and claim enforcement within the community. As Filipinos deeply engaged in contemporary Philippine affairs, such shows of government force may have elicited strong responses. The attack on their presence was thus a discursive mobilization of power against the authority claimed by the PAM, or at least the way it was expressed, which Philippine history and contemporary politics inscribed meaning.

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<sup>476</sup>“Election News Analysis: Philippine Association of Manitoba,” *Silangan*, February 1980, 2.

<sup>477</sup> “Election News Analysis: Philippine Association of Manitoba,” *Silangan*, February 1980, 2.

<sup>478</sup> “Philippine Association of Manitoba charged with mockery of election process,” *Silangan* 4 No.3 (March 1980), 1.



Fig. 3.4. Image of security guard at 1980 PAM elections which spurned controversy.<sup>479</sup>

Despite the initial critiques of the PAM election, the election was viewed with favour in the February issue of the *Silangan*. The election drew 300 voters, which was a record in the PAM's ten-year history. Many of the candidates campaigned on platforms of reforming and opening up the organization in terms of finances and membership, giving hope that the organization might be turning a page. The *Silangan* was optimistic that these five new board

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<sup>479</sup> *Silangan*, February 1980, 2.

members would bring change to the organization, although this was a cautious optimism. “The Filipino community in Manitoba is holding its breath,”<sup>480</sup> the paper wrote, because the aftermath of the election - hurt egos, personal animosities, community cleavages - had to be overcome before changes could occur.

The optimism quickly turned despondent with the front-page story of the March 1980 issue entitled “Philippine Association of Manitoba charged with mockery of election process.”<sup>481</sup> Three days after the election, those who had lost filed a formal protest to the chairman of the PAM election committee. This letter was printed in the same March issue, along with a number of other letters under the title “The biggest entertainment of the decade?” The authors of the letter accused the Philippine Embassy of implying support of one candidate over another, and complained that there were several inappropriate actions, such as candidates “obviously positioning themselves inside the polling area and confronting the members of the Commission on Election” and were “implicitly coercing the voters to vote for them to the disadvantage of those candidates like us [the complainants] who respected the place as a neutral ground.”<sup>482</sup> The complaint requested the chairman of the commission to declare the results void, with the threat of legal action should the protest not be given due consideration. Within two weeks of the election, the PAM was in chaos. The chairman had written a letter to the incoming board members, informing them of the protest and requesting a response. They were also informed that the incumbent members who lost in the election would remain in their post until the controversy was settled. The response of the incoming members, also reprinted in the *Silangan*,<sup>483</sup> was

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<sup>480</sup> “Election News Analysis: Philippine Association of Manitoba,” *Silangan*, February 1980, 2.

<sup>481</sup> “Philippine Association of Manitoba charged with mockery of election process,” *Silangan*, March 1980, 1.

<sup>482</sup> “The biggest entertainment of the decade?” *Silangan*, March 1980, 2.

<sup>483</sup> It is not explicitly stated how the *Silangan* obtained copies of this and other related correspondence, although it is possible the original writers shared the letter(s), or else the letters’ recipients.

stinging and rife with sarcasm, congratulating the chairman for delaying the electoral process. Within two weeks, the issue had become so enflamed that the incumbent president, Ralph M. Bunag, sent a letter to the mayor of Winnipeg, Bill Norie, not only informing him of the controversy, but also laying allegations of meddling against the Philippine Embassy.<sup>484</sup>

The controversy of the 1980 PAM election was a polarizing event in the community. Rod E. Cantiveros, a regular columnist, was concerned by the PAM's decision to withhold the inauguration of new candidates based on candidates "who trailed way way behind the winners."<sup>485</sup> He was also critical of the PAM looking towards the Manitoba Election Law and the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa for direction as a means to "hastily promulgate some rules to fit the complaint."<sup>486</sup> Cantiveros even questioned the PAM's relevance to the community:

If an association wants to survive from the quicksand of disunity, from the quagmire of personal differences and clashes, from the folly of the illusion of grandeur of the 'has-beens,' from the foggy litany of financial statements, and from a weak leadership, and lately from questionable appointments, then it must take a second look at its relevance to the community in this new decade. The Philippine Association of Manitoba must be aware of the new realities of the 80s. It should leave through the status quo back door and open the front door to the new comers, to the new faces and young blood (it needs some transfusion). But it needs transfusion from the community itself which it purports to represent. It needs a new vitality and a new direction...<sup>487</sup>

While supporting the institution of the PAM, Cantiveros had lost confidence in its collective leadership, and his litany of criticisms reflect those made by the *Silangan*'s editorial board.

These include fragmentation along personal differences, a sense of elitism severing segments of

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<sup>484</sup> Letter to Winnipeg Mayor Bill Norie by Ralph M. Bunag, "Day 13: A black day for Filipinos in Manitoba His worship now officially informed of our own... (Stupidity?)..." *Silangan*, March 1980, 2. It is not clear if Mr. Bunag received a reply.

<sup>485</sup> Rod E. Cantiveros, "PAM Crisis: Fate of newly elected board members uncertain - day 36," *Silangan*, March 1980, 6.

<sup>486</sup> Cantiveros, "PAM Crisis," 6

<sup>487</sup> Cantiveros, "PAM Crisis," 6.

the community from participation, a lack of transparency, and nescience of community needs.

The phrase “leave through the status quo back door” bluntly states his desire: new leadership that is not affected by the personal differences and tensions circulating in the current leadership circles, although given the current networks of community leaders, it is not clear who was in mind.

Given that the *Silangan* had circulation well outside of Manitoba, there was a wide reader response to what came to be called the “Crisis,” and it was not always negative. One letter to the editor, penned from a reader in Calgary, viewed the contestation over the election as a reminder of “the instinctive passion and militancy of Filipinos in politics,” as well as the “sagacity, adeptness, and ingenuity of our veteran politicians at home.”<sup>488</sup> Of course, there were many who took issue with this similarity, feeling that the Philippine way of doing politics was not appropriate in Canada. To this end, another letter to the editor in the same issue asked “Must we be what we were before in these regards? I wish these people would behave the way politicians here [in Canada] do and hope that we could devote more time to more sensible matters for the benefit of the majority of Filipinos here in Winnipeg.”<sup>489</sup> The different voices in the *Silangan* demonstrate the variety of opinions on this issue. Thus, if we are to see “community boundaries as social constructions, as products of social interaction, as subjective rather than objective elements of everyday life” and if “community must be seen as an exercise in power, of authority, legitimacy, and resistance”,<sup>490</sup> then the *Silangan* was in this way an engine of community change. However, this controversy was not simply a case of schoolyard jealousies, but rather hinged on questions of leadership, procedure, inclusiveness, and direction. The 1980 crisis is a

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<sup>488</sup> “Of security guards and Philippine politics,” *Silangan*, April 1980, 3.

<sup>489</sup> “Of security guards and Philippine politics,” *Silangan*, April 1980, 3.

<sup>490</sup> Walsh and High, “Rethinking the Concept of Community,” 262.



prime example of the dynamics of community (re)formation and (re)negotiation, as leaders and groups that claimed to represent a community were challenged and pushed, resulting in the community moving in new directions.

One of the new directions that resulted from the PAM crisis was the formation of a new organization, the Barangay Filipino Organization of Manitoba (BFOM), described as an “offshoot” of the election investigation “fiasco”.<sup>491</sup> In early April 1980, the PAM sub-committee decided there had been no wrong doing in the February election, however this did not prevent those who had been declared winners from resigning their posts, which resulted in the four losing candidates being sworn in. Clearly, the issue had discomposed those who had won, with one claiming that the process ignored the wishes of the masses.<sup>492</sup> However, it was also apparent that the PAM was trying to attain a sense of legitimacy in light of the complaints, as the investigation referred to the election acts of Manitoba and the Philippines, as well as sworn testimonies from those involved.<sup>493</sup> With a community organization only a decade old facing its first major crisis, and with no pre-established guidelines for direction, the leadership of the PAM, and especially the election committee, was scrambling to respond to both sides of the affair.

The BFOM was called “a new organization for the 80’s,” referencing criticisms that the PAM was no longer in touch with current issues facing Filipinos in Manitoba.<sup>494</sup> The name was chosen from a list of community submissions. The ‘barangay’ were the early socio-political units of the first migrants to the Philippine islands, and today refers to the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines. The decision to use a Filipino term was a respectful nod to the community’s shared heritage, perhaps to find a common ground for unity. The desire for unity following the

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<sup>491</sup> “A new Manitoba organization is born,” *Silangan* April 1980, 1.

<sup>492</sup> “More Replies,” *Silangan* April 1980, 15.

<sup>493</sup> “Election losers sworn [sic] in,” *Silangan* May 1980, 1 & 2.

<sup>494</sup> “Barangay Filipino Organization of Manitoba to hold elections June 8,” *Silangan*, May 1980, 1.

PAM crisis was clear in its Declaration of Principles: “We believe that an organization representing the various sectors of our community - youth workers, blue collar workers, businessmen, professionals, seniors, etc - can encourage and develop a sense of belongingness, create an organization that the community and its members can trust and be proud of.”<sup>495</sup> It is not entirely clear who was responsible for the formation of the group - they are only referenced as a “group of Filipinos”<sup>496</sup> - however of the fifteen-member BFOM executive board, four had been formerly elected in the recent PAM election. Another appears to be the wife of one who also resigned. There was thus a movement of PAM leadership, and likely membership, to the new Barangay organization, and the result of its first election stunned Filipino communities across Canada. While the previous PAM election made ripples for drawing 300 voters, the BFOM drew more than 1,200 voters, the largest of any Filipino organization in Canada at the time.<sup>497</sup> Whether this was because the uproar over the PAM had fired political interests in the Winnipeg community or that the new Barangay organization appealed to wider segments of the community is not clear, but was likely a combination of both.

The dynamics of community development become clear within the rifts, cleavages, and personal vendettas that created, and were caused by, the PAM election and the formation of the *Barangay* association. It is wrong to think that community development occurs only in a context of consensus, as it is to interpret such rifts as weaknesses or signs of disfunction. The debates and arguments bring out the concerns of the community, and, as in the case of the Barangay association, can lead to change. The community was around twenty years old, and its

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<sup>495</sup> “Barangay Filipino Organization of Manitoba to hold elections June 8,” *Silangan*, May 1980, 1.

<sup>496</sup> “A new Manitoba organization,” *Silangan*, April 1980, 1.

<sup>497</sup> “*Barangay* election biggest in Canada!!” *Silangan*, June 1980, 1.

foundations were still being laid. Within the pages of the *Silangan*, Filipinos, including those outside of Manitoba, engaged the argument. While much of the dialogue was from those directly involved in the PAM elections, others used ethnic media to express their opinions, sometimes calling for patience amidst the investigation, and other times likening the actions of the PAM to cronyism and gangster-style politics in the Philippines. While personal attacks and *ad hominem*s did happen in this debate, there was also much negotiation as several issues facing the community were addressed, such as engaging new segments of the community and including others in leadership roles.

This crisis brought out the growing desire for clear leadership. It was apparent in 1980 that, while there was a number vying for leadership roles, there was no clear leader, whether it be an individual or organization. It was often commented that the PAM's claims of leadership and representation were hollow as they had difficulty in maintaining more than 300 members. One of the best pronouncements of the frustration over leadership came from a B.C. editorial in October 1980, indicating it was a problem not secluded to Winnipeg. The author, E. G. Robles,<sup>498</sup> stated that, despite the growing Filipino community in Canada and the emergence of many organizations, "Filipinos remain disintegrated and the destructing force of apathy continues to stand firm in our midst."<sup>499</sup> Robles extended his observations to Canada more generally, and their inclusion in the *Silangan* indicated that Ted Alcuityas believed they applied to Winnipeg as well. Robles bemoaned that there was no one group or individual to lead, one that could "formulate common goals and aspirations." This was not for a lack of potential, though, as there was "a potentially strong group, to be successful in whatever good aspirations and goals it may

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<sup>498</sup> According to his editorial introduction by Ted Alcuityas, Robles was a law graduate from Far Eastern University in Manila, and thus was one of those educated community elite discussed earlier in the chapter.

<sup>499</sup> "A call for Filipino unity," *Silangan*, October 1980, 20.

endeavour. Yes, such potential exists...but it has to be tapped like a mineral ore or a gold mine. The mine exists...but someone has to hold the pike...the followers are there...but there must be a pied piper to play the flute.”<sup>500</sup>

This call for a “pied piper,” one who could inspire Filipinos to follow, coincided with renewed hopes within the Filipino community that 1981 would be a year of unity. Robles was making a general call for the community to come together, stating:

I sincerely believe that a call for Filipino unity is warranted at this time for our own sake...for our own benefit. It is only through a strong and united Filipino community that our cultural background is understood and appreciated; that our cultural heritage is preserved. It is only through a strong and united Filipino community that we can best participate and contribute as a whole to the overall development of Canada and its society of which we are now a part, and take pride to belong.<sup>501</sup>

Unity was presented as not only necessary for the community’s shared goals but was important as the community negotiated its position within and contributed towards Canadian society.

Robles stated that if any goal should unify all Filipinos, it should be the preservation of their culture in Canada. A Winnipeg respondent to Robles, Efren Herrera Villarba, stated that cultural preservation was a noble goal, but that the “gamut of needs of a Filipino in Canada...is wider than his cultural quests,”<sup>502</sup> pointing towards the complex web of needs, desires, and interests involved in community dynamics. Villarba pointed out that there were a number of smaller organizations present that addressed those concerns: “There is no need to re-invent the wheel. What we need momentarily are more people...who comes out to stir the hornet’s nest, disturb the

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<sup>500</sup> “A call for Filipino unity,” *Silangan*, October 1980, 20.

<sup>501</sup> “A call for Filipino unity,” *Silangan*, October 1980, 20.

<sup>502</sup> “In search of unity,” *Silangan*, November 1980, 4.

lethargy, procrastination or semi-retired imagination of our peers.”<sup>503</sup> This comment reveals what lay beneath some of the tension surrounding the PAM: as an organization claiming to represent the needs of all Filipinos in Manitoba, it was not successful in responding to the myriad concerns and interests that different elements of the community held. It might be unrealistic to expect one organization to reflect such different needs, though, and as a result a number of other groups such as cultural or religious associations (e.g. dance troupes or Church committees), hometown and alumni associations, or professional groups (e.g. Manitoba Association of Filipino Teachers) had arisen to meet these interests.

These calls for unity, then, had a few motivations. One was the belief that the community could not progress unless there was unity. In the case of the PAM, the general sentiment from the *Silangan* was that personal interests had to be shed, and the interests of the broader community taken to heart. The second had to do with integration into Canadian society. The writers of the *Silangan* were clear that it would be a mistake to lose their Filipino heritage as they settled into Canada, but also felt that some practices were no longer acceptable if they wanted to be accepted. These debates about improper practices would lead to the formulations of the “Filipino Self,” discussed in the second half of this chapter, becoming intertwined with community development.

By including the editorial calling for a “pied piper,” and a number of responses in support of the column, the paper was itself making a plea for Filipino unity. Ted Alcuitas had made a similar claim in September 1979 when he pointed out that Winnipeg was not the only community experiencing in-fighting, and that Filipinos were not the only ethnic group in Canada that had divisions. The issue that Alcuitas saw facing Winnipeg in 1979 was that “For over a

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<sup>503</sup> “In search of unity,” *Silangan*, November 1980, 4.

decade, no such leader has emerged to capture the imagination of the Filipino community and rally them to one cause.”<sup>504</sup> Both of these editorials reveal the obscurity with which the purpose of the Filipino community was conceived, as these debates never quite define the community’s social boundaries or who qualified for membership. Furthermore, the community had many layers, and what might concern workers or new comers might not be a concern to the more established professional and business class that dominated this debate.

The question of voice and who defined this identity was a source of much strife within the community. The leadership issue also included the ability of the national Filipino organization to represent or unify regional and civic associations. In the 1970s and 1980s, the United Council of Filipino Organizations in Canada claimed to represent different Filipino organizations across Canada. In 1982, though, the editor of *Silangan* claimed that the organization, originally founded in 1963, was “no longer a working organization,” and that it was merely a “parochial organization interested only in the typical Filipino habit of ‘palabas’ [e.g. staged or insincere discussion].”<sup>505</sup> A Toronto based Filipino newspaper, *Balita*, stated that some viewed the organization as “an ill-disguised government-funded junket for the pioneer elite community leaders.”<sup>506</sup> With the overall weakness of Filipino national organization and leadership, what resulted was a struggle to seize voice in the community.

The divisiveness that had permeated the community was often referred to as a “cancer” that Alcuityas hoped could be exposed and cured. He stated, “We refuse to share the view that Filipinos are never united wherever they are.”<sup>507</sup> The *Silangan* perceived its role in this debate as exposing the divisions and their roots. This “sickness” of disunity was attributed to what the

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<sup>504</sup> “From the Publisher,” *Silangan*, September 1979, 2.

<sup>505</sup> *Silangan*, June 1982, 9.

<sup>506</sup> *Balita*, August 1-15, 1982, 12, in *Silangan*, July 1982.

<sup>507</sup> “From the Publisher,” *Silangan*, September 1979, 2.

Filipino nationalist author Nick Joaquin called a “heritage of smallness.”<sup>508</sup> The heritage of smallness was self-attributed by Filipino writers across the diaspora as being a mentality - often referred to as “colonial mentality” - inherited from centuries of colonialism.<sup>509</sup> The premise of a “heritage of smallness” was that colonial rule had taught Filipinos not to work towards their potential, to realize their ability for success. Amidst the controversy of the 1980 PAM election, Mang Ambo, a regular contributor to the paper, claimed that their heritage of smallness came from the failure of “the heritage of greatness which we were led to believe once upon a time,”<sup>510</sup> referring to the colonial tutelage of the American empire that administered the Philippines from 1898 to 1946. The column was scathing of Filipinos at home and abroad, stating that “We export this negative smallness with all its attendant glory in Winnipeg.”<sup>511</sup>

Mang Ambo interpreted the heritage of smallness differently from Joaquin’s original thesis, which stated it was a mentality inherited from a colonial period that held Filipinos back in realizing their potential, either individually or as a group. The invocation of the term is compelling because Mang Ambo placed local community politics within a history of colonialism in the Philippines, echoing the call to drop certain political behaviours from the homeland. On other occasions, writers in the *Silangan* stated that Canada presented an opportunity to overcome their inherited colonial mentality and that it could be achieved through unity. This gives insight into the deeper levels of the community response to the 1980 crisis. Political behaviours were being interpreted against a Philippine past and within the context of their perceptions of Canadian society, and the election was viewed as an opportunity to shed this “heritage of

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<sup>508</sup> Nick Joaquin, “Heritage of Smallness,” in *Culture and History* (Pasig City: Anvil Press, 2004), 351-369.

<sup>509</sup> Martin Joseph Ponce, *Beyond the Nation: Diasporic Filipino literature and queer reading*, (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 12-13. The Philippines was a Spanish colony from the mid-sixteenth century until 1898, when the United States interrupted the Philippine Revolution with the Spanish-American War (1898), which saw the imposition of American imperialism until 1946.

<sup>510</sup> “Heritage of smallness,” *Silangan*, April 1980, 7.

<sup>511</sup> “Heritage of smallness,” *Silangan*, April 1980, 7.

smallness” and find the political strengths of the community. As was seen previously, many saw in these events the expression of Filipino political character with a certain militancy and passion regarding politics. The calls for unity and a “pied piper” to lead the community were thus made within the context of an ethno-cultural group with binding ties of national identity to an ancestral homeland that, in the 1970s and 1980s, was struggling with its own political identity under Martial Law, while recovering from the legacy of centuries of colonial rule.

The dynamics of the Filipino community in Winnipeg thus operated on three geographic scales. At the local scale, personal vendettas, egos, and business interests were the source of many cleavages within the community and were used to explain the 1980 PAM crisis. This analysis has shown that organizations like that PAM operated along a narrow network of relations - one that included the *Silangan* - that was largely male and of a particular class, leaving out significant members of the community such as a growing number of female garment workers. These issues, though, had a lot in common with problems faced by Filipinos on a national scale. The *Silangan* included columnists from Western Canada, and similar issues were often reported in Alberta and B.C.; other communities such as Toronto had similar issues surrounding cultural organizations.<sup>512</sup> This allowed for a national dialogue to develop on shared problems within the Filipino community in Canada, and this gave the debate a transnational element by ascribing many of the problems to a ‘Filipino-ness,’ or cultural traits and practices that had developed in the Philippines over the course of centuries of colonialism and recent post-colonial history.

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<sup>512</sup> As well, other local Filipino papers such as *Balita* in Toronto had a significant role in community dynamics.



## **Ethnic Media, Dissent, and Community Development**

As a recent ethnocultural group in Winnipeg, the Filipino community experienced considerable change during the 1970s and 1980s. Its cultural institutions and leaders were still establishing themselves, their goals, and their mandates. All the while, this group was negotiating how to maintain their Filipino heritage while integrating and contributing to Canadian society. As Philip Kelly and Tom Lusi argue, immigrants maintain transnational connections to their homeland that are not merely economic *or* social *or* political *or* emotional, but are rather a combination that “merge[s] seamlessly in lived experiences.”<sup>513</sup> While at first sight the criticism of the security presence at the PAM 1980 election was in contrast to Canada’s political behaviours, the political and social history of the Philippines ascribed significant meaning. This further emphasizes the point that immigrants’ lives are not merely grounded in an ancestral homeland, but that life merges with new contexts - in this case, Canadian political culture - to form what Kelly and Lusi term the transnational habitus.

Thus, in forging the community institutions of Filipino Canadians in Winnipeg, a continued Philippine heritage was responding to life in Canada. At the heart of many of these debates, such as that surrounding the cultural institution of the PAM, was an issue of identity. If they were to be Filipinos living in Canada, what would their Filipino identity look like? Life abroad in the Canadian diaspora, and community controversies such as the 1980 crisis, gave Filipinos the opportunity and space to debate this. The image of the ideal Filipino living in the diaspora that arose in these discussions was not a cultural avatar preserving Philippine heritage,

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<sup>513</sup> Kelly and Lusi, “Transnational Habitus,” 831.

but had a very distinct political, national character. This image, what I term the Filipino Self, necessarily had its ‘Others’ to which it was contrasted as writers in the *Silangan* debated what it meant to be a Filipino living in the diaspora, one who had the chance to shed their “heritage of smallness” in the Great White North.

### **The Filipino Self**

The Filipino Self was the ideal Filipino who practiced what were innate virtues of their Philippine heritage, abandoned negative practices that were viewed as inherited from centuries of colonialism, and found expression in a particularly nationalist language. That is, this identity was not simply one of heritage but of Philippine nationalism, which was experiencing a resurgence in the 1970s in the writings of Filipino authors such as Renato Constantino, Reynaldo Ileto, and Nick Joaquin. The Filipino Self that was crafted in the *Silangan* found particular expression during the 1980 PAM election crisis. The comparing of guards at the election to Philippine politics in the 1940s and 1950s connected this image of a transgressing Filipino to the nation state of the past, a past which life in Canada should allow them to transcend. Thus, the Filipino Self was often constructed alongside the *transgressing* Filipino.

While multiple versions of this ideal identity were inevitably given throughout the six years of the paper’s publication, what stands out was the Filipino who was not self-interested and who transcended what one writer called the “indigenous evils of society,”<sup>514</sup> which were envy, gossip, egoism, and pomposity, the “clouds that be-dim our path towards prosperity and success.”<sup>515</sup> The term “indigenous evils” catches one’s attention, as often the traits that were seen

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<sup>514</sup> “In Quest of Filipino Unity...,” *Silangan*, December 1980, 4.

<sup>515</sup> “In Quest of Filipino Unity...,” *Silangan*, December 1980, 4.

as unsuitable were colonial inheritances. Regardless, the Filipino Self arose from the confrontation of the Filipino practices and traits with the new diasporic context in Canada. The imagining of the idealized Filipino involved the negotiation of a national identity and political behaviours which were posited against certain practices within the Philippine nation itself. In this way, the Filipino diaspora sought to recraft its national identity.

The idea of Filipino national identity developing in the diaspora has been discussed by Filomeno Aguilar, Jr., in an article on professional and lesser skilled Filipino migrants in Singapore.<sup>516</sup> In this article, Aguilar describes how, following half a century of American imperialism, Filipino nationalism had developed a bifurcated focus on the Philippines and the United States. In his analysis of nationalist sentiment in Filipino diaspora, which grew significantly in the 1960s and 1970s, Aguilar argues that the focus of the Filipino imagination broadened, and “Filipinoness” was compared to a more globalized “Other” as Filipinos found themselves in countries to which they did not traditionally migrate. In regards to the wider Filipino diaspora, Aguilar posed the question: “Has the exodus [of Filipinos abroad] led to denial of Filipinoness, or has the experience actually deepened national identity?”<sup>517</sup> He argues that the experiences of Filipinos working abroad - especially those who experience shame or humiliation towards their national identity as a result of the status of their work (e.g. nannies, domestic helpers, maids) - have led to a firmer expression and belief in Filipino national identity. This validation of a Filipino national identity decreasingly tethered to the United States, as well as the wider academic study of Filipino nationalism in the Philippines, provides the crucial context of

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<sup>516</sup> Filomeno V. Aguilar, Jr., “The Dialectics of Transnational Shame and National Identity,” *Philippine Sociological Review* 44, no. 1/4 (1996): 101–36.

<sup>517</sup> Aguilar, Jr., “Transnational Shame,” 113.

the nationalist debates surrounding the Filipino Self in Winnipeg. Indeed, the construction of the Filipino Self in the *Silangan* rarely referenced the United States except as a colonizing power.

The Filipino Self was instead contrasted with particular Filipino traits that were associated with the Philippines. The crafting of the Filipino Self, which involved shedding a colonial mentality, was a way of purging Philippine national identity of its colonial vestiges, which Nick Joaquin had criticized. This strengthening of Filipino national consciousness and identity in the Winnipeg community, perhaps ironically, developed parallel to the process of integrating into Canadian society. This Filipino identity held back by a colonial mentality was presented, somewhat ironically, as a Filipino “Other.” As new Canadian residents and citizens, many in the Winnipeg community saw the opportunity to shed what was deemed undesirable about their Filipinoness in the process of redefining a national consciousness and identity abroad.

The construction of the ideal Filipino Canadian necessitated multiple “Others.” The Canadian Other - in general, non-Filipino Canadians<sup>518</sup> - was often discussed as generalized Canadian citizens whose behaviours set a model for life in Canada. A second “Other,” one which was of more concern, was the transgressing Filipino, one who failed to achieve or actively resisted the traits of the Filipino Self. These included traditional values such as respect (*galang*), familial responsibility, gratitude (*utang na loob*), and community spirit (*bayanihan*).<sup>519</sup> Negative traits included petty personal rivalries, political clientelism, and ostentatious displays. The transgressing Filipino was one who continued such negative practices in Canada. Ted Alcuitas took issue with ostentatious religious processions in the Filipino community, vociferously

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<sup>518</sup> The Canadian identity is never really defined by writers in the *Silangan*, except in generalized terms as will be seen.

<sup>519</sup> These are cultural traits that Filipinos often associate with their identity. At a 2016 event in the Winnipeg community, called “Envisioning our Future,” these traits were listed as positive values that Filipinos in Winnipeg should continue and instill in Filipino youth not born in the Philippines.

marking them as colonial remnants of the Spanish era. The transgressing Filipino was often compared to a third “Other,” the national Filipino, one remaining in the Philippines and embodying the undesirable aspects of the Filipino Self, imagined from a distinct Canadian diasporic context. This is not to say that all Filipinos in the Philippines were imagined negatively, but rather that Filipino Canadians viewed practices common in the Philippines unsuitable in Canada, and indeed to their Filipino national identity.

While contributors to the *Silangan* continually expressed a concern over cultural preservation, there were some cultural practices they felt were unsuitable for Canada. One example surrounded the paper’s coverage of the celebration of the *Flores de Mayo*, a popular Catholic festivity. An editorial in April 1977 took issue with the ostentatious display and questioned its value to the Filipino community.<sup>520</sup> A later edition of the *Silangan*, a news story on the festival stated that “Centuries of Spanish colonial rule have encouraged the practice thus becoming ingrained in the Filipino mind.”<sup>521</sup> The writers contesting these sorts of festivals were directly confronting inherited colonial practices. Using the context of Canadian society, which the authors argued did not have such flamboyant displays, these writers were reconstructing a Filipino national identity. Not only were these practices deemed inappropriate in Canada, but they were also incompatible with a post-colonial national identity. This was confronted in the July 1979 edition of the *Silangan*. Referring to the need for “more time to shed off our colonial mentality,” an editorial stated that “Filipinos abroad particularly cling to some traditions that definitely have no more bearing on our times.” This critique of the *Santacruz* was extended to “most social functions” of Filipino organizations. The editorial questioned whether such lavishness was the most appropriate way to effectively communicate Philippine heritage to

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<sup>520</sup> “Editorial: Palabas,” *Silangan*, April 1977, 4.

<sup>521</sup> “Weather Perfect for Procession,” *Silangan*, June 1978, 11.

children living in Canada.<sup>522</sup> Filipinos living abroad, perhaps clinging to cultural practices in a state of nostalgia, were urged to “shed off” inherited practices. In this case, the diaspora presented an opportunity to reassert their national identity through its reconstructing.

### **Crafting the Filipino Self and Other(s)**

The forging of a Filipino Self in the Canadian diaspora found energy and expression in the intellectual context of the Philippines. In the 1960s and 1970s, scholarship in the Philippines was seeking to claim its post-colonial historical identity, one that sought to move beyond colonial hangovers to a surviving indigeneity. As Renato Constantino, one such historian, stated in his opening paragraph in his history of the Philippines:

Decades have passed since Filipino historians felt the initial impulse to rewrite Philippine history from the point of view of the Filipino. The discovery that some accepted facts of history were actually apocryphal, the growing realization that certain foreign sources which used to be the staple of history books were flawed by bias, and, during periods of nationalist ferment, the Filipinos’ own heightening awareness of their separate national identity - all these spurred recurring attempts to revisit the past. More recently, the intensified thrust of nationalist forces in Philippine society projected the necessity of establishing a new framework for Philippine history.<sup>523</sup>

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<sup>522</sup> “Should we celebrate lavishly?” *Silangan*, July 1979, 2. It does not seem that these criticisms enacted any real change in the religious practice of Filipinos in Canada. In a June 1980 editorial, Dave Fernandez from Vancouver wrote about the “pride” and “joy” he felt at witnessing the *Santacruz*an pageantry in his “home-away-from-home”. As with many other Hispanized societies, such pageantry around religious festivals is an important part of Filipino culture. The critiques made by Ted Alcuityas were less about the religious value of such pageantry than they were about both integrating into Canadian society, where he perceived such practices were not favoured, and recrafting a Filipino identity free of what he seemed to feel were unproductive practices.

<sup>523</sup> Renato Constantino, *The Philippines*, Volume I: A Past Revisited (Quezon City: Tala Publishing, 1975), 4.

Other authors like Reynaldo Ileto<sup>524</sup> and Nick Joaquin<sup>525</sup> worked towards reclaiming the nation's history from the clutches of colonial-era scholarship. This was a result of a new generation of Filipinos coming of age in a nation that was struggling with the memory of colonial centuries, and this generation of scholars created an intellectual environment that encouraged sentiments of nationalism. It seems that these authors affected many of the authors of *Silangan*, whom were alumni of major universities like Ateneo de Manila, the University of the Philippines, Far Eastern University, and the University of Santo Tomas. Furthermore, given the proliferation of university alumni groups in Winnipeg, it can be assumed that many others in the community were familiar with such writings through their university education. On a number of occasions, when appealing to an ideal Filipino *national* Self, writers in the *Silangan* made appeals to Constantino or Ileto, and even the Filipino American author Carlos Bulosan whose autobiography epitomized the life of Filipinos living in 1930s America.<sup>526</sup> It was in this intellectual context that Nick Joaquin's essay on the "Heritage of Smallness" was used as a means to argue in the *Silangan* that Canada offered Filipinos the opportunity to shed a colonial mentality.

Amid this growth in nationalist scholarship, post-colonial Philippines was undergoing significant economic changes in the 1970s and 1980s, resulting in the phenomenal increase in Filipino emigration. As Filipinos settled abroad, either as temporary workers or permanent immigrants, many took this nationalist sentiment along with them. Filomeno Aguilar, Jr., demonstrated that, with Filipino contract workers in Singapore, this national identity's imagination bifurcated along class lines. On the one end, lesser skilled workers often expressed

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<sup>524</sup>Reynaldo Ileto, *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979).

<sup>525</sup> Joaquin, "Heritage of Smallness."

<sup>526</sup> Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart: A personal history* (University of Washington Press, 1973).

strong expressions of nationalism, sometimes violent, in the face of shame or insults towards their identity as Filipinos, which were viewed as injuries against the nation.<sup>527</sup> On the other end, Filipino professionals experienced a different form of shame by being conflated with lesser skilled workers, leading to refrains like “not all Filipinos are maids.”<sup>528</sup> These various experiences of shame resulted in a finessing of consciousness, especially amongst the lesser skilled workers who found new pride and sense of nationalism. Following events in the international labour market - such as the execution of Flor Contemplacion in 1995<sup>529</sup> - the elites became more invested or concerned with the well-being of these workers as this became imagined in terms of the well-being of the nation.

Thus, this period from the 1960s to the 1980s was one of imaginative energy in the Philippine nation, at home and abroad. The energy and confidence generated by the growing body of nationalist scholarship fueled the desire of Filipinos in Winnipeg to imagine and recraft their national identity. This imaginative power was wielded openly by submissions to the paper, with one Letter to the Editor declaring that “Filipino life abroad is how and what one makes it.”<sup>530</sup> In reference to Filipino political life abroad, Ted Alcuítas made an impassioned call for community leaders to “realize that there is a latent desire in the Filipino to be politically active even in their adopted country.” While not explicitly stated, this construction of the diasporic Filipino is made in contrast to the Philippines where political franchise was stymied by Martial Law and corruption. The language used to express this vision reflects the ultimate sense of pride

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<sup>527</sup> Aguilar, Jr., “Transnational Shame,” 117.

<sup>528</sup> Aguilar, Jr., “Transnational Shame,” 123, 126.

<sup>529</sup> On 17 March 1995, Flor Contemplacion, a Filipina domestic worker, was executed by the Singapore government for the murders of a fellow worker and child. The circumstances around the trial and execution were mired in controversy, and to this day Contemplacion is held as a model of the dangers Overseas Filipino workers can be in. The death of Contemplacion also changed how the government and Philippine society viewed overseas contract workers (Guevarra, *Manufacturing Dreams*, 34).

<sup>530</sup> “Life is how we make it...,” *Silangan*, June 1980, 4.



that the writers had in their heritage. In writing on the cultural practices of Filipinos in Vancouver, one writer cited a friend who had declared their pride of being “a Canadian who is a Filipino.”<sup>531</sup> These expressions are an insight into the “processual mode”<sup>532</sup> of diasporic identity creation in Canada. Not only is it a process of becoming Filipino living in Canada, but it also involves recrafting that Filipino Self within a national imagination that not only reaffirms its identity, but challenges it at once.

### **Overcoming Colonial Mentality in the ‘Great White North’**

Political corruption and other negative cultural and political practices in the Philippines were often cast as a symptom of colonial mentality, as when Mang Ambo invoked Nick Joaquin’s “heritage of smallness.” In his study of British colonialism in India, Asis Nandy states that by having a cultural identity that is permeable, one may encounter and even internalize certain aspects of an invading group while still legitimately maintaining their own existence.<sup>533</sup> Stuart Hall agrees, stating that “this inner expropriation...cripples and deforms.”<sup>534</sup> Writing in a North African context, Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth* states that the reconstruction of national identity following a colonial era is an attempt to move “beyond the misery of today, beyond self-contempt, resignation and abjuration”.<sup>535</sup> The notion of colonial mentality, referring to this internalized oppression in the Filipino psyche, seems to have first appeared during the

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<sup>531</sup> “Some of the things that make us proud,” *Silangan*, June 1980, 22.

<sup>532</sup> Annabelle Sreberny, “‘Not Only, but Also’: Mixedness and media,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 3 (2005), 444.

<sup>533</sup> Asis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and recovery of self under colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), 107.

<sup>534</sup> Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and the Diaspora,” in *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference*, J. Ruherford, ed. (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 226.

<sup>535</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The wretched of the earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004 [1961]), 170.

intellectual fervour of the 1970s, and became a way of understanding the crises of identity that often arose following Philippine independence from American colonialism.

This colonial mentality was not just conceived of as a “heritage of smallness,” but also as a legacy of divisiveness. It is relevant to reflect upon the “growing ‘cancer’ in our society” mentioned previously:

It has been said that four centuries of Spanish colonization has imbued Filipinos with the tribal and regionalistic enmities conveniently encouraged by the colonizers to divide and rule the archipelago. We are no longer living under those conditions, and it behooves on Filipino leaders in Canada to correct this attitude and finally convince everyone to work for a common goal.<sup>536</sup>

Thus, there was a sense that the Filipino Self could shed this legacy of colonial mentality abroad. Living in Canada was, in this way, an act of post-colonial rediscovery of Filipino identity, of overcoming self-contempt, resignation, and abjuration. This invocation of the Filipino imagination in Canada, and the call to overcome Philippine colonial mentality, speaks to the means by which national consciousness was being constructed in the diaspora. Moreover, to emphasize Aguilar’s point that in the 1970s the bifurcated focus of Filipino national consciousness was re-aligning itself,<sup>537</sup> this reimagining of national identity contrasted with the Canadian state. Much of the literature on the Filipino diaspora has focused on Filipino American experiences,<sup>538</sup> however, while Canada has many cultural similarities with the U.S., Canadian experiences cannot be conflated with American. Filipinos living in Canada do not live within the shadow empire of the U.S. and its legacy of imperialism in the Philippines, and the history of Filipino immigration to Canada has had more to do with Canadian labour needs than colonial

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<sup>536</sup> “From the Publisher,” *Silangan*, September 1979, 2.

<sup>537</sup> Aguilar, Jr., “Transnational Shame,” 109-112.

<sup>538</sup> Filomeno V. Aguilar, Jr., “Is the Filipino Diaspora a Diaspora?” *Critical Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2015): 440-461.

linkages.<sup>539</sup> Certainly, the history of White racism towards Filipinos existed in Canada as it did in the United States, although it was not as socially prevalent. Thus, while the *Silangan* sought to represent the viewpoints of Filipinos in Manitoba and Canada, it was also writing itself into the broader Filipino diaspora as it negotiated a national Filipino identity into Canadian society.

The formation of the Winnipeg community falls within this process of decentering the nationalist imagination and the Filipino diaspora.<sup>540</sup> As we've seen, Canadian democracy provided a model to which many Filipinos looked for a way out of the quagmire of undesirable political practices inherited from a colonial past, while also providing a setting in which it was necessary to maintain positive cultural practices that defined the Filipino Self. In Winnipeg, and through the voice community members exercised in the *Silangan*, the Filipino Self was imagined and recrafted to fit into several geographic scales. At the local level, Filipino political practices were criticized in events such as the PAM Crisis of 1980 as leading to internal divisiveness and weakness; to realize their potential as Filipinos, these practices had to be overcome. At a national level, the Canadian Other presented the Filipino with a somewhat contradictory image. As Filipinos pursued their potential in Canadian society, there were many aspects deemed inappropriate, such as individualism, but as a democratic society, many writers felt Canada had a lot to offer the community. Finally, on a transnational level, this Filipino Self developed in tandem, and at times in contrast, to the Filipino national identity. There was no doubt that the Philippines was the homeland, if not "home," and that the community was bound to their heritage. There was also little doubt to many that they were part of the reimagination of that national consciousness, of that reimagining of the community. It is unsurprising the role that

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<sup>539</sup> Such colonial pathways to the United States have been mapped by Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

<sup>540</sup> Aguilar, Jr., "Transnational Shame," 107; 109-112.

ethnic media such as the *Silangan* played in the formation of this diasporic national consciousness, given the primordial role of the media in the formation of national consciousness.<sup>541</sup> Although the regular circulation of the *Silangan* was in Western Canada, it consistently reported on issues in the Philippines and other diasporic communities, and found itself circulating the global diaspora, including Australia, the United States, and the Philippines. The plights or successes of Filipinos across in the diaspora were regular features, and on more than one occasion the paper encouraged the community to rally for their *kababayan* in other communities.

## Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the degree of community and identity development that can occur in response to community crisis and dissent. It has also demonstrated the integral role that ethnic media can have in actively shaping these discussions. In the Winnipeg community, the *Silangan* was not merely a neutral medium of discussion but was an active voice. Its editor and columnists regularly engaged other members of the community in discussion and debate, members who were often given space in the paper to respond. By giving the opportunity for voice to exert itself, and by connecting different members of the Filipino community together, the paper directed and facilitated these community shaping debates.

While this chapter has had two major divisions - one focusing on how the PAM crisis drove community development, and another analyzing the discursive creation of a Filipino identity - these two processes were indeed part of the same. The PAM election gave the

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<sup>541</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and sprad of nationalism* (London: Verso Books, 2006 [1983]).

community opportunity to question its values, heritage, and desire to shed what many saw as their colonial past. As the analysis has shown, this was a process that at times seemed contradictory: while emphasizing the need to maintain their Filipino heritage in a new country, there was a concomitant emphasis on shedding practices deemed inappropriate and, in a way, un-Filipino. This crisis, and other moments like it, provided opportunities for community members to argue what “innate virtues” they should privilege, and what “colonial mentalities” they should shed. All of this was possible in the diaspora, for a few reasons. First, Filipinos looked to the Canadian Other as a model with which to compare their own behaviours. Many writers to the *Silangan* felt that living in Canada gave them an ideal opportunity to shed unwelcome traits. Second, life in Canada gave community members an opportunity to reflect on their cultural past, the relics of Spanish and American colonialism, and a safe space to debate what being Filipino meant living abroad. Many felt that the Philippines was too mired in a colonial mentality to properly rid itself of inappropriate cultural traits. There is a very strong sense that some writers to the *Silangan* felt that they were caught in a process of finding or reconstructing the ‘true’ Filipino. Third, living in the diaspora gave the chance for Filipino members to tie their cultural identity to a national identity.

This analysis of Winnipeg points to the complexity of identity in the Filipino diaspora and the prevalence of national consciousness. The historical narrative of Filipino Canadians should not merely be one of integration, a history that traces how “Canadian” this group became. For this was not a matter of becoming a Canadian, but the experiences of “a Canadian who is a Filipino.” In Canada, the Filipino diasporic identity has officially sanctioned rhetorical space to maintain a strong Filipino identity, and the ability to attain Canadian citizenship allows the potential for a high degree of integration. The gendered and class lines of these debates affected

the concerns that debates of Filipino identity addressed. As will be seen in Chapter 4, when a different demographic approached the question of Filipino heritage, a different narrative was created.

As Aguilar argued, it is difficult to understand the Filipino diaspora when its literature is so heavily dominated by an American perspective; it is high time indeed that other perspectives, other voices, and other contexts are included in this diasporic experience. It is also important that these experiences are not forced to fit the discourses of national integration, of becoming Canadian. From a thick description approach, analyses must listen to what the voices stated, such as those in the *Silangan*, and try to reconstruct the imaginations of their own identity. These identities have multiple positions depending on their performance. Expressions of Filipino identity expressed during debates in the *Silangan* differed from those more simplified forms presented to Canadian society at cultural festivals, but both are equally valid.

## Chapter 4: History and Memory in the Winnipeg Filipino Community

### Introduction

In Chapter 3, ethnic media was shown to have acted as a mediator in the (re)creation and (re)negotiation of a Filipino Canadian identity in the 1970s and 1980s. I argued that the value of ethnic media was that, while being mediated and shaped by an editorial voice, it remained grounded in the context of the times, compared to oral histories which are often collected after an event or period. In some cases, oral histories can be shaded by personal censorship, significant restructuring, and even reinterpretations of events.<sup>542</sup> In that context, ethnic media provides an insight into the development of the Winnipeg Filipino community and identity as it was being negotiated. This chapter, however, examines those mediated memories, the processes behind the selection and privileging of past events, and the inscriptions of meaning upon them as community and personal histories are created and expressed through oral history.

The analysis in this chapter focuses on a museum exhibit in 2009 that celebrated the history of Filipinos in Winnipeg. In commemoration of this event, the exhibit *From Manila to Manitoba* was displayed at the Manitoba Museum from July to September 2010.<sup>543</sup> The Filipino youth group *Aksyon ng Ating Kabataan* (ANAK) conceived, researched, designed, and curated the exhibit.<sup>544</sup> The group is composed of 1.5 and second generation Filipino Canadians

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<sup>542</sup> Fred H. Allison, "Remembering a Vietnam War Firefight: Changing perspectives over time," *Oral History Review* 31 no. 2 (2004): 69-83.

<sup>543</sup> The name of the exhibit appears to have first appeared in the title of a piece by Darlyne Bautista, the lead researcher and curator of the exhibit. Darlyne Bautista and J. Udarbe, "From Manila to Manitoba: Family history and Filipino migration to Winnipeg," *Prairie Perspectives: Geographical Essay* 4 (2001), 232-242.

<sup>544</sup> This translates to "Our Youth in Action." The acronym ANAK is significant, too, as it is the Filipino word for "child".

concerned with preserving and encouraging Filipino culture among younger generations. The exhibit consisted of poster boards that presented a mix between archival and secondary source research, and oral history from members of the community. ANAK exercised significant editorial authority in deciding what material to collect and present, to which members of the community to give voice, and what narrative to construct.<sup>545</sup> The narrative that arises in the exhibit, as well as an accompanying oral history book series, was consciously contrasted against other community histories that emphasized the role of early, “pioneer” Filipino immigrants. The *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit thus attempted to offer a corrective to community narratives that emphasized the early migrations of doctors, nurses, and garment workers as establishing the foundations of the community, while not giving equal voice to Filipino youth and subsequent waves of Filipino immigrants. ANAK, a youth-led organization, sought to make the community’s history more inclusive of these generations.

This chapter continues with the theme of community that was raised in Chapter 3 and the argument that community development occurs when disagreements arise as much as when there is agreement. This argument is progressed by discussion of three important themes that the *From Manila to Manitoba* raises: the dynamics of how this community group approaches its history of migration and integration; its emphasis that the youth be included and that “pioneers” are not privileged; and the tensions surrounding the politics of commemoration that this exhibit brought to the surface. While the exhibit did not give rise to open arguments and disagreements that was

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<sup>545</sup> There is no available information regarding who viewed the exhibit, or what ethno-cultural background they were from. Because the exhibit was offered free of charge with admission to the museum, viewers did not have to register themselves to view the exhibit, and there was no guest book available for viewers to write in. This exhibit, being open to the public, can also be viewed as a representation of the Filipino community to the broader civic community. However, as this chapter is concerned with the presentation of memory within this particular ethno-cultural group, this intercultural element will not be discussed.



seen in the *Silangan*, the general discontent with the absence of youth representation in community histories motivated the exhibit.

### **Collective and Individual Memory**

The dynamics of history and memory are by no means characterized by consensus. Group memory is a contested arena wherein numerous groups - identified by age, date of arrival, gender, and even region of origin in the Philippines - vie to define the community's history based upon their own memory. While there is no limit to how many different histories can be created, there is a limited community arena in which these memories can be expressed and received. Memory is not static, objective, or passive. It is an act of an entity, whether individual or social, in which moments and feelings of the past are recalled, selected for preservation, and given meaning. To think memory is a compendium of all past events is to miss the extremely editorial element to which memory is subjected. Furthermore, memory takes on a number of forms both physical and mental. They may be encompassed by the stories passed down through generations, recounted in public school curricula, or commemorated in memorials. Memory, and society's various interactions with it, thus serves as a means of mediating how individuals and societies engage with the past. Geoffrey Cubitt broadly defines memory as "a conscious sense of the past, as something meaningfully connected to the present...sustained and developed within human individuals and human cultures."<sup>546</sup> While individual memory may instinctively be seen as operating within group memory,<sup>547</sup> this is not necessarily the case, and conceiving of it in this manner may confuse the different forms of memory. Individual memory is the personal

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<sup>546</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 2007), 9.

<sup>547</sup> Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 26.

recollections and structuring of past events into sequences that provide meaning and identity to the person. Individual memory certainly engages with collective memory, and offers the “mental equipment” necessary for people to function in social settings.<sup>548</sup>

Collective memory is the historical narrative that is created through collective mediation of past events, often in the context of group identity such as the family unit,<sup>549</sup> community,<sup>550</sup> or nation state.<sup>551</sup> Collective memory is not simply individual memory writ large, as various individual memories can contradict such broader memories. Collective memory represents those stories and narratives that society chooses to privilege and to give prominence, a process that involves authority and hegemony. Collective memory can also grant to society members memories that are not their own, such as a family’s memory of migration or a nation’s foundation history.<sup>552</sup> Key to both conceptions is memory as process, subject to change over time; it can be given different performative interpretations, and can have multiple therapeutic and traumatic consequences. This chapter will examine the latter form of memory, collective memory, in the Winnipeg Filipino Community and the process of its creation and expression.

While various memories may co-exist at once, others may come into conflict. When the historical narratives told for decades by the “pioneer” Filipino immigrants to Winnipeg are challenged by the community’s youth, the tensions inherent in collective memory become apparent. Inherent in collective memory is a theme already addressed in Chapter 3, tension and dissent. Collective memory is not a singularity, although it may be presented as such in

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<sup>548</sup> Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 14.

<sup>549</sup> Alexander Freund, “A Canadian Family Talks about Oma’s Life in Nazi Germany,” *Oral History Forum d’histoire orale* 29 (2009): 1-26.

<sup>550</sup> Jon G. Malek, “Memories of Migration: Memory and the Creation of Historical Narrative in the Winnipeg Filipino Community, 1959-2009,” *Oral History Forum d’histoire orale* (2015): 1-31.

<sup>551</sup> Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011).

<sup>552</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The transformation of American remembrance in the age of mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

commemorative monuments and acts. Societies and communities remember similar events differently, and sometimes the expression of collective memory can involve discussion and negotiation, but also dissent and even hostility. Depending on the event, individual responses and interpretations can conflict with others. In the case of the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit, the narrative created was in direct opposition to existing collective memory of the community's history.

## Community

While the term 'community' is convenient in terms of discussion, it should be remembered that it need not refer to a community of consensus. The term community will be consciously used as a problematic term for the convenience of categorically referring to the body of individuals in Winnipeg of Filipino descent. Benedict Anderson's understanding of nationalist communities as being 'imagined' has become a mainstay in academic literature, as communities have come to be seen as imagined realities, brought into existence through discursive realities created out of certain ethnic, racial, geographic, or political characteristics.<sup>553</sup> Ethnic communities have qualities similar to Anderson's nationalist communities, and have internal divisions on a variety of issues, such as political beliefs, religious affiliations, generational differences, class distinctions, and community aspirations. These internal divisions should not necessarily be seen as rifts within a community as they can represent the ongoing process of community creation, re-creation, and negotiation.

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<sup>553</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. ed. (London; New York: Verso, 2006 [1983]).

In their article on the concept of community, John Walsh and Steven High are critical of using this term to refer to static societies without interrogating what goes into the definition of a community. In particular, they argue that too much emphasis has been placed on the physical markers of a community – the street, the neighbourhood, the village – which downplays the importance of cultural and imagined commonalities that are integral to a community.<sup>554</sup> Walsh and High suggest three conceptions that are “fundamental to understanding the historical significance of community”: as an imagined reality, as social interaction, and as an ongoing process.<sup>555</sup> Thus, instead of seeing a community as being in an end product stage, Walsh and High advocate understanding community as an ongoing process of creation and negotiation. Following this emphasis on process, when the term ‘Winnipeg Filipino community’ is used, it will refer to the body of individuals with Filipino ancestry *and* to refer to the process of community creation and negotiation, which is naturally rife with internal dialogue as that identity is continually imagined, realized, and renegotiated. This approach to community is in the spirit of what R. H. Tawney referred to when he said that each generation must write its own history,

not because the conclusions of its predecessors are untrue, but for a practical reason. Different answers are required, because different questions are asked. Standing at a new point on the road, it finds that fresh ranges of the landscape come into view, whose unfamiliar intricacies demand an amplification of traditional charts.<sup>556</sup>

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<sup>554</sup> John Walsh and Steven High, “Re-Thinking the Concept of ‘Community,’” *Social History / Histoire Sociale* 32, no. 64 (November 1999): 255–74.

<sup>555</sup> Walsh and High, 255.

<sup>556</sup> R. H. Tawney, cited in L. S. Stavrianos, *Lifelines from our Past: A New World History*, Revised ed. (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 3.

Thus, when a younger generation of a community writes its own history, it is not necessarily done in opposition to existing narratives, but rather because history is autobiographical and must reflect the historical experiences of each generation if it is to be relevant.

## Voice

Perhaps due to the relatively young age of the Filipino community in Canada, it has not elicited much attention from historians. As a result, the broader literature on the Filipino Canadian experience is incomplete, and this community's historical voice and experiences have not been included in wider, national discussions. In the local context, this has meant that members of the Winnipeg community have conducted recent historical projects to fulfill historical curiosity.<sup>557</sup> This reality provided much of the motivation behind the *From Manila to Manitoba* project. The exhibit is part of a larger oral history project, which is intended to include five published volumes of oral history.<sup>558</sup> ANAK's response to the dearth of literature and the need to document the community's heritage and history for younger Filipino generations makes this project more than commemoration; it is an attempt by ANAK to express the voice of the community's historical experience in Winnipeg with an awareness of generational experiences.

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<sup>557</sup> In addition to the *From Manila to Manitoba* project, see Gemma Dalayon, Leah Enverga-Magsino and Leonnie Bailon, *The First Filipino Migrants in Manitoba (1959-1975)* (Winnipeg: Published for the Manitoba Filipino Writers Guild, 2009), which also had an accompanying oral history project.

<sup>558</sup> The first was released in 2012: Darlyne Bautista, *Winnipeg's Filipino Health Professionals (C.1950-1970)*, Vol. 1 of *From Manila to Manitoba: Celebrating 50 Years with the Filipino Canadian Community in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: ANAK Publishing Worker Cooperative, 2012). As of late 2018, there have been no new books in this series.

### *From Manila to Manitoba and the Winnipeg Filipino Community*

ANAK was formed in 2006 by a group of educated Filipinos in Winnipeg who had either immigrated to Canada with their families as youth or were born in Canada to immigrant parents. Describing themselves as “concerned young Filipino Canadian[s],” their aim is to “bridge the cultural, generational, and social gaps found both in and outside of the Filipino Canadian community in Winnipeg.”<sup>559</sup> In addition to this museum exhibit, ANAK performs its mandate by offering scholarships to high school students entering university or college and an in-school mentorship program that assists newcomers to explore their new cultural surroundings while encouraging their Filipino heritage.<sup>560</sup> ANAK has also collaborated with the university research project “Filipino Youth Transitions in Canada,” led by geographer Philip Kelly at York University.<sup>561</sup> The group is active within the Philippine Heritage Council of Manitoba, an umbrella organization that attempts to bring together Filipino cultural groups without dictating their mandates or activities, and has positive relationships with other organizations. The group is regularly active at the Filipino pavilions in Folklorama, Winnipeg’s long-running cultural festival, and participates in numerous community led events.

A major goal of the project is to make this history more inclusive of younger generations, and thus more accessible to a wider Filipino audience. In referring to two histories of Filipino

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<sup>559</sup> ANAK, “About,” *Aksyon Ng Ating Kabataan (ANAK) Inc.* Last Modified 23 March 2009. [http://anakinc.blogspot.ca/2009/03/about\\_23.html](http://anakinc.blogspot.ca/2009/03/about_23.html). Although the website is dated from 23 March 2009, this quote has since been removed from the page.

<sup>560</sup> ANAK, “Projects,” *Aksyon Ng Ating Kabataan (ANAK) Inc.* Last Modified 23 March 2009. [http://anakinc.blogspot.ca/2009/03/projects\\_23.html](http://anakinc.blogspot.ca/2009/03/projects_23.html). The Mentorship program is currently available in four public schools in Winnipeg.

<sup>561</sup> Filipino Youth Transitions in Canada, York Centre for Asian Research, accessed 29 April 2013. <http://www.yorku.ca/ycar/fytic.html>. The research findings can be found in Kelly, *Understanding Intergenerational Social Mobility: Filipino Youth in Canada*.

Canadians written by older members of the community,<sup>562</sup> Darlyne Bautista, the head curator of the exhibit and former Director of ANAK, states that “These works celebrate and offer teachings through a shared immigrant narrative. Now, with the outlook of a new emerging generation of Filipino Canadian youth, this discussion is evolving.”<sup>563</sup> Referring to the inclusion of younger Filipino generations as “evolving” the discussion, the narrative suggests that the existing history was no longer effectively relevant to the youth and was in need of revision. However, the exhibit sought to maintain inclusivity of all members of the Winnipeg Filipino community with the goal of creating a sense of unity among generations.<sup>564</sup> The inclusive nature of this project has led to a sense of ownership of this memory, as Bautista explains that their project “*will define* Filipino Canadians in Winnipeg through a chorus of voices and experiences interpreted and told by one Filipino Canadian to another.”<sup>565</sup> Further, Bautista supports this claim by emphasizing that ANAK did not wish to privilege one narrative over another:

[This oral history series] represents a grassroots perspective of a shared common experience. There are no celebrations of politicians or community ‘firsts’ written here. Instead, it explores common themes that illustrate the historical intersect lived between the Philippines and Canada. This series highlights the patterns and perspectives of the Filipino Canadian identity that continues to evolve over time and through waves of migration.<sup>566</sup>

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<sup>562</sup> Dalayon, Enverga-Magsino and Bailon, *The First Filipino Migrants in Manitoba*; Eleanor del Rio-Laquian and Aprodicio A. Laquian, *Seeking a Better Life Abroad: A Study of Filipinos in Canada, 1957-2007* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 2008).

<sup>563</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg’s Filipino Health Professionals*, ix.

<sup>564</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg’s Filipino Health Professionals*, xii.

<sup>565</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg’s Filipino Health Professionals*, xii. Emphasis added.

<sup>566</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg’s Filipino Health Professionals*, xi.

ANAK constructed the exhibit's narrative by using the voices of interview participants to reflect a variety of experiences, while at the same time maintaining authorial control over the exhibit and the narrative that was being presented.<sup>567</sup>

## History and Memory

The *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit should not be seen as merely presenting the history of the Winnipeg Filipino community that viewers passively 'learn' through observation. One of the goals of the exhibit seemed to encourage Filipino viewers to reflect on their own experiences of immigration, whether directly or through family members. With each viewer engaging in a personal dialogue with the exhibit, questions on the distinction of history and memory emerge. While history refers to the past as a series of events, it simultaneously refers to how those events were experienced and, further, how those events and experiences have been written about and understood.<sup>568</sup> Memory might be used to refer to this interpretive understanding of history, although it is important to note that memory and history are not quite the same. Pierre Nora wrote that there is a gulf between history and memory. He argued that

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<sup>567</sup> This point raises a number of questions in regards to the sharing of authority between ANAK and the project's research participants, as well as the broader Filipino community. For more on sharing authority, see Steven High, "Sharing Authority in the Writing of Canadian History: The Case of Oral History," in *Contesting Clio's Craft: New Directions and Debates in Canadian History*, eds. Christopher Dummitt and Michael Dawson (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London, 2009a), 21-46. The *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue D'Études Canadiennes* had a special issue in 2009 on the subject. Some pertinent articles include: Lisa Ndjeduru, "Sharing Authority as Deep Listening and Sharing the Load," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue D'Études Canadiennes* 43, no. 1 (2009), 5-11; Steven High, "Sharing Authority: An Introduction," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue D'Études Canadiennes* 43, no. 1 (2009b), 12-34; Elizabeth Miller, "Building Participation in the Outreach for the Documentary the Water Front," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue D'Études Canadiennes* 43, no. 1 (2009), 59-86; Stacey Zembrzycki, "Sharing Authority with Baba," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue D'Études Canadiennes* 43, no. 1 (2009), 219-238; Alan Wong, "Conversations for the Real World: Shared Authority, Self-Reflexivity, and Process in the Oral History Interview," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue D'Études Canadiennes* 43, no. 1 (2009), 239-258.

<sup>568</sup> Susan A. Crane, "Writing the individual back into collective memory," *The American Historical Review* 02, no.5 (1997): 1372-1385.



“memory is life,” and that it “remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived.”<sup>569</sup> History, on the other hand, lies on the other end of the gulf of experience. It is “the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer.”<sup>570</sup> Thus, while memory is a daily, lived engagement with the recent or distant past, history is a representation of that past, recorded for analysis and criticism, often in written form.<sup>571</sup>

While memory might be fluid and reflexive to instances where it finds expression, it too can find a crystallized expression. That is, memory need not be as irrevocably separated from history as Nora has suggested.<sup>572</sup> Alexander Freund has argued that (family) memories are not formed at one moment in time to be continuously re-enacted, but are continually crystallized based on the context of the performance.<sup>573</sup> With each re-telling, or “situational crystallization,” the memories are mobilized to emphasize certain elements within the memory that suit the purpose of what Freund refers to as the “communicative situation.”<sup>574</sup> Thus, these situational memories will find different expressions depending on the audience, the context of their re-telling, and who is conveying the memory.

Pierre Nora’s distinction between history and memory, and Alexander Freund’s emphasis on the situational re-crystallization of memory, establishes that memory, although fluid and reflexive, also finds crystallized expression. The *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit is an ideal example of this. While Freund discusses how a family reproduces and re-enacts its memories,

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<sup>569</sup> Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Mémoire,” *Representations* 26 (1989), 8.

<sup>570</sup> Nora, “Between Memory and History,” 8.

<sup>571</sup> Nora, “Between Memory and History,” 9.

<sup>572</sup> Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

<sup>573</sup> Freund, “A Canadian Family Talks about Oma’s Life in Nazi Germany,” 11.

<sup>574</sup> Freund, “A Canadian Family Talks about Oma’s Life in Nazi Germany,” 11.

these observations can be applied to the memories of an ethnic community. One important distinction, though, is that while family memories often reflect foundational memories that are commonly shared,<sup>575</sup> the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit reflects foundational *community* memories. There is a shared memory<sup>576</sup> of migration and integration, however each family unit within the community has had their own experience of this foundational memory which can have multiple variables, including the time of arrival in Canada, their reasons for leaving the Philippines, and their generational position. While many of these reasons might be shared, differences in experience can lead to a tension in the negotiation of a bridge between community memory and community experience on the one hand, and personal experiences on the other. Some of this tension will be discussed below, but it is important to note that ANAK intended to create a historical narrative that did not only emphasize pioneers, community firsts, or important individuals; rather, it sought to present a history that was more reflective of the entire community's history and spoke to the various experiences of its members.<sup>577</sup>

Interviews with twenty-three community members were conducted by Filipino youth<sup>578</sup> volunteers for the *From Manila to Manitoba* project. The youth were paired with older community members who had similar experiences of immigration to encourage a deeper discussion in the interview and to create a broader sense of community through shared

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<sup>575</sup> Freund, "A Canadian Family Talks about Oma's Life in Nazi Germany," 11. The example in Freund's analysis was the life experience of a family's Grandmother in Nazi Germany.

<sup>576</sup> 'Shared memory' refers to the ability of an individual or group to be able to express and compare memories with those of contemporaries in a shared language and with comparable themes. (T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, "The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics" in *Commemorating War: The Politics of Memory*, eds. T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 18.

<sup>577</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg's Filipino Health Professionals*, xi.

<sup>578</sup> The age profile of these youth interviewers was not available to the author.

experience.<sup>579</sup> To prepare the volunteers for the oral interview process, ANAK worked with the Oral History Center (OHC) at the University of Winnipeg to draft an interviewer handbook.<sup>580</sup> This handbook provided a brief introduction to oral history, methods of conducting oral interviews, and instructions for transcribing the interviews. Beyond this initial training, the OHC did not take part in the research process. In some cases, members of the museum exhibit's main research team performed follow up interviews to elicit further details.<sup>581</sup>

The *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit was on display in the Festival Hall at the Manitoba Museum in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Upon entering the hall, a large, two-piece poster board greeted the visitor. The first piece had the words "This is our story" sprawled across pictures of Filipinos who had been interviewed for the exhibit. The other piece bore two statements, one in English, the other in Filipino. The English statement read: "Together, we bring our heritage forward to a new generation of Filipino Canadians who will gain strength in the knowledge and pride of our community in Winnipeg." After this welcoming, there is an untranslated quote in Filipino from the hero of Philippine independence, José Rizal (d. 1896), spread across a map of the globe: "*Ang hindi marunong lumigon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi mak-ararating sa paroroonan,*" which translates as "The one who does not know where he/she came from, will never reach his/her destination."<sup>582</sup>

These two statements reveal an interventionist aspect of this exhibit and suggest that the organizers were targeting a specific Filipino audience. The English statement indicates that this exhibit was created to intervene in what was perceived by the organizers as a critical moment in

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<sup>579</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg's Filipino Health Professionals*, vii.

<sup>580</sup> ANAK, *Filipino Canadian Community in Winnipeg Oral History Project and Exhibit, Interviewer Handbook* (June 2009).

<sup>581</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg's Filipino Health Professionals*, 3.

<sup>582</sup> Author's translation.

the history of the Winnipeg Filipino community – the maturing of 1.5 and second generation Filipinos.<sup>583</sup> The second passage from José Rizal is vital to the organization of the exhibit, because the emphasis on moving forward while remaining firmly grounded in one's background is physically represented in the design of the exhibit.

This use of physical space is key to the exhibit's message, offering an interpretation of the Rizal quote while emphasizing the strong connections to the Philippines that Filipinos in Canada inhabit. The main focus of the exhibit, the Winnipeg Filipino community, is represented through a series of poster boards along three walls of Festival Hall, while three temporary-walls face opposite and bear poster boards relating the contemporary history of the Philippine Islands. Thus, while one faces the main panels (moving forward), one's back is always facing the history of one's homeland (keeping grounded in their heritage). This positioning of the exhibit's poster boards also reflects how this community is simultaneously Filipino and Canadian: as events in Canada are depicted, the exhibit emphasizes that Filipinos remain tied to the Philippines. The physical spacing of the exhibit's poster boards reflects the idea that Filipino Canadians inhabit two cultural lives at once, one Filipino and one Canadian, referred to by Philip Kelly as the "transnational habitus."<sup>584</sup> On one panel on the wall representing events in the Philippines is a letter from a Winnipeg resident to the President of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos, who declared Martial Law in 1972. The letter offers suggestions that the author felt would benefit the economy of the Philippines, and feels that, although he had been living in Canada for a number of years already, he still maintained a connection with his home country, referring to himself as a "fellow-countryman" to Marcos and stating that his "heart and soul belong to the Philippines."

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<sup>583</sup> Generation 1.5 refers to those who immigrated before the age of 13, while the second generation are those who have at least one parent born outside of Canada. (Philip Kelly, *Understanding Intergenerational Social Mobility: Filipino Youth in Canada* (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2014).

<sup>584</sup>Kelly and Lusi, "Migration and the Transnational Habitus."

The exhibit itself is broken up into three thematic categories, representing the exhibit's periodization of the community's history. These periods are Winnipeg's first Filipino Canadians (1950-1974), the growth and unification of the Winnipeg Filipino community (1976-1999) and the last ten years of the community (2000-2010). The first period of 1950-1974 presents the history of the first Filipinos to Canada: the first waves were professional, followed by manual labourers such as garment workers. The second period of 1976-1999 presents many issues that surrounded the integration of Filipinos into Winnipeg. Of particular notice is the predominant inclusion of racism that was experienced by the community, as racial tensions involving Filipino youth in Winnipeg's public schools are represented. The sense of tension (described in one panel as a "powder keg" of racial tension), though, is brought to a sense of solution in the final section depicting the last ten years ending in 2010. Here, the history of the Winnipeg community and the Philippines is brought together on the final wall, physically representing the idea of a "Filipino transnational family" and a Filipino Canadian identity co-existing.

The physical organization also creates a linear narrative of the community's development. Several panels depict the experiences of racism that Filipino Canadian youth experienced growing up in Winnipeg's public schools. A sense of community activism is strong in these panels, as demonstrated by one example in May 1993 when a local grocery clerk made a racial slur to a Filipino youth for which the store refused to apologize. The panel describes how a local Filipino radio program rallied the community to protest the store, attracting local media attention. In the chronological organization of the exhibit, these experiences are placed in the middle as an important event in the development of the Winnipeg community. If one were to read the exhibit as a crystallized historical narrative, the placing of racism is interesting. While

not claiming there are no similar experiences anymore, the exhibit seems to suggest that racism is an experience the community has faced and overcome.

A number of salient themes appear in these panels. In many of the oral testimonies, there is a strong sense of sacrifice as families move from the Philippines to Canada in hopes of better opportunities, often for their children. The implication, it seems, is that the Filipino Canadian viewer, especially one of a younger generation, is in Canada because of similar sacrifices in their family. However, the children of these Filipino parents are given a strong representation of their own, emphasizing their own experiences. For example, many of the oral testimonies are from the children of immigrants, describing how they reacted to immigration. Importantly, the final boards, such as one pointing to a “new generation construct[ing] an ‘imagined’ identity,” emphasizes the development of a Filipino Canadian identity. Thus, this exhibit is not only creating space for younger Filipino generations in the community’s narrative but is acknowledging that they are the next leaders of the community.

It is perhaps in recognition of this that the emphasis on maintaining a Filipino identity is predominant throughout this exhibit, as introduced by the José Rizal quote. In this final series of boards, the viewer is reminded of ANAK’s mandate to encourage Filipino identity as the growth and maturation of this new generation of Filipino Canadians is acknowledged.<sup>585</sup> But, at the same time as this new generation is being acknowledged, there is a stark reminder of its Filipino heritage. As the (Filipino) visitor turns from the last panel to face the back (which represents the homeland), he/she is presented with a simple art installation. Among six rows of draped bamboo sheets sits a wooden table with a mirror on its top. When the viewer looks into the mirror, their own reflection can be seen along with the words *sabay* (together), *tanggapin* (accept/embrace),

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<sup>585</sup> An in-depth study of the experiences of second-generation Filipino youth in Canada has recently been released by Philip Kelly: Kelly, *Understanding Intergenerational Social Mobility: Filipino Youth in Canada*.

*nakaraan* (past), *kumilos* (act upon/engage) and *kinabukasan* (future) written upon a board hanging from the ceiling. The message thus presented harkens back to the opening José Rizal quote, creating a sense of completion to the exhibit. As if to emphasize the Filipino viewer, the words on the mirror remain untranslated to English. The choice of the bamboo sheets is also important. In the Philippines, as with other tropical climates, bamboo is an abundant material used in the construction of traditional houses due to its resilience and ability to bend in a strong wind, making it an apt form of commemoration.

This exhibit not only represents a commemoration of the community's history but is also an intervention in the memory of that history. It has been seen that part of ANAK's mandate is to foster an appreciation of Filipino heritage among youth through education and that ANAK's goal with this oral history project is to inject "the outlook of a new emerging generation of Filipino Canadian youth."<sup>586</sup> Therefore, as an intervention, the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit seeks to rejuvenate the historical narrative in the community by moving beyond "celebrations of politicians or community 'firsts'" to a more "grassroots perspective of a shared common experience."<sup>587</sup> The exhibit is suggesting a narrative that includes the voices of a variety of experiences within the community without privileging any in particular. The memories presented reflect the history of Filipino Canadians, one that Bautista describes as being "deeply personal."<sup>588</sup> Thus, it is a memory shared by all, but one that must be negotiated on an intimate and personal level.

The intervention that the exhibit represents does not operate outside the memory of this community, however. Rather, it is a distinct 'memory-event' in the development of this

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<sup>586</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg's Filipino Health Professionals*, ix.

<sup>587</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg's Filipino Health Professionals*, xi.

<sup>588</sup> Bautista, *Winnipeg's Filipino Health Professionals*, xi.

community. A memory-event treats narration and the presentation of memories as an event in itself, not just a description of an event.<sup>589</sup> That is, as a real and concrete expression that is meant to shape the community's memory of itself and its immigration experience, this exhibit has itself become a part of that memory instead of being merely an external influence. There was no documented feedback on this exhibit by which to gauge community response and although the exhibit generated some excitement in the community upon its opening,<sup>590</sup> there does not appear to be any media attention following the exhibit. Nevertheless, this exhibit mobilized large segments of the Filipino Canadian community in Winnipeg, including the research team from ANAK, the interviewees, the Philippine Heritage Council of Manitoba, and all those who did visit the exhibit.

As a memory event, this exhibit presents a divided memory of dislocation and integration; pride, hope, and sacrifice; and of migration and settlement. This is described by Alessandro Portelli as a double consciousness of the same experience existing at the same moment, either between individuals or within groups.<sup>591</sup> Throughout the exhibit, themes of homesickness and dislocation from the homeland are expressed alongside a hope for a better future and a strong sense of Filipino Canadianness, creating a divided memory of immigration to Canada. Putting these themes together was a conscious element of the exhibit as a means of fostering unity and pride within the community. One of the researchers and oral interviewers told a local community news magazine, the *Pilipino Express*, that "the interviews made me look back at my own immigration experience, which was mostly negative, since it was associated with

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<sup>589</sup> Francesca Cappelletto, "Long-Term Memory of Extreme Events: From Autobiography to History," *Journal of the Royal Anthropology Institute* 9 (2003), 242.

<sup>590</sup> Alison Mayes, "Exhibit Shines Light on Manitoba's Filipinos," *Winnipeg Free Press*, June 17, 2010; Amalia Pempengco, "From Manila to Manitoba: Manitoba Museum Presents First-Ever Exhibit on Filipino immigrants," *Pilipino Express*, June 16, 2010. The exhibit also appeared on the entertainment section of the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

<sup>591</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Order Has Been Carried Out: History, Memory, and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 109, 206.



homesickness and culture shock. Knowing their stories made me feel proud that I learned to adapt to a new country.”<sup>592</sup> In isolation, these personal experiences of dislocation can lead to negative feelings among immigrants, but through community projects like this, these narratives can be formed into a more positive and encouraging narrative for immigrants. While both memories of dislocation and of integrating into Canadian society exist, the shared experience of the wider community creates a narrative that members can positively relate to.

This theme of dislocation is represented throughout the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit. The first wave of Filipinos to Winnipeg (starting in 1959) were medical doctors, nurses, teachers, and other professionals who often entered Canada through the United States, described in Chapter 2. In 1968, the first wave of Filipina garment workers came to Winnipeg, a stream that would account for much immigration to the city until the 1980s when the garment industry turned to overseas labour sources to fill their production lines.<sup>593</sup> This phenomenon of immigrant labour is a major event within the history of the Winnipeg Filipino community, and it is with this event that the exhibit begins. These early workers are depicted as dislocated Filipinos who “left behind the familiarity of home where opportunities appeared few and recovery efforts from the war [World War II] were still eminent.”<sup>594</sup> The implicit meaning of this statement is that Filipinos willingly uprooted themselves in hopes of better economic opportunities abroad. In descriptions such as this, the exhibit presents the divided memory of dislocation from family and friends on the one hand, and of hope for better opportunity abroad on the other.

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<sup>592</sup> “From Manila to Manitoba: Manitoba Museum presents first-ever exhibit on Filipino immigrants,” *Pilipino Express*, June 16, 2010, <http://www.pilipino-express.com/news/875-from-manila-to-manitoba.html>.

<sup>593</sup> Lepp, Millar, and Roberts, “Women in the Winnipeg Garment Industry, 1950s-1970s,” 159-160. For the Filipino segment of this cohort of foreign workers, see Dalayoan, Enverga-Magsino and Bailon, *The First Filipino Immigrants in*, 28-35.

<sup>594</sup> “Winnipeg’s First Filipino Canadians: The arrival of Filipino professionals,” *Manila to Manitoba Museum Exhibit*, June 18 – September 26, 2010, Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

This sense of dislocation from family and friends in the search of better opportunity is represented in the testimony of a migrant Filipina worker interviewed for the exhibit. She had been adopted at the age of five by her aunt who was working on getting her into Canada. For the next six years she lived with her aunt, with her parents living just across the street. She saw her parents every day and remained very close with them, but by living with her aunt, she was being trained to live apart from her family. When she was old enough she would move to Canada to find work and send money home to her family in the form of remittances and, in her family's opinion, she needed to be prepared for it. She describes this experience thus:

I guess they're [her parents and aunt] deciding what's better for me... *Wala ka pang isip noon. Ang alam mo lang aadoptin ka* (You didn't know it then. All you knew is that you're going to be adopted), you're going to go [to Canada], it's going to be nice and that's it. Or go to school, '*di ba* (right)? Go to school, have a good job, help your family right? That's basically what's in the back of my head 'til this day. I'm going to go to school. I'm going to have a good job and I'm going to help my family – that's our culture, right? That's what we do, who we are...<sup>595</sup>

While Filipino migrants were faced with the loneliness of being separated from their family, they also experienced a sense of familial responsibility and the hope that there would be opportunities to better support relatives. Those who remained in the Philippines also experienced a similar divided memory. As the above example demonstrates, the interviewee's parents parted with their daughter in hopes of better opportunities for her and believed that she would experience a better quality of life in Canada than in the Philippines. Another Filipina oral interviewee depicts a similar scenario: "And, I guess my aunt talked a lot about the opportunities that would be available here once we got to Canada...All I remember my dad saying was it was

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<sup>595</sup> ANAK Oral History Project (part of the *Manila to Manitoba* Exhibit), November 8, 2009. (Dates refer to when the interview was conducted.)

for my future...”<sup>596</sup> In this case, the parents accompanied the daughter in search of better opportunity; however, to come to Canada they had to give up their home and socio-cultural support network, and the motivation to do this was the sense of familial responsibility for their daughter. Thus, there is a sense of sacrifice within this divided memory of Filipino immigration to Canada, one that is painful in its geo-spatial rupture as families are split, but hopeful in the opportunities for familial prosperity that the sacrifice may engender. The final panel of the exhibit reflected this divided memory in an ironic way. A first-generation Filipina-Canadian interviewee for the exhibit states that she wanted to leave the Philippines because she wanted her family, who had previously immigrated to Canada, to be complete again.<sup>597</sup>

Whereas the first panels depicted how initial flows of labour migration created a sense of dislocation in Filipino families, and the middle panels describe some of the issues of integrating into Canadian society, the final panel depicts how migration *unites* it once more. It is at this point that the bamboo art installation brings the exhibit – and the physical embodiment of the community’s memory – to an end. One of the last panels of the exhibit, “On being Filipino *and* Canadian,” returns the exhibit to the English passage presented at the beginning of the exhibit to the new generation of Filipino Canadians. Throughout the exhibit, the importance of remembering one’s (Filipino) past while integrating into Canadian society had been emphasized. On this closing poster board it is stated that, “for many, the ‘Filipino’ identity is *not an everyday connection to the Philippines, but a very real bond to those who trace their experiences there*. This new generation interprets these memories and mediates them to the realities of today.”<sup>598</sup> The exhibit, while being a crystallized memory, is an evolving experience that acts as an

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<sup>596</sup> ANAK Oral History Project, February 3, 2010.

<sup>597</sup> ANAK Oral History Project, September 12, 2009.

<sup>598</sup> “On Being Filipino *and* Canadian: A new generation constructs and ‘imagined’ identity.” *From Manila to Manitoba*. Emphasis added.

intervention within the community's history and will continue to shape the lives of Filipino Canadians who come across various aspects of this project. The *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit is but one event in this memory's development, one of the more recent comprehensive attempts to shape the community.

The exhibit seems to be in the spirit behind Nora's statement that "when memory is no longer everywhere, it will not be anywhere unless one takes the responsibility to recapture it through individual means".<sup>599</sup> To maintain the vivacity and prevent the individual privatization of the collective memory that much of the Winnipeg Filipino community identifies with, ANAK has performed this intervention. In contrast to Pierre Nora's self-referential *lieu de mémoire*, which has no material referent other than itself,<sup>600</sup> the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit does have real referents: every Filipino that views it. This is not because the exhibit claims to present and preserve the oral testimonies of Filipinos that are still alive – which it does – or that the community is at a particular point in its history where every member can say they or a close family member has experienced what is being depicted – which it is. Rather, the real referent of the exhibit is the reality that, as a collective, the Winnipeg Filipino Canadian community has been and continues to be shaped by these experiences of migration. These memories of migration are not yet relegated to Nora's detached sites of memory, as they continue to alter the dynamic of the community and the history it tells.

It is clear, then, that the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit is a memory-event actively engaging with the Winnipeg Filipino community's memory of migration. It is not presenting the history of the community's development as a past that has ceased to exert itself. ANAK has presented a version of this memory with which it believes the entire Filipino Canadian

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<sup>599</sup> Nora, "Between Memory and History," 16.

<sup>600</sup> Nora, "Between Memory and History," 23.

community can identify. The exhibit does not represent a passage from memory to history as Nora as conceived but is a revitalization of that memory that seeks to unite the community. While this exhibit does not express a specific historical narrative, however, and despite the goal to be inclusive of various elements of the community, *From Manila to Manitoba* does present a careful selection of materials from the community's memory. To a non-Filipino viewer, the exhibit might seem to present *the* history of the Winnipeg Filipino community as a retelling of past events, and it is likely that the exhibit was meant to make the history of Filipino Canadians more known to the wider Winnipeg community. To a member of the Filipino Canadian community, though, it might be situated within the realm of a contested space. In their discussion on the politics of war memory, T. G. Ashplant *et al.* state that "the articulation of memory involves struggles to extend, or alternatively to limit, the arenas [of articulation] within which specific memories are able to circulate, and hence make claims for recognition."<sup>601</sup> These arenas of articulation vary from family stories to projects such as the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit, and various narratives can be present at once in the same arena. Thus, at the community level, ANAK's exhibit is not the only version of the community's history.

A striking example of this is a history of the Manitoba Filipino community by Gemma Dalayoan et al., *The First Filipino Immigrants in Manitoba (1959-1975)*.<sup>602</sup> Published in 2005, *The First Filipino Immigrants* covers the initial waves of Filipinos to Manitoba, emphasizing these community pioneers. The researchers interviewed Filipino immigrants to Manitoba and used their testimony as a major source.<sup>603</sup> Motivated by the same literature gap as ANAK, the authors introduce the purpose of their study in the preface:

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<sup>601</sup> Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, 17.

<sup>602</sup> Dalayon, Enverga-Magsino and Bailon, *The First Filipino Migrants in Manitoba (1959-1975)*.

<sup>603</sup> To the best of the author's knowledge, these interviews were performed independently of each other and no collaboration between the two projects took place.

The Filipino community has emerged as one of the most vibrant communities in Manitoba. However, there is a dearth of written information about Filipinos and their significant contributions to all aspects of life in Manitoba. This lack of knowledge about Filipinos in Manitoba and the desire of the Manitoba Filipino Writers' Guild [the sponsoring organization of the publication] to highlight the contributions of the earliest Filipinos for posterity purposes have inspired and propelled the Guild's members to start documenting the experiences of the first Filipino immigrants, the trail blazers, who paved the way for the present and future Filipino immigrants in Manitoba.<sup>604</sup>

It is clear this book was envisaged as an act of commemoration, as a sort of homage to the first waves of Filipino migrants, something ANAK sought to avoid.<sup>605</sup> The text highlights some of the struggles experienced by the early Filipino Canadian community, such as economic integration, but contentious issues such as racism do not factor into the analysis. It is possible that the authors wanted to avoid such controversial pasts or did not want to rekindle tensions with the broader Manitoban community;<sup>606</sup> it is also possible that the authors wished to focus on the positive aspects of Filipino experience in Manitoba. Nevertheless, the absence is compelling when compared to the relative prominence the subject received in the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit.

As an intervention, and as an alternative historical narrative, the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit sought to bring attention to the serious issues the community has faced, and continues to face. By doing this, however, the exhibit is also acknowledging that there is a tension within the community surrounding memory between a portion that wishes to keep silent on such contentious issues and a group that believes such issues have played a major role in the

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<sup>604</sup> Dalayoan, Enverga-Magsino, and Bailon, *The First Filipino Migrants in Manitoba (1959-1975)*, 7.

<sup>605</sup> Personal conversations with members of the Filipino Canadian community have suggested to the author that this emphasis on the first comers and pioneers of the community is because this cohort of Filipino immigrants is aging quickly. The rush to document the lives and experiences of some of the first Filipinos in Manitoba, however, seems to have created a discursive space in which younger generations and newer immigrants are not included. This was a major motivating factor in ANAK's *From Manila to Manitoba* oral history project.

<sup>606</sup> This process of silencing or smoothing out experiences of racism has been documented by Pamela Sugiman, "Interpreting Wartime Narratives of Japanese-Canadian Women," in *Rethinking Canada: The promise of women's history*. 5th ed., edited by Mona Gleason and Adele Perry (Toronto: OUP, 2006): 242-263.

community's history and should be acknowledged. In a recent history of Filipino immigration to Canada, Eleanor Del Rio-Laquian and Aprodicio Laquian have noted that the debate surrounding immigration and racism is silent.<sup>607</sup>

In discussions of community, and especially of community memory, points of contention are inevitable and part of the negotiation of a community's identity.<sup>608</sup> In this instance, the tension comes from an issue of what to emphasize. The chronological focus of *The First Filipino Immigrants in Manitoba*, which emphasizes the deeds of the first wave of Filipinos, alongside Bautista's remarks that ANAK's oral history project was not going to focus on such community firsts, indicates that this too is a point of contention in the performance of memory in the community. This can be seen as different generations demarcating what issues are important to them, rather than stating what issues are important and which are not. In their own way, as they each respond to questions raised by each generation, these historical narratives and memories are both valid at once. This is one of the qualities of memory and of community, where multiple and competing memories can exist at the same time and both be entirely valid.

### ***From Manila to Manitoba and Community Development***

The difference in the approaches to Filipino Canadian history of *From Manila to Manitoba*, *Seeking a Better Life Abroad*, and *The First Filipino Immigrants in Manitoba* can be understood along generational lines. The two texts discussed above were written by older members of the community; the *From Manila to Manitoba* project was produced by younger members, children of first-generation immigrants. James Mochoruk, who reviewed the museum

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<sup>607</sup> Del Rio-Laquian and Laquian, *Seeking a Better Life Abroad: A Study of Filipinos in Canada, 1957-2007*, 37.

<sup>608</sup> Walsh and High, "Re-Thinking the Concept of 'Community'," 255-274.

exhibit in *Oral History Review*,<sup>609</sup> stated that “it was intimated that some of the first-generation professionals were not too happy with the fact that their ‘firsts’ and leadership role were not at the heart of the exhibit.” However, when Mochoruk probed this from museum organizers, he received little feedback.<sup>610</sup> A prominent community member, and participant in the exhibit, has echoed this observation, stating that “some organizations with older membership were quick to criticize but that, to me, was more due to envy – because they didn’t think of doing it – and it took these young people to create this tribute to the community.”<sup>611</sup> Bautista has indicated that “petty community politics” were present, but did not elaborate, stating she would rather focus on the positive response of the community.<sup>612</sup> These politics, it seems, comes from an issue of what to focus on. The chronological limits of *The First Filipino Immigrants in Manitoba*, which emphasizes the deeds of the first wave of Filipinos, alongside Bautista’s remarks that ANAK’s oral history project was not going to focus on such community firsts, indicates that this remains a point of contention in the memory of the community.

A final indication of the community’s reception is the indirect media attention that the *Filipino Journal* gave to the exhibit. While news outlets like the *Pilipino Express* and the *Winnipeg Free Press* gave a full review of the exhibit, the *Filipino Journal* only picked up on a story that complained about the wording used in the *Winnipeg Free Press* by Allison Mayes to describe the exhibit.<sup>613</sup> The section of the article by Mayes that was under attack was in a text

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<sup>609</sup> Jim Mochoruk. "Review: From Manila o Manitoba," *Oral History Review* 38, no. 1 (2011): 193-196.

<sup>610</sup> Jim Mochoruk, 20 April 2013. Email correspondence.

<sup>611</sup> Emmie Joaquin, 19 April 2013. Personal electronic correspondence.

<sup>612</sup> Bautista, 25 April 2013. Email correspondence.

<sup>613</sup> Alfie Vera Mella, “The Power of the Pen is Really Mighty and with that...,” *The Filipino Journal*. July 12, 2010. The *Pilipino Journal* (to which the author is a regular contributor) and the *Filipino Journal* are Filipino newspapers published in Winnipeg. The *Pilipino Journal* was begun in 2005 by Emmie Joaquin, a graduate of the University of the Philippines, who has been an active leader in the Winnipeg community. The *Pilipino Express* brands itself a newsmagazine, and includes news items, entertainment stories, articles on immigration, and information on community events. The *Filipino Journal* is a descendent of the *Silangan* discussed in Chapter 3. After Ted Alcuítas



box that briefly indicated the history of the community, referring to the first Filipino garment workers in Winnipeg as “uneducated”. The *Filipino Journal* article took issue with the word “uneducated” and claimed that it cast these workers in a negative light. The author, Alfie Vera Merra, initially suggested that the *Winnipeg Free Press* author was responsible for the inappropriate word usage, but also included Mayes’ response in which she placed all responsibility on Darlyne Bautista, who had used the word “uneducated” in an interview. What is important about this is that while the exhibit was not celebrated in the *Filipino Journal* as it was in other venues, the only acknowledgement the paper gave to *From Manila to Manitoba* was critical, even if it was touching on a sensitive subject.

These various fault lines of dissent are one of the driving forces in the Filipino community. This is not to argue that consent and agreement are absent in the community, as it is active in many forms. In Jun 2016, the Philippine Heritage Council of Manitoba hosted an event called “Envisioning the Future,” in which members of the community were joined to discuss the future goals of the Filipino community in Winnipeg. This event, which the author attended, was one of energetic discussion that reflected a general consensus of the community’s aspirations. The group consisted of different generational representatives, including the president of ANAK. The event was similar to the 1978 Philippine Association of Manitoba’s conference on the role of Filipinos in the Manitoba Mosaic,<sup>614</sup> with a similar question of how the community envisioned itself in the future. In covering this event, the *Filipino Journal* was clear of who led the movement: “a group of the wise and knowledgeable “elders” from our Filipino Community”

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closed the *Silangan* in 1982, it was sold to Rod Cantiveros, former columnist and associate editor. The paper was first renamed the *New Silangan*, and then again renamed as *Filipino Journal* in 1987.

<sup>614</sup> Conrado R. Santos and Erlinda E. Thomson, eds., *The Proceedings of the First Provincial Conference of the Philippine Association of Manitoba on the Theme of ‘The Role of Filipinos in the Manitoba Mosaic.’* 2-4 September 1977 (Winnipeg: Published by the Philippine Association of Manitoba in co-operation with the Department of the Secretary of State, the Government of Canada.)

whose “guidance and help in the community [will] prepare for envisioning the future of Filipinos in Manitoba.”<sup>615</sup> The owner of the *Filipino Journal*, Rod Cantiveros, who purchased the paper from Ted Alcuityas in 1982, was also present at the 1978 conference. Although the *Journal* emphasized these early Filipino immigrants, the “Envisioning the Future” event was a reevaluation of questions facing the community in the 1970s, and the youth played a major role. The return to these themes, and the inclusion of the youth, recalls the quote at the beginning of this chapter that asserted memories are reevaluated by new generations, not because they previous answers were wrong, but because those answers need to be recontextualized in a world that the youth inhabited.

The nature of community, however, is that consent and dissent operate in the same arena and even in the same space, whether discursive or material. In the case of the “Envisioning the Future” event, the “elders” of the community were privileged for their guidance and wisdom in leading the community, however the context of the *From Manila to Manitoba* exhibit and the presence of ANAK at the event reminds one of that generational tension. The tension does not necessarily revolve around the fact that elders are leading the community, but the level of inclusion of the voices and opinions of the youth. This chapter has focused on dissent to demonstrate that out of the disagreements discussed, change has happened in the community. Dissenting voices, as discussed in Chapter 3, must be given an audience by those in authority, because denying this would weaken their claims of authority and representation of the broader community. As other voices are given space - in this case, the voices of youth - the dynamics of community and community leadership change. As these new voices are included in community

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<sup>615</sup> “The envisioning celebration of the future of Filipinos in Manitoba,” *The Filipino Journal* 29 no. 5

discussions, new disagreements will arise, as will potential rifts in community leadership, but from this new goals, identities, and values will develop to lead the Filipino community.

## **Conclusion**

We have thus seen how ANAK organized, researched and designed a museum exhibit to intervene in the memory of immigration in the Winnipeg Filipino community. While celebrating the Filipino-Canadian community's fiftieth anniversary, ANAK has also seen an opportunity to create a space in the memory in which younger generations could feel included. Through this exhibit, and other cultural programs offered by ANAK, its mandate to foster an appreciation of Philippine heritage in youth has found expression. It is also clear, however, that ANAK is not only interested in incorporating the youth of the community or maintaining a strong sense of Filipino-ness, but is also actively engaged in the community politics of memory and wants to stimulate dialogue on aspects of the community's history that are not often spoken. This exhibit was unique because ANAK is composed of male and female Filipino youth. A woman led this project and had a significant role in shaping the narrative, which contrasts to the debates examined in Chapter 3. In that chapter's analysis of the *Silangan* newspaper, the idea of the Filipino Self was largely crafted by educated men. Many similar questions of Filipino identity were addressed in the *Manila to Manitoba* exhibit, such as what appropriate cultural practices were appropriate to a Philippine heritage. While there were some similarities, the such as an emphasis on maintaining a connection to the Philippines, the construction of the narrative itself attempted to be more inclusive than that which transpired in the *Silangan*.

Furthermore, ANAK chose a unique venue to present its project. While accompanied by a textual component, the oral history project found its flagship expression in this museum exhibit. By choosing this medium, more viewer engagement was possible. While ANAK exercised editorial voice in selecting events and quotes from oral interviews, there was still space for the viewer to engage with the exhibit on a personal level. Being led by younger generations of Filipinos, this project has largely been an affair internal to the community. Communities are not bound by consent. As was seen in the case of ethnic media, while disagreement can lead to arguments and hurt relationships (and egos), it can also be a push for development and change. The process of community, while involving many positive elements, can be chaotic at times. This reveals that nature of community, though, as a conglomeration of multiple viewpoints, sometimes overlapping or complementary, but often opposing and contradictory. Of course, dissent that is unresolved can cause rifts in a community, and even destroy a community. Thus, the bonds of community must be strong enough to withstand the disagreements that come along with active and vocal members. These bonds are made at multiple sites, but we saw some of this process in Chapter 3 as the Philippine Association of Manitoba, and later the Barangay group, worked to become an inclusive and unifying cultural institution. These bonds, furthermore, remain tight in the community despite any dissent or rifts because of what ANAK pointed out in their exhibit: their shared heritage. The place of the Philippines in the real and imagined identity of Filipinos - not just in Winnipeg, but across the world - remains present. Regardless of disagreements between Filipino youth and “elder of the community” about community history, both groups agree that preserving their shared Filipino culture is of primary importance. This heritage is the foundation of the Filipino community that reaches out beyond Winnipeg to

connect its members to wider Filipino diaspora, making it at once a local and transnational community.

## Conclusion: Why Winnipeg?

On 30 March 2011, Sally Ordinario-Villanueva, 32, Ramon Credo, 42, and Elizabeth Batain, 38, were executed by the Chinese state on charges of drug smuggling. Sally, Ramon, and Elizabeth were migrants travelling to China for temporary work contracts. Siblings of Ordinario-Villanueva claimed that Sally had been tricked by her Manila-based recruiter into carrying a bag that had a secret-compartment filled with heroin, as was believed to be the case with Ramon and Elizabeth. Philippine President Benigno Aquino and Vice-President Jejomar Binay pleaded with Chinese officials to stay the executions, claiming they had proof the three had been victims of drug traffickers in the Philippines. Even though members of the alleged drug syndicate had been arrested, including Sally's recruiter, Chinese officials went through with the executions.<sup>616</sup> The case revealed a disturbing reality in the Philippines, where many are so desperate to find work abroad that they put themselves in a similar situation. President Aquino acknowledged this, stating the ultimate goal was "to create a situation where people are not pressured to resort to these things, where they can find enough gainful employment in the Philippines."<sup>617</sup>

The injustice of the deaths of Sally, Ramon, and Elizabeth struck my heart at a time when I was deciding what PhD dissertation project to which I was going to dedicate the next few years of my life. It was not just the injustice of China's stiff, unwavering persecution, or of the ultimate inability for the Philippine state to stop China. What hit me the most, and continues to even as I write this, was the fact that nearly ten percent of the Philippine population must seek work

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<sup>616</sup> "China executes Filipinos for drug trafficking," *Al-Jazeera*, 30 March 2011.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2011/03/201133044117175610.html>. Accessed 20 October 2018.

<sup>617</sup> "Mother-of-two tells children to 'finish your studies' before she is executed with two others for drug smuggling in China," *Daily Mail*, 31 March 2011. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1371888/Mother-tells-children-finish-studies-China-executes-2-Filipinos-drug-smuggling.html>. Accessed 20 October 2018.

abroad to survive. Many destinations for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) put them at risk for racism and abuse (physical, sexual, and psychological). In April 2018, President Rodrigo Duterte temporarily banned temporary Filipino workers in Kuwait after reports of abuse and murders, the most recent being Joanna Demafellis, whose body was found in a freezer.<sup>618</sup> As it was noted in the dissertation's introduction, the roots for this situation lay squarely in the Philippines' colonial past, although its future correction rests entirely upon the modern Philippine government which has become reliant upon these workers. The remittances from these OFWs not only keep the Philippine economy afloat but remove any real necessity for the state to enact the drastic measures that are needed to stop the annual exodus of Filipino citizens who have every right to expect gainful and meaningful employment in their home country.

This study has not looked at the plight of OFWs, but it takes its cue from the same originating issue: poor economic opportunities and living conditions leading Filipinos to look abroad for better living conditions. The same historical roots that have created economic and social instability in the Philippines and have led to state-sponsored labour migration are the same roots that have compelled millions of Filipinos to emigrate and settle across the world - including Canada. Discussions and interviews with community members reveal similar reasons for leaving, including the welfare of children and family, the rampant degree of government corruption that infuses daily life, and precarious living conditions. People who were successful in their careers in the Philippines have opted for a life of deprofessionalization in Canada. While they were secure in their work, they could not be sure that their own children would find similar success in the Philippines. I have been told that life in Canada is better even if a former banker may be working

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<sup>618</sup> "OFW welfare is top PH foreign policy concern, says Duterte," *ABS-CBN News*, 23 July 2018. <https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/07/23/18/ofw-welfare-is-top-ph-foreign-policy-concern-says-duterte>. Accessed 21 October 2018.

as maintenance staff in a Winnipeg hospital simply because of Canadian healthcare. The precariousness of life in the Philippines is often enough for many to consider immigration.

The story told in this dissertation is drastically different from that of Sally Ordinario-Villanueva, Ramon Credo, and Elizabeth Batain, even if conditions in the Philippines similarly prompted the migration of Winnipeg Filipinos. Yet, it is not a rosy story either, and has often included discrimination, manipulation, and abuse. The Filipino nurses and garment workers who experienced exploitation at the hands of recruiters discussed in Chapter 2 are proof of this. These women hopefully found security once they settled in Canada, however these stories have never been told to the best of my knowledge. The government sources do not indicate that any perpetrators were brought to justice or that support was offered to these women. The experiences of OFWs and of those who have immigrated to Winnipeg all demonstrate the tenacity of Filipinos. As the title of one history states, Filipinos have immigrated to Canada *Seeking a Better Life Abroad*, rarely for themselves but for their family. This dissertation, in addition to detailing the first decades of the Winnipeg Filipino community, has been the result of a motivation seeded on the night of 30 March 2011 to bring attention and voice to at least some of the consequences of contemporary Philippine society and the “ethos of migration.”<sup>619</sup>

### **Why Winnipeg?**

This study began by reflecting on “Why Winnipeg?” This was not only to justify an analysis of Winnipeg specifically but, and perhaps more importantly, why Winnipeg has become one of the most substantial Filipino communities in Canada. This dissertation has demonstrated

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<sup>619</sup> Anna Romina Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes: The transnational labor brokering of Filipino workers*. (New Brunswick, N.J.:Rutgers University Press, 2009).



that it was the result of a confluence of events in Canada and the Philippines. Following the end of the Second World War, Canada's economy grew significantly. The garment industry experienced significant growth across the country in the post-war period, and Winnipeg was at the forefront of many of these changes. As companies in Winnipeg grew, traditional sources of labour could not fill the demand, and companies such as Silpit Industries began petitioning the government for assistance with a recruitment scheme in Manila. This began the immigration of garment workers to Winnipeg from the Philippines in 1968, the first of a group that would change not only the Filipino community, but the face of Winnipeg itself. As discussed in the Introduction, Filipinos today account for nearly ten percent of the city's population, and thousands of these families can trace their presence in the city to these early waves through the process of family reunification. These garment workers came into a small, yet well-established Filipino community. Changes in the practice and delivery of healthcare following the Second World War created demands for nurses and doctors that Canadian schools could not supply. Beginning with doctors who had been practicing in the United States under the Exchange Visitor Program, Filipino health professionals began applying to immigrate to Canada as their contracts ended. While garment workers' immigration was processed relatively quickly under the new Points System implemented by the Canadian government in 1967, policies during the movement of healthcare workers were more restrictive and special dispensation was made to allow their entry into Canada as they would have otherwise been prevented entry based upon their ethnic background.

These events within Canada and Winnipeg coincided with a sharp decline in the Philippine economy and worsening social conditions. The presidency of Ferdinand Marcos (1965-1986) exacerbated the situation with Martial Law and economic damages so bad that the

Philippine GDP took over two decades to recover its levels from 1982.<sup>620</sup> As the economy worsened, so too did employment prospects, and the Philippine state adopted a policy of encouraging and facilitating the emigration of its citizens. In the case of healthcare workers, colleges and universities in the Philippines, which had been established by or upon an American model, produced nurses, doctors, and healthcare technicians that could not be absorbed into the local healthcare system. Likewise, garment workers who immigrated to Canada in the 1960s and 1970s benefitted from an active industry in the Philippines which could not compete with the wages offered in Canada. It bears mentioning that those leaving the Philippines for Canada were not the abject poor who were most affected by the declining economy, those who had to engage in an informal market for survival. Filipinos from a lower socio-economic background could never hope to afford the costs associated with immigration and would not have access to the type of training necessary to make them applicable applicants under Canada's immigration system.

### **Winnipeg and the Filipino Diaspora**

The same factors that led Filipinos to immigrate to Winnipeg have pushed their compatriots to regions around the world. According to estimates in 2013, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas' list of top ten destination countries indicate how far-flung the diaspora has become: the United States, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Canada, Australia, Italy, United Kingdom, Qatar, and Singapore.<sup>621</sup> Sometimes, siblings settle in different cities

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<sup>620</sup> Ronald U. Mendoza, "Ferdinand Marcos' economic disaster," *Rappler*, 26 February 2016. <https://www.rappler.com/thought-leaders/123773-marcos-economic-disaster>. Accessed 20 October 2018.

<sup>621</sup> "Stock Estimate of Overseas Filipinos as of Dec. 2013," Commission on Filipinos Overseas. <https://www.cfo.gov.ph/program-and-services/yearly-stock-estimation-of-overseas-filipinos.html>. Accessed 20 October 2018.

within Canada, if not different countries entirely. The phenomenon of emigration has become so widespread that nearly everyone in the Philippines knows someone who has left the country either to temporarily work or permanently settle. Each of these individuals bring with them bonds of friendship and kinship that are indeed transnational. Chapter 3 examined the role of technology - in this case, ethnic media - in creating transnational spaces within which interactions between people displaced by space and time can engage with each other. This dissertation has been at once a study of a single community and of the Philippine diaspora. As the study of the *Silangan* newspaper demonstrated, Winnipeg Filipinos were concerned with local issues such as community organization, preserving Philippine heritage, and integrating into Canadian society. But these issues were also approached from a transnational perspective. Controversy over the 1980 election of the Philippine Association of Manitoba's executive board was approached in terms of Philippine political cultures, with some suggesting they turn to Philippine election law to solve their issues. Preserving their Philippine heritage was an opportunity to claim a post-colonial identity, one that was cast as being truer to Filipino "innate" virtues than was the case within the Philippines itself. Integration into Canadian society was never a discussion of shedding their Filipino identity, but rather of how best to contribute to Canada with that heritage. This sentiment was expressed aptly by a reader of the *Silangan*, who wrote that he was "proud of being a Canadian who is a Filipino."<sup>622</sup>

Transnationalism has provided a conceptual tool to appropriately understand the lives which Filipinos have experienced. Filipino immigrants did not merely become Canadian citizens of Philippine descent, but rather maintained active connections to their heritage, to the Philippines, and to the Filipino diaspora. There is not much evidence that those who have

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<sup>622</sup> Dave Fernandez, "Some of the Things that Make Us Proud," *Silangan*, June 1980, 22.

immigrated to Winnipeg did so because of a dislike of the Philippines. In some cases, there has been a sense of loss at the necessity to leave the Philippines. Filipinos frequently express that they would have preferred to stay were it not for uncertainty over their children's future, poor living conditions, or government corruption. While expressing gratitude towards, and a love for, Canada, the Philippines remains an active force in the community's identity. Transnationalism offers a heuristic to appropriately explain how Filipinos living in Winnipeg remained, at once, connected to Canadian society, the Philippines, and the Filipino diaspora. I have avoided getting bogged down in discussions on transnational theory because of the wide interpretation and application of the term. I have instead chosen to let the experiences of the community create a picture that is both transnational and local, as these are the realities that Filipino lives represent.

### **Canada and the Trans-Pacific**

This study has been part of a broader historiographical moment in Canadian history that shifts the gaze away from Atlantic history to the Pacific. Since before Confederation in 1867, people from the Asia-Pacific region have entered what is now Canada. As was seen in Chapter 2, the presence of Filipino in Canada can definitively be dated to 1890, and it is extremely likely they were present before. Filipino migrants often followed the paths of Chinese and Japanese labourers in the United States, and while these communities have received significant study in the past few decades, the Filipino community has yet to receive such attention. As Henry Yu has demonstrated, Canada is a Pacific nation.<sup>623</sup> This "uncommon past," one hardly known, is often overlooked in popular historical narratives that favour Canada's Trans-Atlantic character; once

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<sup>623</sup> Yu, "Refracting Pacific Canada"; Yu, "Global migrants and the new Pacific Canada."

Pacific Canada is included in these narratives, however, the character and history of the nation becomes richer. This dissertation joins the march of work that seeks to uncover this “uncommon past.”

The research presented in the preceding chapters lay out some of the connections between Canada and the Trans-Pacific. The political crisis at the heart of Chapter 1 resulted from Canada’s goal to expand its influence in the Asia-Pacific region being threatened by the Philippine government. One of the main arguments for responding to Philippine demands for Filipino immigration to Canada was to strengthen Canadian presence in the region. The chapters on ethnic media and history and memory depict the ways in which society in Canada has become Trans-Pacific. Without a doubt, Filipinos have become active Canadian citizens and are integrating their transnational connections to that identity. From a purely demographic standpoint, the fact that Canada’s top three source countries for immigrants are from Asia reveal this reality. This is not a new development either; Canada did not become a Pacific nation in the last few decades through reformed immigration policies, but rather has been engaged in the Trans-Pacific since before Confederation. This dissertation has adopted a Trans-Pacific perspective to Canadian immigration, and furthermore has injected Filipinos into the refraction of Canada’s “uncommon pasts”.

### **Future Directions**

This dissertation has laid down the foundational research to build a wider historiographical body of literature on Filipino Canadians, but there is still much more work that needs to be done. As pointed out in the Introduction, Filipino Canadians are beginning to attract

scholarly attention. The edited collection *Filipinos in Canada: Disturbing Invisibility* is evidence that a body of young Filipino Canadian scholars are beginning to ask hard questions of their own community. Hopefully, this research will lead others to build on the historical knowledge of Filipino immigration to Canada and the communities that they have built by pointing the way to further research.

The research in this dissertation is likely going to be of more interest to historians of Canadian immigration and ethnicity, although it is also directed to scholars of the Philippines. Filomeno Aguilar, Jr., has noted that the field of Filipino studies has become a synonym for Filipino American studies.<sup>624</sup> It has also been noted that there remains a gulf between Filipino studies and Philippine studies. Speaking of *Filipinos in Canada: Disturbing Invisibility*, Janus Isaac Nolasco has noted that there was no Philippine-based scholar who contributed to the text.<sup>625</sup> Based upon the focus of the text, this might not seem an issue, but perhaps that is the point. Hitherto, Filipino studies and Philippine studies have largely worked independently of each other, largely unaware or uninterested in work being done in the other field. Attempts should be made from both sides to bridge that gap.<sup>626</sup> To this end, I have presented conference papers in the Philippines on two occasions, drawing upon research presented in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3. While the content of these presentations dealt with a Canadian context, presenting this research to a Philippine audience challenged me to make it relevant to their interests, and to demonstrate why they should care about Filipino Canadians. To do this, common interests must be found and what this dissertation has discovered is that identity is often at the heart of both

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<sup>624</sup> Filomeno Aguilar, Jr., "Is the Filipino Diaspora a Diaspora?" *Critical Asian Studies* 47 no. 3 (2015): 440-461.

<sup>625</sup> Janus Isaac Nolasco, "The Brains of the Transnation: Overseas Filipino Academics and Philippine Historiography in the Late 20th and Early 21st Century," Paper presented at *Bridging Worlds, Illumining the Archive: An International Conference in Honor of Professor Resil B. Mojares*. Manila, 31 July 2018.

<sup>626</sup> Janus Isaac Nolasco, Personal Conversation, 31 July 2018.

literatures. When Filipinos leave the Philippines, they do not simply cease to be Filipino, and they by no means revoke their membership in the Philippine state. Just as the Philippine state continues to embrace the Filipino diaspora,<sup>627</sup> so too does the diaspora engage the Philippines. To properly do justice to Filipinos in the Philippines and abroad, and to their lived experiences, more should be done by scholars in both fields to bridge the literature by building upon common concerns.

Finally, the scope of what has been laid out here also needs to be expanded upon. Most of this dissertation has been built upon original research; there was no definitive history upon which an analysis could be built. Filipinos in Canada continue to require further study, and more so from a historical perspective. Bonifacio's study of Filipina women in the Prairies, and Colomma et al.'s social science approach to Filipinos in Canada provide valuable analysis but lack a rigorous historical approach.<sup>628</sup> Marshall's study of Filipino religiosity in Canada makes a positive move in this direction with some analysis of communities outside of Winnipeg. As was seen in Chapter 4, when a community's history is not taught - never mind hardly researched - it leads to questions about integration and belonging in Canadian society. To compound this problem is a relative dearth of research on Filipino communities in Manitoba outside of Winnipeg. According to Census data, there are 5,940 Filipinos living in rural Manitoba, and more OFWs.<sup>629</sup> Very little is known about these communities, their histories, and their experiences, more so in the case of temporary workers. This is a crucial avenue of inquiry that will provide rich opportunities for research.

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<sup>627</sup> The Commission on Filipinos Overseas is a government agency meant to foster maintained ties between Filipino immigrants and the Philippines, such as the Diaspora to Development program to "mobilize Diaspora Communities to contribute to their home country's development". <https://www.cfo.gov.ph/15-aboutcfo/programs-and-projects/2997-about-the-diaspora-to-development-or-d2d-program.html>. Accessed 20 October 2018.

<sup>628</sup> Bonifacio, *Pinay on the Prairies*; Coloma et al., eds., *Filipinos in Canada*.

<sup>629</sup> "Census Profile, 2016 Census: Winnipeg CMA." Statistics Canada.

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The history of the Winnipeg Filipino community is the result of converging circumstances. Affairs on the international stage - such as the end of the Second World War - in the Philippines, and in Canada all came to converge on the city of Winnipeg which, in its own ways, was tied into changes sweeping the world in this period. There was no logical expectation in the 1950s and 1960s that Winnipeg would become a hub for Filipino Canadians. There was no history of Filipino migration to the city, and before 1959 when the first Filipino doctor arrived in Winnipeg, the city did not merit the attention of mobile Filipinos. As events transpired, though, Winnipeg became more attractive to immigrants, and - just as importantly - Winnipeg became interested in Filipinos. This dissertation has laid out some of these early convergences and has traced the first waves in this community's history. There remains a shocking dearth of knowledge about this community, as well as the broader Filipino Canadian experience. Uncovering this rich and complex history will only enrich our understanding of Winnipeg and Canada, and of the Filipino diaspora to which the city has been inextricably connected.

This is a preliminary history of a community seeking to define, understand, and express itself. The subject of the study, the Winnipeg Filipino community, has had a high degree of self-awareness since its inception and, if cleavages and disagreements erupt periodically, the future directions of the community have always guided these discussions. Several these debates have been discussed such as the 1977 conference on the role of Filipinos in Manitoba and the Envisioning Community project in 2016 which sought to map the current state of the community and track its future steps. The *Manila to Manitoba* exhibit, examined in Chapter 4, was a retrospective look at fifty years of the community's history that also presented an image of how



the future should progress. This is a community with a strong sense of its history, both in Canada and the Philippines, that will continue to define and redefine itself in Winnipeg and the diaspora.

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