FILIPINO AUSTRIANS:
Transforming Identities and Changing Selfhood Under Conditions of Migration

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Philippine immigration to Austria began with the first wave of labor migration initiated by the Austrian government in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The specific circumstances of labor migration for Philippine nationals, their educational background, its originally predominantly female character, and the ensuing inter-marriages with native Austrians, have created living conditions that differ significantly from those of other early immigrant groups. Filipino-Austrians of the first and second generations seem to be legally and socially better integrated in Austria than other immigrant groups from non-Western countries.

This paper investigates Philippine labor migration to Austria and shows how the circumstances of early immigrants differ from those who migrated more recently. It argues that these differences can be traced to changes in the labor market and a much stricter immigration law and to the different background of an already entrenched Philippine migrant community in Austria. Further, it deals with everyday negotiations and strategies of Philippine immigrants and their second-generation offspring in coping with migration and—for those already born in Austria—of living and growing up in two cultures.

The paper draws from available studies and data on migration, interviews and from two decades of close observation of the Philippine migrant community in Austria.

Keywords: migration, identity construction, Filipino-Austrians

INTRODUCTION

Filipinos are a highly mobile population. For years, the Philippines has been the second largest labor-sending country in the world, next to Mexico. Thus, Philippine labor migration has become a well-researched topic. Still, what has been unnoticed in this field is Philippine migration to Austria, although Filipinos constitute quite a substantial immigrant group in this country of slightly more than eight million inhabitants.

Philippine immigration to Austria began with the first wave of labor migration initiated by the Austrian government in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, Philippine nationals, came to Austria under circumstances that differed widely from those of other early immigrants. Thus, Filipino-Austrians of the first and second generations seem to have been better integrated in Austria than other earlier immigrant groups.

The paper starts with brief remarks on the beginnings of labor migration to Austria. This is followed by a description of the conditions and circumstances of early Philippine immigration to that country. The paper then discusses recent first-generation Philippine immigrants to Austria when immigration laws had changed and which already had an existing migrant community. Some statistical data are presented, showing the extent of Philippine migration. Since Filipinos in Austria tend to speak about themselves as a distinct community, the paper then proceeds with some reflections on their identity, self-image and background as a migrant community. After this, second-generation immigrants and the roles ascribed to them by their parents are dealt with. Here, some case studies, based on autobiographical interviews with informants chosen randomly, are presented. The paper ends with a concluding analysis.

The paper abstains from an indepth discussion of migration theories. Theoretical issues are kept to a minimum and elaborated only when necessary. And while this study draws on available migration literature, it also owes much to a close observation of the Philippine migrant community in Austria and to informal conversations with community members.

PHILIPPINE MIGRATION TO AUSTRIA: 1960s

Philippine labor migration to Austria started as part of the first wave of labor migration initiated by the Austrian government in the 1960s, when the country faced a shortage of labor. Between 1962 and 1966 the Austrian

government entered into recruitment agreements with Spain, Turkey, and former Yugoslavia. Austrian companies were looking for male unskilled workers employable in temporary, low-paid, menial jobs who were supposed to return to their home country as soon as their contracts expired and when they were no longer needed (Fassmann and Münz 1996: 222). They were eventually granted social security and other benefits to increase the pull factors. Many labor migrants were not officially recruited but came as tourists and acquired a work permit. This practise was finally stopped in 1974 when the Austrian economy went into recession. Besides, xenophobia was on the rise, since migrant workers now decided to stay and petitioned their wives and children to join them (Gächter and Recherche-Gruppe 2004: 31-45). Due to their low income, they settled in areas where accommodation costs were low. Thus, ethnic communities of migrants from the same country, sometimes even from the same village, emerged, forming the basis of a segregation of living quarters.

Although Philippine labor migration to Austria started at about the same time as those from other countries, its circumstances differed significantly from those of other immigrant groups. Early Philippine migration was skilled and female. Filipinas were granted the option to stay upon the signing of their contracts. Prone to "Eurogamy" (Hall 2001) and with practically no choices within their own expat-community many of the early immigrants married native Austrians, blended well into Austrian society and acquired Austrian citizenship. This makes research on second-generation Filipino-Austrians problematic since archival records are not clear on their national origin.[1] Second-generation Philippine immigrants have thus largely become "invisible" in statistical terms.

Owing to favorable conditions in the receiving country and the fact that they possess formal educational training, most early Philippine migrants in Austria, have found secure employment in "skilled" employment categories. They enjoy a better socio-economic status, are concentrated in the Austrian middle class, and have a higher degree of acceptance by the native population compared to other early immigrant groups. They also have a decent standard of living, enabling them to provide their children with advanced education and to send remittances to relatives in the Philippines. Other immigrant groups from non-Western countries—owing to having less favorable educational backgrounds and contract conditions—have to cope with many more difficulties, and are often confined to a much lower socio-economic status.

PHILIPPINE IMMIGRATION TO AUSTRIA: 1970s

In the early 1970s, with the prospect of a United Nations (UN) office to be opened in Vienna, the Philippine government was convinced that an embassy should be established in Austria.[2] In 1973, to justify this move, a bilateral agreement was formalized between the city of Vienna and the Philippine Department of Labor, under which the Viennese municipal administration consented to admit a number of young, single, Filipina nurses in line with the city's needs.[3] The municipal government acceded to shoulder the travel expenses of the nurses as well as the cost of their two-month intensive language training, after completion of which they could begin working full-time as stipulated in their contract. The agreement considered Philippine nursing diplomas equivalent to Austrian diplomas, and provided for three-year contracts, with the assurance that the contracts could be extended and that the nurses could eventually acquire civil servant status like Austrian nurses.[4] The document, however, did not specify the duration of the effectivity of the agreement nor the number of nurses to be admitted.

The first Philippine nurses arrived in autumn 1973. By 1985, when the agreement expired (without being formally terminated), about 400 Filipina nurses had extended their work permit indefinitely (WKAV 2003). However, the actual number of Philippine nurses in Austria was much higher than the original entrants and also included males since, starting in 1975, many of their relatives had come to Austria. The latter entered with tourist visas but intended to stay and acquire work permits. This did not prove to be too difficult because Austria needed health personnel. Others came to join their relatives and found employment in other fields, very often in relatively menial jobs (Reiterer 2003: 8). The establishment of the UN offices in Vienna in 1979 offered further career opportunities, ranging from professional positions to maintenance and security jobs. The employment of Philippine migrants to Austria became more diverse but was still mainly limited to the tertiary sector. However, early Filipina immigrants, with few exceptions, found better jobs than their male counterparts despite little differences in formal education. Practically all of them were college, or at least high school graduates, or claimed undergoing some kind of formal education which in many cases went beyond high school.

RECENT FIRST-GENERATION PHILIPPINE IMMIGRATION

Recent Philippine immigrants enter the country under highly changed circumstances. Austria has become an immigration country against her will

and immigration laws have become much stricter. In 1992, Austria decided to regulate immigration by enacting the *Residence Law*, a euphemism for *Immigration Law.* In fact, since World War II, net immigration in Austria has always been higher than net emigration. Between 1961-2001 about 620,000 more people stayed in the country than left it. This does not include the offspring of immigrants born in Austria. At present, 10 percent of the residents in Austria are aliens and 17 percent or 1.346 million people have a migrant background (Fassmann 2007: 394).

The *Residence Law*, which has been amended several times, distinguishes between *residence,* under which one's stay is only temporary although longer than six months, and *settlement,* under which one is considered a permanent resident. Labor migration is generally restricted to key personnel. Immigration from non-EU countries has become subject to quotas and is widely restricted to family reunification. Newly-joint family members, however, are only entitled to a work permit after at least one year of residence in Austria.

The naturalization law was also tightened. Citizenship, which in Austria is based on the principle of *jus sanguinis,* is granted to aliens after a minimum of ten uninterrupted years of residence, inclusive of time spent out of Austria for studies. Moreover, potential citizens have to prove that they have not been convicted of any crime or been imprisoned in Austria or elsewhere, have sufficient means at their disposal for a secure livelihood, and fulfil the *Integration Agreement* which was passed in 2002 (Schuhmacher 2007: 75). This agreement stipulates that immigrants have to pass a German language test within five years of residence. Only small children, old people and people with a formal education equivalent to a high school diploma or a university degree are exempt from this requirement. Moreover, all applicants have to pass a formal exam on the Austrian political system and history, as well as on some special topics such as those concerning the province they live in (Vogl 2007: 19-41). Alien residents who have resided in Austria for 30 years or longer, however, are entitled to Austrian citizenship without fulfilling these requirements. Spouses and minor children of applicants can be naturalized together with the applicants. Alien spouses of native Austrians can be naturalized after five years of marriage and a six-year residence. Prior to the passage of the Integration Agreement, the requirement was one-year marriage and four years of residence. Dual citizenship is not recognized (Çinar 2007: 41-46).

Reunification of family members is subject to immigration regulations. These family members, however, need not possess any particular

qualifications. Thus, possession of formal education qualifications, for example, is less important for Filipinos joining relatives already in Austria than for the latter who were in fact only able to migrate to Austria because of their educational qualifications. Lack of formal education or diplomas not equivalent or not treated as equivalent to Austrian diplomas together with the less favorable conditions in the labor market means that their job aspirations are often frustrated and they end up in employment far below their expectations.[5] Even if they have a Philippine university degree, they often work in fairly menial jobs. Most of them can be found in restaurants or hospitals as kitchen hands, cleaners, janitors, bell boys, or in supermarkets as cashiers.

Although they are worse off in the labor market than the early immigrants, they face more favorable social conditions. They can usually rely on their often already naturalized relatives and find an already established Philippine-Austrian community that can provide them with a sense of emotional security. Numerous Philippine associations provide opportunities for socializing. Several Sunday masses, attended almost exclusively by immigrants and their offspring, are officiated by Philippine priests, who also provide spiritual guidance and help when these are sought. Thus the process of integration becomes less pressing but is also slowed down. The Philippine-Austrian community in Austria is still fairly a closed-knit one, with community activities directed towards the Philippines. Native Austrians are rarely found there. Even native Austrian husbands rarely attend them.

PHILIPPINE MIGRATION TO AUSTRIA IN STATISTICAL TERMS

Because they are a small group, Philippine immigrants in official Austrian statistics have long been subsumed under other small immigrant groups under the category "others." With the census of 2001 new kinds of data on migration have become available and have been constantly updated. However, these data only cover migrants born in the Philippines or Philippine nationals who are official residents of Austria, i.e., mostly first-generation immigrants. They do not include second-generation Filipinos born in Austria as Austrian citizens or those born in Austria and became naturalized later.[6]

As of 1 January 2007, Philippine migrants in Austria total 11,623. Of these 7,762 (66.78%) are female and 3,861 (33.22%) are male; 7,254 (62.41%) of them have already acquired Austrian citizenship, of whom 5,230 (67.38%) are female and 2,024 (52.42%) male (Tables 1 and 2). The higher

naturalization rate among women results from, first, intermarriage and second, the lower rate of return by women to the country of origin than men. Women are also involved in more meaningful integration than men. For them emigration is, finally, an opportunity to escape the closeness and stickiness of Philippine society or serious family problems. It is an act of autonomy and self-liberation.[7]

Table 1 People with Philippine Migrant Background

			Country of birth					
			Austria		Philippines		Others	
		%		%		%		%
both sexes	11,623	100	266	2.29	11,346	97.62	11	0.90
female	7,762	66.78	133	1.71	7,624	98.22	5	0.06
male	3,861	33.22	133	1.71	3,722	98.22	6	0.16

Source: Statistik Austria, Information Service. E-mail 7 April 2008.

Table 2 People with Philippine Migrant Background

			Citizenship					
			Austria		Philippines		Others	
		%		%		%	%	
both sexes	11,623	100	7,254	62.41	4,257	36.63	112	0.96
female	7,762	66.78	5,230	67.38	2,450	31.56	82	1.06
male	3,861	33.22	2,024	52.42	1,807	46.8	30	0.78

Source: Statistik Austria, Information Service. E-mail 7 April 2008.

The naturalization rate of Filipinos has long been the third highest among immigrants from East, Southeast and South Asia after the People's Republic of China and India but has been decreasing since 2004. Vienna, the capital of Austria, offers the best employment opportunities and has thus become home to 72.28 percent of Philippine immigrants, followed by the adjoining province of Lower Austria with 7.82 percent. Women still comprise the majority of recent Philippine immigrants. State-organized overseas Philippine contract labor is negligible in terms of numbers and has been decreasing.

THE PHILIPPINE COMMUNITY IN AUSTRIA

The first Philippine migrant associations in Austria were founded in the 1970s and were usually organized along regional lines. Most were formed

for social and cultural purposes and objectives. In 1986, after the fall of President Ferdinand Marcos, the first efforts to unify these associations started. These failed due to the personal ambitions of some of the people involved. Migration itself did not seem to be suffient to overcome the notorious Philippine factionalism. Parochialism had been exported together with the migrants. It is said that Filipino people have always put family, friends and region first before country. Individual career aspirations and ambitions of Filipinos have always been stronger than their dedication to some abstract common good and national unity. But, despite these, in 2000 the Council of Filipino Associations in Austria was established as an umbrella organization. To minimize friction, it was decided that organizations not individual people should take over the leadership. At present, there are 63 registered Philippine organizations in Austria, most of them in Vienna, whose self-ascribed nature is given in Table 3. Twenty of them, all based in Vienna, constitute the Council of Filipino Associations in Austria, but membership is constantly in flux.

Table 3 Filipino Associations in Austria

Nature of organization/association	Number
Cultural	13
Cultural/religious	1
Medical	1
Political	1
Professional	2
Religious	14
Social	16
Social/charity	2
Sociocultural	4
Sociocultural/political	1
Sociocultural/religious	3
Sports	3
Umbrella organization	1
Unstated	1
Total	**63**

Source: Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Austria 13 April 2008.[8]

The Council's avowed aims are to facilitate Philippine migration to Austria, help recent immigrants to establish themselves in their host country, further their integration, and support Filipino residents in Austria in need. It should not only address financial problems but also try to solve social and legal questions arising inside the community such as the maltreatment of women, drug abuse, or juvenile delinquency to mention only a few. Dealing with

these problems seems especially important in the process of integration, which should not be delayed or disturbed by negative headlines in the Austrian media. While community members are genuinely interested in solving these problems, they are also concerned with "face," which means that even if they cannot deal with them successfully, problems inside the community are not supposed to surface. Any negative publicity could deal a blow to their self-styled image of a highly professional, well-accepted and badly needed immigrant group.[9]

The Council also aims at implanting Filipino values and culture into the second and gradually growing third generation of Philippine migrants and offspring of mixed Filipino-Austrian marriages who are considered as destined to carry on their Philippine heritage and remember their roots, while at the same time blending perfectly into Austrian society.

SECOND GENERATION – BEARERS OF CULTURE AND TRADITION: WHAT CULTURE, WHAT TRADITION?

For second-generation immigrants, Philippine culture and "Filipinoness" are brief intermittent experiences disconnected from most of the other areas of their lives. Being Filipino is an event, periodic and external (Espiritu 2002: 157). Filipino immigrants have been less diligent than other immigrant groups in transmitting their culture and language to the next generation. This lack of cultural transmission stems from their desire to succeed in mainstream society (Espiritu 2002: 156). Still, Philippine migrant adolescents say that they were brought up according to Philippine standards and tradition, even if their fathers are native Austrians (Reiterer 2007: 152).[10] This means that as far as children are concerned, the households are matrifocal and organized around the mother, who also becomes an active mediator in the process of migration. She is the one who creates a new tradition, a mixture of the two backgrounds, the foreign and the "domestic" (Apitzsch 1999). She is the prime source of nurture, goodness, dependability, learning, and authority. She is considerate, anticipates the feelings of her children and knows what is good for them (Mulder 1997: 30). While she sacrifices herself for her children and somehow becomes their superego, their father is an authoritarian and often distant figure with a great claim for respect. Female and male spheres in life are thus seen to be complementary. While women are the moral agents and caring mothers who shoulder the greatest responsibility in socialization, fathers are the procreators whose main roles are that of providers and disciplinarians

(Medina 2001: 223). The special conditions of migration, however, force them to become more involved in childcare and household chores.

Filipinos tend to talk about their "group culture" (Torres-D'Mello 2001: 60), which means that the individuals are not supposed to define themselves apart from each other but rather as members of a closed group. Successful and smooth interpersonal relations bring reassurance, recognition and rewards. Self-esteem depends on how a person is perceived by others. This experience of "dependent subjectivity" (Mulder 1997: 21) makes people see others as extensions of themselves. This is especially often the case in the parent-child relationship. Parents identify with the failures and successes of their children and regard their behavior as reflective of their upbringing. Obligation to place family first and foremost implies the unquestioned acceptance of parental authority, which is also a form of debt-of-gratitude for the parents' sufferings and sacrifices for their children, the duty to repay that love through loyalty, obedience, and living up to their expectations (Medina 2001: 219). Children are seen as assets. With the material needs of their immigrant parents virtually guaranteed, they must now tend to their emotional needs (Reiterer 2007: 153). Possessiveness, overprotection, mutual dependence, and traditional gender roles which are still a feature in the education of second-generation Filipino migrants, are apt to create "unindividuated" egos and complicate identity formation (Mulder 1997: 21).

Child-parent tensions often run high but are not supposed to surface in public, though they sometimes do. Second-generation immigrants have to cope with two, sometimes conflicting, sets of socialization: their family and the Austrian school system. They soon learn two different forms of behavior, Philippine and Western, which allow them to get along with their family on the one hand and to be accepted as equals by their native Austrian peers on the other. While boys are granted the liberties they would have in the Philippines even in the area of sexual relationships, girls are brought up with many more constraints. This double standard often leads to fierce rebellion of girls and young women (Reiterer 2007: 154).

While employment of Filipina migrants in Austria is far above average, female employment and formal education rank high in the Philippine value system, especially since it is seen as a precondition for emigration. Education, however, seems to have lost some importance under the conditions of migration. The early diversification of the Austrian education system offers a variety of career paths, but later socio-economic positions are practically

decided by the age of 15 years. Philippine migrants envision some kind of diploma for their children but not necessarily a university degee. In a school system with a highly selective profile as in Austria, it is difficult to climb the social ladder especially when one's mother tongue is not German. Much work has to be done outside the school and students do not get much support in this respect from their family. While second-generation migrants are fluent in speaking German but not in a Philippine language, their reading and writing abilities are often deficient in school. This severely limits their career prospects.[11] They rarely go beyond secondary education, end their formal training at vocational schools or enter the dual training system of apprenticeship. Filipino migrant parents often press their offspring to start earning a living early and forego further formal education. For many, the migration project seems to be completed when their children find a relatively secure job (Reiterer 2007: 157).

While socio-economic positioning reflects successful integration, social contacts and networks are other important indicators. Social contacts are closely connected with identity formation and identification with values and standards of the country of origin and the country of residence. While first-generation Philippine immigrants have few contacts with native Austrians beyond family and work, the second generation forms ethnically mixed relationships at an early age, since working parents are forced to send their children to kindergarten and childcare centers. Although intermarriage between Filipinas and white men is common, there is a growing tendency among Philippine migrant parents in Austria to prefer partners for their children from within their own ethnic community. Second-generation immigrants feel divided about this issue. For them exogamic marriage is a chance to escape the constraints of the Philippine value system. When asked about their national identity, majority of them claim to be Austrians but are conscious of their Philippine roots (Reiterer 2007: 158-160).

Case box 1:

> Arlene, 40, a farmer's daughter from Northern Luzon, migrated in 1989. She was then working as a high school English teacher in Metro Manila when her cousin asked her to come to Vienna as a domestic helper and nanny for his son. Arlene agreed after serious discussions with her family. While working for her cousin she planned on completing a graduate degree in Austria. She would then return to the Philippines to become a career woman. However, after three months, her cousin's Austrian wife told her to leave since she did not meet her expectations,

even though she has no place to stay, no source of income and no knowledge of German. However, it was a question of honor not to return to the Philippines. Fortunately, she met a Philippine migrant family who took her in and saw to it that she found even a menial job. Arlene eventually got involved with her benefactor's brother, moved into his apartment and married him in 1993, although she did not really love him. When her first child was two years old, she already considered a divorce, but eventually stayed with him hoping that things would change. A second child came, but nothing changed. Finally, when her third child was three, she decided to leave her husband. By that time she had already fallen in love with a native Austrian. When she told this to her parents, who were staying in Austria with her family for about five years, and were taking care of her three children, they immediately left for the Philippines. Even the fact that her sister, who stayed with her, was dying of cancer and was in her last days, did not prevent the the parents from leaving Austria and returning home. Losing face mattered to them more than humanitarian considerations.

Since then Arlene has been heavily dependent on her eldest daughter for the care of her three younger children. As a result, this eldest daughter cannot live up to her full potentials. Having insufficient time for studying, her performance in school is far below average, which causes lots of frustration to her mother.

Looking back on her early years in Austria, Arlene frequently stresses her naivité and her unpreparedness for the challenges of migration. She speaks freely about her search for identity and the changes that she had to make "inside" herself to help her to survive. While she feels at home in Austria now, she admits that at heart she is a Filipina. Still, she does not plan to return since it will take her many years to rework her relationships there. Besides, she enjoys more freedom in Austria than in the Philippines and can never do there what she can do in Austria. She sees migration to Austria as a privilege, especially since she has recently found an interesting and well-paid job at a foreign embassy in Vienna.

Case box 2:

Philip, 45, moved to Austria in 1993. He was born in Antique, the son of a farmer who eventually moved to Manila where he found a job as a construction worker. Philip studied mechanical engineering but did not finish his studies due to his work as legal political activist. He is married to another former political activist, who migrated with him and with whom he has four children. He now works as a kitchen hand in a Viennese hospital, while his wife, who has a degree in business, is a janitor in a Jewish temple. Philip is a member of *Pinoy First*, the only

politically oriented Philippine association in Austria, which is affiliated with the leftist movement led by José Maria Sison.

Philip came to Austria due to personal relationships. In 1973, Philip's third eldest sister moved to Austria. She was not one of the early Philippine nurses. She came with Father Edbert, a Catholic priest from the province of Salzburg. The latter worked in the Philippines as a missionary and on his return brought a number of Filipinas from his parish to Salzburg.[12] Two years later, another sister followed her. In 1993, Philip, then already the father of two daughters, decided to join them. Although migration was never among his plans before, family matters forced him to take this decision since he did not see a bright future for his children in the Philippines. Due to the pressure of his sisters, who feared that his marriage would break up (because he was meeting so many Philippine women in Austria), his wife joined him. His children followed 15 months later.

Philip could not find a job for a whole year. So they lived on the money they receive from his sisters and from the cleaning jobs his wife took on. Philip was desperate and was beginning to question his role as a man and his masculinity. He was willing to return to the Philippines but he eventually joined his wife in the cleaning company until he got the job as a kitchen hand. As a janitor, his wife provides them with a decent apartment.

Philip stresses that he feels much freer in Austria than in the Philippines and that in Austria there are fewer constraints to child education. Besides he claims that their family is not a typical Philippine family since they are more politically aware than the average Filipino and thus discuss a lot more. His children have some say in family matters and are not brought up in an authoritarian way. This means that they are much more aware of discrimination. They are also more active in school life, which is rather atypical for Philippine immigrant parents. Philip talks of his dream to return to the Philippines but admits that this will never materialize since their children will always need them and their future is more secure in Austria than in the Philippines.

Case box 3:

Rose, 28, works for a public relations company and belongs to the second-generation of Filipino immigrants to Austria. She is the illegitimate daughter of one of the early Philippine immigrant nurses and of a Filipino. After spending her first five years in the Philippines with her grandmother, she was finally brought to Austria where in the meantime her mother had married a native Austrian. Her mother's Austrian husband and his parents welcomed and treated her as their

own daughter and granddaughter and she became very close to them. She considers her stepfather as her "real father" to whom she owes, she says, "she is what she is." It was her stepfather who taught her critical thinking, while her mother was responsible for the more emotional side. She taught her Philippine values and how to be nice, polite and sweet. From her, she learned the importance of smooth interpersonal relationships. However, both of them proved supportive so that she became a critically thinking person. Thus she learned the best of both cultures. Still, she is much closer to her stepfather, although her mother left him and went to the United States when Rose was still a child and left her in his care. Since then, contacts with her mother have been intermittent.

Rose, conscious of her Philippine roots, considers Philippine culture important to her. No longer fluent in Tagalog, she began to learn her mother tongue again two years ago. This is not a form of re-ethnicization but a general interest in her descent. She visits the Philippines for holidays. She enjoys her time there but she does not understand the way of life of her relatives and is disgusted with Philippine politics. In this context she stressed her freedom in Austria. She elaborated that she can do things in Austria she never can do in the Philippines. She is highly critical of the Philippine way of life, the closeness and social constraints of Philippine society and the American orientation of the Filipinos.

As a second-generation immigrant she is not active in the Filipino-Austrian community but is repulsed by the factionalism and showmanship of community members, who, in her opinion, find life in Austria great. She considers herself 40 percent Filipina and, at the same time, feels totally European. She is aware of her skin color and of being a potential victim of racism but thinks she could always play "the Asian card" ("exotic card") to impress Western men, if she wanted to.

Case box 4:

Rufus, 22, is the eldest son of an early immigrant nurse and a Philippine father, who came to Austria years after his wife. He works for the UN. Rufus spent his first eight years with his grandparents in the Philippines. Together with his younger brother and sister, he belongs to the more successful second-generation Philippine immigrants in Austria. All siblings have graduated from Grammar School and are now enrolled in the university. Rufus studies Economics.

In Austria, he said, he grew up in a very closed environment. His parents, although open to non-Philippine contacts, do not have any.

His mother is not fluent in German while his father does not speak it at all. Being an employee of the UN, his father is not subject to Austrian immigration provisions and never learned German. This severely limits his chances to communicate with Austrians. Rufus claimed that the majority of first-generation Philippine immigrants live in a fairly closed set of relationships and their contacts with native Austrians do not usually extend beyond work and family. However, he has native Austrian friends as well as friends from other immigrant groups. The stickiness of Philippine families in Austria and the gossiping inside the community convinced him not to take part in any community events any longer. He also said that life becomes more difficult and tension with parents increases when children choose their partners. For Philippine parents, partnerships are more pragmatic and less emotional affairs. With more choices inside the community due to a more equal sex ratio, they prefer partners for their children from within their own ethnic group.

Being conscious of his Philippine roots, Rufus stresses that he is probably 80 percent Austrian. This seems especially important to him since his father is rather nationalistic—highly active in the community and never gets tired of talking about the beauty of the Philippines—which causes lots of embarrassment for Rufus. Therefore, disagreements between them is common and usually ends with the question of why his parents left the country when everything is so great and beautiful there.

For Rufus "Filipinoness" is an event, not a substance. Eager to climb the career ladder, he complains about the disinterest of Filipinos in political affairs and feels repulsed by Philippine politics. While his parents plan to re-immigrate he wants to stay since he experiences more individual freedom and better chances in Austria than in the Philippines.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study examined Philippine migration to Austria, the immigrants' ways of adapting in a foreign country and the construction of identities among first- and second-generation immigrants. The special circumstances of early Philippine labor migration to Austria have created favorable conditions for the integration of Philippine immigrants. Still, migration always means a great challenge for the individual. In the new surroundings, old behavioral patterns lose their importance and validity. When migrants leave their country they produce a fracture with their previous system of values and way of life. Their everyday knowledge and behavior experience a devaluation and thus become

useless. The presence of different cultural groups "makes it imperative for "individuals to recognize themselves as a member of specific nationalities/ ethnic groups" (Calloni 1999: 126), making a connection between ethnicity and collective identity necessary. Migrants have to find their place in their host society and have to adapt to the challenges which means identity work. Integration, identity formation and self-perception are not isolated processes. They are often unreflective or semiconscious negotiations with the given social, political and economic structures. Biography is a form of constant historical self-positioning. The result is a sort of synthesis, a reproduction of "mine" which only makes sense with the acquisition of "theirs." Filipino-Austrians retain some identification as a particular ethnic group, which is largely symbolic. Their ethnic behavior is "characterized by a nostalgic but unacquainted allegiance to an imagined past" (Espiritu 2002: 149). Tradition is not the return to given ethnic ties but a form of the past which becomes only visible through biographical reflections. Like identity, culture and tradition are not fixed but continually remade "through an 'internal-external dialectic' involving a simultanous synthesis of internal self-definition and one's ascription by others" (Edensor 2002: 24). Growing mobility and migration create mobile identities and promote the mutation of national identity and culture, which are not only evident in spectacular and refined displays of elite culture but are deeply ingrained in the banalities and unreflexive patterns of everyday life (Billig 1995).

As the study shows, migration is a complex phenomenon. Migration creates new cultures and subcultures, leaves its imprint on both the sending and the receiving country and contributes to changing and restructuring migration practices over time. Philippine migrants are not a uniform, homogenous group of people sharing the same background, motivation, desires, or problems. They are not passive victims of structures and circumstances who sacrifice themselves for their country or their family. Neither are they mere pawns of capitalists, recruiters or employers. They are human agents capable of making their own rational choices which may not necessarily be the best but are at least the most satisfactory ones to them personally. They are social and political actors in a multi-ethnic, multicultural or better, transcultural society who develop a variety of strategies to cope with their situations. Under the given circumstances, most Filipino-Austrians consider migration a privilege. They strive for equality with the native population, but not necessarily for homogeneity. However, as the second generation shows, assimilation is not inevitable. While the first generation

immigrants still talk about *their* Philippines and identify much more with the Philippines than with Austria, for the second generation it is already *their* Austria.

NOTES

1 Definitions of the term "second generation" vary widely among researchers. In this paper, it covers descendants of Philippine migrants in Austria, who came to the country before the age of twelve, or who were born in Austria of Filipino parentage or of mixed marriages.

2 This should help to promote job opportunities for Philippine nationals in Austria.

3 Both cultures—Philippine and Austrian—considered women as apt for this "typical female job," which shows a gender-bias on both sides.

4 Because of the lack of reliable data, this chapter draws heavily on the information provided in an interview given by the then officer-in-charge of the program, Helmut Kempel, on 16 June 2003.

5 As one interviewee said, men especially often consider returning to the Philippines because of lack of career opportunities in Austria.

6 The third generation is surfacing slowly only now.

7 This phenomenon is widespread among different migrant groups. See also: Fassmann, Reeger & Sari 2007: 19-20. Intermarriage between native Austrian women and Philippine men is very rare.

8 There is only one politically active organization, Pinoy First, that has ties to the leftist movement in the Philippines and to the NDF, but it has been listed as "sociocultural" by the Philippine embassy in Vienna.

9 As Tadiar states in a different context, any criticism of Philippine migrants abroad is considered to be an onslaught on Philippine dignity and the Philippines at large (Tadiar 2002: 282).

10 In 2006 the author carried out a study on self-positioning and belonging among second-generation Austro-Filipinos (Reiterer 2007).

11 This was confirmed by an analysis of the PISA survey 2000 (Bacher 2005).

12 Salzburg is a province and a provincial capital in Austria.

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