Sociology as the Reflexive Side of Culture

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I started to write my thoughts for this occasion in English. The short abstract I gave the organizers described briefly what I wanted to do – and that is, to discuss what it may mean for us sociologists to see our discipline as the reflexive side of our culture.

From the outset, I realized how easy it is to elaborate on this theme using a borrowed language. A borrowed language like English gives us the necessary distance from the object of our reflection. The drawback is that the same language interferes with the effort to communicate with the culture we are observing. We have long been the alien observers of our culture, and we should have no wish to make this disability permanent. We must strive to make our second-order observations become constitutive elements of the first-order observations of our people. In the wake of the successive disasters that have hit our country, there is a growing clamor to bring scientific reflection into the stream of public discourse. This conference therefore could not have come at a more opportune time.

Hangad natin na magkaroon ng kongkretong epekto ang ating mga pag-aaral, pagsusuri, at pagninilay-nilay sa aktwal na takbo ng pang-araw-araw na buhay ng ating lipunan. Alam natin na mangyayari lamang ito kung masimulan natin ang dayalogo sa pagitan ng ating disiplina at ng ating kultura.

What does it take to do that? Ano ang kailangan nating gawin upang magsimula ang ganitong kombersasyon?

Una sa lahat, kailangan nating tuklasing muli ang taglay na kakayahan ng ating disiplina. Ang kakayahang ito ay hango sa anyo ng pagmamasid na sosyolohikal na sadyang kakaiba sa praktikal at karaniwan nating pananaw sa pang-araw-araw. Unang binigyang-pansin ni Emile Durkheim ang

pagkakaibang ito sa kanyang "The Rules of the Sociological Method." Ani Durkheim: "We think it is a fertile idea that social life must be explained, not by the conception of it created by those who participate in it, but by profound causes which escape awareness."[1] Kinilala ni Durkheim na utang niya kay Marx ang kaisipang ito. Magugunita ninyo marahil ang pambungad na pangungusap na ito mula sa Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy: "In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will."[2] Kung nais nating maunawaan ang anyo ng kanilang kamalayan, sabi ni Marx, ang mga batayang relasyong ito ang dapat suriin. Hindi natin maaaring hiramin ang lohika ng umiiral na kamalayan ng isang lipunan upang ipaliwanag ang istruktura ng lipunang ito. Bagkus, ang kamalayan nito ang dapat ipaliwanag sa pamamagitan ng pagsusuri sa materyal na kalagayan ng lipunang pinag-ugatan nito.

Malalim ang kahulugan at mahaba ang pinagdaanan ng konsepto ng kamalayan o consciousness. Nananatili itong masalimuot, kung kaya't ang pag-aaral nito ay isa sa pinakamahinang sangay ng sosyolohiya.

Sa kaniyang mga panulat, iminungkahi ng German sociologist na si Niklas Luhmann[3] na, sa halip na kamalayan, bakit hindi natin subukang gamitin ang konsepto ng pagmamasid o observation. Sa ganitong paraan, aniya, baka maaari nating iwasan ang ilang mga problemang teoretikal na kaakibat ng salitang kamalayan. Nakita ko na may katwiran ang kaniyang mungkahi.

Maraming katumbas na salita sa ating wika ang konsepto ng "observation" at "observer." Nariyan ang "pagtanaw," "pagtingin," "pagmamatyag," "pagmamasid" – na pawang hindi kailangang tumukoy sa estado ng kaisipan (mind) o kamalayan (consciousness). Indeed, the usual translation of "I think" is "sa aking paningin," which seems to suggest that we are more inclined to the visual than to the mental.

Simple ang depinisyon ni Luhmann ng konseptong obserbasyon. According to him, to observe is to make a distinction.[4] To observe is to make a cut in the world, and to indicate what that cut contains. For example, an observer from law defines what is a legal question – distinguishing it from a non-legal issue. The legal distinction operates using the binary code of the legal and the illegal.

Lahat tayo ay gumagamit ng mga ganitong paghihiwalay o pagbubukod ng mga bagay. Habang abala tayo sa pagmamasid o pagbubukod ng mga bagay, tayo ay mga "first-order observers," sabi ni Luhmann. Subalit kapag

ang ating minamatyagan ay hindi mga simpleng bagay lamang kungdi ang mismong pagmamasid at pagbubukod na ginagawa ng ating kapwa, tayo ay nagiging "second-order observers." Ang malaking bahagi ng sosyolohiya ay pagmamasid ng mga nagmamasid – the observation of observers.

Ano ang kagagawan nito sa kultura? Ang bawat kultura, sa aking paningin, ay maituturing na isang balangkas ng pagmamasid – a framework of observation, a way of seeing or perceiving, and therefore a framework for making distinctions. Kaakibat nito ang isang buong estilo ng pamumuhay.

Samakatwid, una ang buhay, susunod lamang ang paningin. Our way of living defines our way of seeing. In the words of the cognitive biologist, Humberto Maturana, from whom Luhmann borrowed some of his most important concepts, cognition is "not a process of representation of the world out there. Rather, it is the process of bringing forth of a world through the process of living itself."[5]

As we live, so we create the world around us. Kultura ang produkto ng pamumuhay na ito, at kultura rin ang nagsisilbing gabay natin sa ating paglalakbay sa ating daigdig. Masalimuot ang ating daigdig. Wala tayong kakayahang pansinin ang lahat ng nilalaman nito. Sa pamamagitan ng kultura, nagiging simple ang pananaw natin sa reyalidad ng mundong ito. Subalit may kapalit ang ganitong simplipikasyon ng ating mundo. At ito ang paglaho mula sa ating paningin ng malaking bahagi ng reyalidad. We thus say that culture is a way of seeing, but it is also a way of being blind. Ang bawat kultura ay may blind spots. Blind spots ang tawag sa mga bagay na labas sa saklaw ng ating nakagisnang kultura. We often say that sociology is a study of social reality. But what is realty, asks Luhmann. He offers an interesting answer: "Reality is what one does not perceive when one perceives it." Ang reyalidad ay yung hindi mo nakikita kapag ito'y iyong tinitingnan. Ito ang tungkulin ng ating disiplina: ang palitawin ang nakatagong reyalidad.

This does not mean that our way of seeing is necessarily superior. The question of adequacy or superiority is relative to the purposes that are to be served. We can say that sociology is a way of seeing differently. Mapapansin marahil na ito'y isa lamang paraan ng pagsasabi na ang pag-aaral ng ating kultura ay walang ipinagkaiba sa paglalarawan ng mga blind spots nito. Sinusuri natin kung ano ang pinahahalagahan ng ating kultura, kung ano ang ipinakikita nito, at kung ano ang ikinukubli nito. Kaagad, mapapansin marahil natin na ang ating kultura ay bulag sa mga isyu ng panlipunang katarungan,

o ng kahalagahan ng kapaligiran, o ng isang payapa at ligtas na kinabukasan, at marami pang iba.

The values that drive or inform social inquiry are many — social justice, gender equality, ecological rationality, economic prosperity, peace, social cohesion, technical efficiency, good governance, democracy, etc. It is difficult to arrange these into a scale of priorities, because there are no timeless and universal foundations which one may use as a secure basis for assigning relative worth. In the words of the philosopher Richard Rorty, the issue of purposes is not a philosophical but an "ethico-political" question[6] – meaning, it all depends on how a given community chooses to live.

And here I come to what I think is the crux of the problem of change in our society. May dalawa tayong problema: (1) Una, ang problema sa paningin: Alam nating may mga problema ang ating lipunan pero hindi natin matukoy kung ano ang mga ito. (2) At, pangalawa, ang problema sa pagkilos: Gusto nating kumilos pero hindi natin matiyak kung papaano at kung ano ang uunahin natin.

Sa pagsagot sa dalawang problemang ito, malaking tulong para sa akin ang *Sociological Imagination* ni C. Wright Mills[7] at, maniwala kayo o hindi, ang social systems theory ni Talcott Parsons. Alam kong kabisado na ninyo ito, pero hayaan ninyong ibahagi ko kung paano ko ito ginagamit sa pagpapaliwanag sa mga audiences na walang background sa sociology.

Ang bawat tao, sabi ni Mills, ay may nararanasang problema sa buhay. Karaniwan nang ituring ang mga problemang ito na sanhi ng mga pribadong kapansanan o kakulangan sa kakayahan o edukasyon o pagsisikap ng isang tao. Hinihimok tayo ng imahinasyong sosyolohikal, ayon kay Mills, na masdan ang mga personal na problemang ito sa konteksto ng umiiral na lipunan. Sa ganitong paraan, maaaring masilip natin ang mga panlipunang istrukturang kinapapalooban ng mga pribadong problema ng nakararami. The translation of private troubles of milieu into public issues of structure is the kind of "gestalt switch" that prompts decisive popular action. To begin to see our lives no longer as isolated individual cases but as aspects of the social structures that shape the life chances of a given population is the mark of the sociological imagination, says Mills.

But how does one portray social structures to the non-sociologist? It is natural to turn to Marx's base and superstructure metaphor. But, as often, I turn to a re-reading of Parsons that I have found immensely useful in explaining what a sociologist looks for in the study of a society's structure. I may perhaps

be accused of over-reading Parsons, but from his work on the social system,[8] I have drawn the following discussion which I use in telling people how and what a sociologist observes.

- Ang isang matagumpay at matatag na lipunan, ani Parsons, ay may ilang batayang katangian o sukatan: (1) Ang kaniyang ekonomiya ay tuluy-tuloy na lumilikha ng kayamanan. (2) Ang pulitika nito ay lumilikha ng kapangyarihan na maaaring gamitin sa pagkamit ng mga mithiin ng lipunan. (3) Ang pagpapatupad ng mga batas at sistema ng hustisya ay nagbubunga ng pagkakaisa at kapayapaan sa lipunan; at (4) Ang mga batayang institusyong tulad ng pamilya at paaralan na siyang humuhubog sa pagkatao ng mga miyembro ay lumilikha ng matatag na moralidad at identidad.

- Kung bigo naman ang isang lipunan, kabaligtaran ang maaasahan: kahirapan, kahinaan, kaguluhan at walang-tigil na away, at demoralisasyon at kalituhan sa moralidad.

Kaagad, makikita rito kung ano ang maituturing na batayang problema ng ating lipunan sa kasalukuyan:

- *Economic*: Matinding kahirapan na sanhi ng kawalan ng kabuhayan at oportunidad para sa marami.

- *Governance*: Kawalan ng kakayahang magtakda ng mga kolektibong layunin o direksyon, o kawalan ng matibay na pamumuno sanhi ng kawalan ng tiwala sa mga namumuno, na bunga naman ng laganap na persepsyon ng katiwalian.

- *Law and justice*: Ang kawalan ng katarungan ay humahantong sa kawalan ng tiwala sa batas at hustisya, at walang-tigil na alitan, rebelyon at insurhensya.

- *Identity*: may krisis tayo sa moralidad (hindi na natin tiyak kung ano ang tama at hindi), at may krisis tayo sa ating pagka-Pilipino na lumilitaw bilang kawalan ng malasakit sa bayan.

Ang paghahanap ng mga lunas sa mga suliraning ito ay hindi maaaring ihihiwalay sa pag-unawa at pagsusuri ng mga sanhi ng mga problemang ito. Hindi umusbong ang mga problemang ito sa isang magdamag. Kaya wala ring magdamag na solusyon sa mga problemang ito. Hindi ito simpleng kwestyon lamang ng paghahanap ng mabubuting lider, o mga taong may malinis na kalooban. Higit na mahalaga ang pagtukoy sa mga ugat na patuloy na bumubuhay sa mga problemang ito. Kung masinop ang ating mga pag-aaral, tiyak na makikita natin na tayong lahat ay bahagi ng problema, na tayong lahat ay may partisipasyon sa pagpapalawig sa buhay ng isang kulturang hindi na angkop sa mga hamon ng isang nagbabagong panahon.

To be able to see our own selves as contributory to the problems of our society is to my mind what reflexivity is all about. Reflexivity is the capacity for self-observation, and, according to Luhmann, the mark of the modern man.

I do not mean to suggest that sociologists see better than anyone else in society, or that we have a privileged standpoint. No, every form of inquiry is a re-contextualization of things, or a way of looking at reality from a different context. To look at things sociologically, to me, is to observe the behavior of human beings in the context of the social structures that constrain the way they live. It is to understand the distinctions they employ and the choices they make in the course of their everyday lives.

I am aware that this in itself will not change the world, and we are nagged by Marx's oft-repeated line: "Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point however is to change it."[9] I, too, am convinced that sociological enlightenment alone will not change the world. Those who operate in the realm of politics are undoubtedly in a better position to do that. And so it has sometimes been necessary for intellectuals to cross-over to a political terrain that requires an altogether different set of observational lenses.

But certainly we need not all become politicians in order to make a difference in the life of our society. We only need, as I said at the beginning, to methodically bring the findings of social inquiry into the stream of public discourse. Beyond that, we might still hope to change the world if we could pursue C. Wright Mills' dream to make the sociological imagination an integral feature of everyday popular thinking. I like to think that in my own little way, I have tried to do that through my newspaper column. Still, because it is written in English, I believe I have not been as effective in doing this as I was when I was hosting a public affairs talk show in Filipino.

Naniniwala ako na ang wika ay isang ring uri ng pagpili. Meron itong ipinakikita at meron itong ikinukubli. Mahalagang pagnilayan natin, kung ganon, kung ano'ng wika ang ating ginagamit at para sa ano'ng layunin.

Hanggang dito na lamang at maraming salamat.

NOTES

1   Emile Durkheim, The Rules of the Sociological Method, New York: Free Press, 1982, Preface to the Second Edition, pp. 35-38

2   Karl Marx, Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Collected Works

3   Niklas Luhmann, Social Systems

4   Niklas Luhmann, Risk, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005, p. 223

5   Humberto Maturana, Autopoiesis and Cognition

6   Richard Rorty, Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth

7   C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination. Penguin, 1959

8   Talcott Parsons and Neil Smelser, Economy and Society

9   Karl Marx, Theses on Feuerbach, Collected Works

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Neoliberalism as Hegemonic Ideology in the Philippines: Rise, Apogee, and Crisis

Walden Bello

This paper seeks to shed light on how an ideology achieves hegemony, how this hegemony is maintained, and what happens when the claims of an ideology are contradicted by reality. I will use neoliberalism in the Philippines as a case study.

Neoliberalism is a perspective that champions the market as the prime regulator of economic activity and seeks to limit the intervention of the state in economic life to a minimum. Neoliberalism in recent times has become identified with economics, given its hegemony as a paradigm within the discipline, that is, its excluding other perspectives as legitimate ways of doing economics. Since economics is regarded in many quarters as a hard science, much like physics—being, for instance, the only social science for which there is a Nobel Prize—neoliberalism has had a tremendous and pervasive influence not only in academic circles but in policy circles as well. While the University of Chicago became the font of academic wisdom, in technocratic circles the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were seen as the key institutions that translated this theory into policy, to a set of practical prescriptions that were applicable to all economies.

It is often surprising to realize how relatively recent neoliberalism has become a hegemonic paradigm. As late as the latter half of the 1970s, Keynesian economics, which promoted a good dose of state intervention as necessary for stability and steady growth, was the orthodoxy. In what used to be known as the Third World, developmentalism, which specified Keynesian economics to economies that were still insufficiently penetrated and transformed by capitalism, was the dominant approach. There was a conservative brand of developmentalism and there was a progressive one,

but both saw the state, rather than the market, as the central mechanism of development.

In the Philippines, neoliberalism first came in the form of structural adjustment program imposed by the World Bank in the early 1980s, in the latter's effort to strengthen the economy's capacity to service its massive external debt. Structural adjustment helped trigger the economic crisis of the early 1980s, its contractionary effects being magnified by the onset of the global recession.[1] The crisis was the country's worst since the Second World War, but the role of neoliberal economics in precipitating it was shrouded by its coinciding with the deep political crisis triggered by the Aquino assassination in August 1983. To most Filipinos, Marcos was the cause of both crises.

TRIUMPH BY DEFAULT?

It was during the Aquino period that neoliberal economics started its rise to ideological ascendancy. I think it is worthwhile to examine the reasons for the ease with which it captured the heights of both academia and the technocracy during this period.

First of all, it was associated with several high-powered activist intellectuals and technocrats close to the Aquino administration who had been greatly influenced by the Reagan and Thatcher free-market experiments in the United States and Britain. These included economist Bernardo Villegas and Cory Aquino's secretary of finance Jesus Estanislao. Another key center of emergent neoliberalism was the University of the Philippines School of Economics, which had drafted the extremely influential anti-Marcos White Paper on the Philippine economy in 1985.

Second, the analysis forwarded by these intellectuals was in synch with the popular mood. This located the economic troubles of the country in what had come to be known as "crony capitalism," or the use of state agencies to advance the private interests of a few close associates of the dictator. The direct assault on the Keynesian state as the source of inefficiency, which was the most prominent feature of Thatcherism and Reaganism, was a subsidiary element in the case made for market freedom.

Third, there were simply no credible alternatives to neoliberalism. Keynesian developmentalism, which promoted the role of the state as the strategic factor in the first phase of the ascent to development, was compromised by its personification in the Marcos dictatorship. As for the

left's vision of "nationalist industrialization" or the "national democratic" economy, this hardly went beyond rhetorical flourishes and had been hardly popularized in the period prior to the EDSA Uprising, perhaps owing to the priority that the Communist Party placed on the anti-fascist struggle, which demanded underplaying the view that national democracy was the antechamber to socialism in order to form as wide a front as possible with antidictatorial elements of the elite. Then, after the EDSA Uprising, the articulation of an alternative was derailed by the left's preoccupation with the consequences of its failure to participate in the final act of the ouster of Marcos.

In short, the neoliberal perspective triumphed by default, and this absence of credible alternatives domestically was complemented by four developments internationally: the collapse of centralized socialism in Eastern Europe, which seemed to deliver the coup d'grace to the socialist alternative; the crisis of the Swedish social democratic model; the seeming success of the Reagan and Thatcher Revolutions in revitalizing the American and British economies; and the rise of the East Asian newly industrializing countries. All four had an impact on the thinking of the middle class and the elites, which are, incidentally, called the "chattering classes" because of their central discursive role in legitimizing social and political perspectives.

HOW THE ASIAN MIRACLE WAS INTERPRETED BY THE NEOLIBERALS

It is worthwhile to note how the rise of our neighboring economies was interpreted by neoliberals in the Philippines since this shows the ideological and mystifying character of neoliberalism. In the view of the neoliberals, the key to the success of our neighbors was the hegemony of the market. As Jesus Estanislao put it, "Government takes very good care of macroeconomic balances, takes care of a number of activities like, for example, infrastructure building, and leaves everything else to the private sector. And that is exactly what Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand have done, and that is what the Philippines is doing, and we are beginning to do it."[2]

The reality, however, was that while it is true that in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, the state may have played a less aggressive role than in Korea and Taiwan, an activist state posture—manifested in industrial policy, protectionism, mercantilism, and intrusive regulation—was central in the drive to industrialize. For instance, Thailand began to register the eight to 10 percent

growth rates that dazzled the world, when it was moving to a "second stage of import substitution"—the use of trade policy to create the space for the emergence of an intermediate goods sector—during the second half of the 1980s.[3]

In the case of Malaysia, while it is true that some privatization and deregulation favoring private interests took place in the late 1980s, it would be a mistake to overestimate the impact of these policies. The state oil company, Petronas, was consistently rated one of East Asia's best-run firms, and one of the most innovative and successful enterprises in the whole East Asian region was a state-directed joint venture between a state-owned firm and a foreign automobile corporation, Mitsubishi, which produced the so-called Malaysian car, the Proton Saga. The Saga, which came to control two thirds of the domestic market and turned a profit for its producers, exemplified all the sins of industrial policy that neoclassical economists such as Estanislao had warned against: discriminatory tax treatment of competitors, strategic industrial targeting or a systematic plan to manipulate market incentives to create a local car industry, and forced local sourcing of components to encourage the growth of local supplier industries.[4]

In Indonesia, the state remained throughout the 1980s and 1990s the key actor in the economy, with state enterprises contributing about 30 per cent of total GDP and close to 40 percent of non-agricultural GDP. Capital expenditures as a percentage of the government budget came to 47 percent in Indonesia, while Thailand hiked the figure from 23 to 33 percent. In contrast, in the Philippines, Aquino's technocrats pushed down capital expenditures as a proportion of the national budget from 26 to 16 percent. Since government is the biggest investor in any economy, this radical reduction of capital outlays as our neighbors maintained or increased theirs could not but have an impact in economic performance. While the Philippines languished with one to two percent annual growth for most of the Aquino period, our neighbors enjoyed six to 10 percent growth rates.

In sum, our neoliberal technocrats were dazzled to the point of envy by our neighbors' performance, but they did not correctly identify the reason for this. They claimed it was the market when in reality it was the state. While some liberalization was going on in our neighbors' economies, it was selective liberalization pursued in the context of strategic protectionism driven by the state, the objective of which was to deepen the industrial structure. This conclusion was readily available at the empirical level, but the paradigm

that our technocrats had settled on screened out these data, to put it in Kuhnian terms.

THE APOGEE OF NEOLIBERALISM

Ideas, unfortunately, do have consequences, and perhaps no development illustrates this more than the effort to make the Philippines a NIC ("newly industrializing country" by the year 2000, as the slogan went, via globalization: that is, the accelerated integration of the Philippines into the global market and production circuits through radical trade and investment liberalization. The administration of President Fidel Ramos saw neoliberalism at its most doctrinaire and most influential phase.

What we might call the "neoclassification" of the Philippine technocracy that became so marked under Ramos did not so much exhibit the character of an intellectual coup as that of a gradual takeover of the strategic heights of the technocracy by free market-oriented policymakers coming from academia, government, and business, many of whom had done graduate work in the 1970s and 1980s in the United States and Britain, when state-oriented Keynesianism had lost its luster and neoliberalism had come into vogue in the economics departments of US universities. A number did their post-graduate stint in the staffs of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, including Ramos' Finance Minister Roberto de Ocampo. As one pivotal figure pointed out to Focus on the Global South analyst Joy Chavez, she and her colleagues who played prominent roles of the country's free-market turn acted not only out of external pressure from the World Bank and the IMF but also out of belief. "Imposed, maybe in one way, but on the other hand, the mainstream decision-makers—[the] technocracy and policymakers—also internally believed in that. So there is a confluence of policy direction."[5] Another figure stressed the emergence of a broader "consensus" among the elite and the middle class around free-market reform: "[No] policy reform becomes credible, workable policies unless the people accepted [them]. Yes, there were researchers and economists pushing for that, yes there were donor communities pushing for that...but ultimately it is a question of whether the public accepts that policy."[6]

In any event, the neoliberal revolution had achieved a critical mass by the time Ramos came to power, and its hegemony was consolidated during his administration. "It is the dominant sector," one player put it. "It is the president, it's his chief economic advisers, both formal and informal; the

House of Representatives; the Senate—the mainstream. The mainstream is pushing for liberalization."[7] That player would herself become president in 2001.

The centerpiece of the neoliberal program during this period was tariff liberalization: Executive Order 264 committed the Philippines to bringing down tariffs on all but a few sensitive products to one to five percent by 2004. The model for Cielito Habito, the secretary of the National Economic Development Authority who was the brains behind this enterprise, was the radical neoliberal tariff reforms conducted in Chile under the dictator August Pinochet, which had brought tariffs to 11 percent or under. If the Chileans could manage to bring down their tariffs to 11 percent, surely the Philippines could bring them to five percent or below! In their eagerness to catch up with our neighbors, what our Filipino technocrats saw was only Chile's not unimpressive growth rate, not the deindustrialization and enormous social crises induced by its free-market policies.

In addition to radical tariff liberalization, the foreign investment regime was liberalized, banking rules were loosened to allow more foreign banks to set up operations in the country, and the capital account was almost fully liberalized to attract speculative investors by making the peso fully convertible, allowing the full and immediate utilization of profits, and the full utilization of foreign currency accounts. Indeed, in the administration's drive to catch up with its neighbors, attracting speculative investment by eliminating barriers to capital entry and exit became the cutting edge of the its globalization strategy.

The administration also moved to ensure that liberalization would be hard to reverse by succeeding regimes by multilateralizing it, that is make the Philippines party to international agreements requiring it to eliminate quotas and keep tariffs low permanently. Thus, the Philippines joined the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), with its Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) program. Under this scheme, by next year, 2010, all tariffs, except those on rice, will be reduced at zero to five percent. More important, the Philippines joined the World Trade Organization in 1995, a move which required revising a whole slew of laws governing trade, investment, and intellectual property rights to make our legal code "WTO-consistent."

The economy grew by an average of four percent during the Ramos period, mainly because after the depressed Aquino years, there was no place to go but up. Nevertheless, there was a feeling among sectors of the middle

class that it was the reforms of the Ramos administration that accounted for the upward movement in the economy, a key manifestation of which was the boom atmosphere in the real estate and stock markets.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE ASIAN FINANCIAL CRISIS

This illusion was punctured by the Asian financial crisis of 1997. As financial panic triggered by the massive devaluation of the Thai Baht spread in June 1997, some $4.6 billion in speculative funds left the Philippines, unhindered by capital controls, which the neoliberal administration had eliminated. The massive outflow of capital resulted in recession and stagnation from 1998 to 2000.

The Asian financial crisis led, in the next few years, to a more critical reception of neoliberalism in some elite and middle class circles. It opened up the paradigm to critical challenges, and these challenges from civil society organizations became even stronger as the evidence of the negative impact of the neoliberal approach emerged. Owing to its compliance with the World Trade Organization's Agreement in Agriculture, the Philippines was turned from a net food exporting country to a net food importing country from the mid-1990s on. The liberalization of industry beginning with structural adjustment in the mid-eighties, resulted in the irreversible erosion of the country's manufacturing base. The list of industrial casualties included paper products, textiles, ceramics, rubber products, furniture and fixtures, petrochemicals, beverage, wood, shoes, petroleum oils, clothing accessories, and leather goods. By the early years of this decade, the country's textile industry had shrunk from 200 to less than 10 firms.[8]

The verdict on over two decades of liberalization was perhaps most cogently delivered by then Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho Jr. in 2003: "There is an uneven implementation of trade liberalization, which was to our disadvantage."[9] While consumers may have benefited from tariff cuts, he asserted, tariff reform "has killed so many local industries."[10] In other countries, the loss of the local industrial base has often been countered by neoliberals by citing improvements in consumer welfare. This was not possible in the Philippines, where the poverty rate remained stuck at 32-35 percent of the population.

Civil society groups as well as local industry lobbies such as the Free Trade Alliance (FTA) were central in the discrediting of neoliberal doctrine. However, the role played by certain government bodies must not be

underestimated. For instance, the international policy staff at the Department of Agriculture has successfully led opposition to further liberalization of agricultural trade at the WTO. Indeed, this staff—working closely with civil society groups—provided, along with the Indonesian government, the leadership of the Group of 33 at the WTO, which sought to protect the livelihoods of small farmers by exempting key products from substantial tariffs cuts and instituting mechanisms to allow governments to raise tariffs under certain conditions.

The doctrinaire neoliberal approach that was dominant under the Ramos administration has given way in recent years to a more pragmatic perspective as dissonant data can no longer be screened out. While the bias towards tariff reductions continues to dominate, there are now several cases of reversal. For instance, a government review committee constituted under Executive Order 241 raised tariffs on 627 of 1371 locally produced goods to provide relief to industries suffering from import competition.

DEFAULT DISCOURSE

The recent collapse of the global economy owing to, among other things, the absence of regulation of financial markets has further eroded the credibility of neoliberalism. Nevertheless, it continues to exercise a strong influence on our economists and economic managers. Despite its obvious shortcomings, it continues to be the default discourse in these circles. At the recent hearings on the budget at the House of Representatives that I participated in during the last few days, trade liberalization was defended as leading to greater "competitiveness;" raising the prospect of renegotiating our foreign debt was discouraged, allegedly because it will give us a bad name in global capital markets; globalization continued to be extolled as the wave of the future; and capital outlays were cut to balance the budget even if this will invite recession.[11]

Why this continuing invocation of neoliberal mantras when the promises of neoliberalism have been contradicted at almost every turn by reality?

Let me end by hazarding the reasons why.

First, corruption discourse continues to be pervasive in explaining Philippine underdevelopment. In this discourse, the state is the source of corruption, so that having a greater state role in the economy, even as a regulator, is viewed with skepticism. Neoliberal discourse ties in very neatly with corruption discourse, with its minimization of the role of the state in

economic life and its assumption that making market relations more dominant in economic transactions at the expense of the state will reduce the opportunities for rent-seeking by both economic and state agents. For many Filipinos, and not only in the discourse setting middle class, the corrupt state—and not the relations of inequality spawned by the market and the erosion of national economic interests brought about by the liberalization of trade and capital markets—continues to be the main block to the greater good. It is seen as the biggest obstacle to development and sustained economic growth. This is not the place to discuss this belief in detail; suffice it to say at this point that this supposed correlation between corruption and underdevelopment and poverty has little basis in fact.[12] (This is, not, of course, to deodorize corruption, which must be condemned for moral and political reasons!)

Second, despite the deep crisis of neoliberalism, there has been no credible alternative paradigm or discourse that has emerged, either locally or internationally. There is nothing like the challenge that Keynesian economics posed to market fundamentalism during the Great Depression. The challenges posed by star economists like Paul Krugman, Joseph Stiglitz, and Dani Rodrik continue to be made within the confines of neoclassical economics, with its equation of social welfare with the reduction of the unit cost of production. Whether we like it or not, not only economists but Filipino intellectuals generally look to guidance from abroad, including from critics of the establishment.

There is a third, related reason, and this is what I would like conclude this discussion with. Neoliberal economics continues to project a hard science image owing to its having been thoroughly mathematized. In the aftermath of the recent financial crisis, this extreme formalization and mathematization of the discipline has come under criticism from within the economics profession itself, with some contending that methodology rather than substance has become the end of economic practice, with the discipline as a result, losing its contact with real world trends and problems. It might be worthwhile to note that John Maynard Keynes, a mathematical mind himself, opposed the mathematization of the discipline owing precisely to false sense of solidity that this gave to economics. As his biographer Robert Skidelsky notes, Keynes was "famously skeptical about econometrics," with numbers for him being "simply clues, triggers for the imagination," rather than the expressions of certainties or probabilities of past and future events.[13]

Getting over neoliberalism, in short, will involve getting beyond the worship of numbers that often act as a shroud to the real, beyond the scientism that masks itself as science.

NOTES

1   Charles Lindsay, "The Political Economy of Economic Policy Reform in the Philippines: Continuity and Restoration," in Andrew McIntyre and Kanishka Jayasuriya, eds., The Dynamics of Economic Policy Reform in the Philippines (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1992).

2   Jesus Estanislao, interviewed by Marco Mezzera, 13 November 1996.

3   See Chaopath Sasakul, Lessons from the World Bank's Experience of Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs): A Case Study of Thailand. Bangkok: Thailand Development Research Institute, 1992, p. 19; and Narongchai Akrasanee, David Dapice, and Frank Flatters, Thailand's Export-led Growth: Retrospect and Prospects. Bangkok: Thailand Development Research Institute, 1991, p. 17.

4   See, among others, Richard Doner, "Domestic Coalitions and Japanese Auto Firms in Southeast Asia," Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1987, pp. 511-596.

5   Quoted in Jenina Joy Chavez, Shaping the Philippine Political Economy: the Role of Neoclassical Activists (Manila: Mode, 1996), p. 9.

6   Ibid.

7   Ibid.

8   Fair Trade Alliance, Stop De-industrialization: Recalibrate Philippine Tariffs Now (Manila: Fair Trade Alliance, 2003), p. 16.

9   Quoted in Eric Boras, "Government Loses P120 Billion to Tariff Cuts." Business World. 20 October 2003.

10 Ibid, p. 26

11 Remarks of Rep. June Cua, Chairman of Appropriations Committee, during deliberations on the Republic of the Philippines 2010 Budget, 6 October 2009.

12 See Herbert Docena, "Corruption and Poverty: Barking up the Wrong Tree?," in Walden Bello, Herbert Docena, Marissa de Guzman, and Marylou Malig (eds.) The Anti-Development State: The Political Economy of Permanent Crisis in the Philippines. London: Zed Press, p. 281.

13 Robert Skidelsky, John Maynard Keynes: the Economist as Savior (London: Penguin Books, 1992).

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Social Imaginary in Social Change

Delfo C. Canceran, OP

This paper is a contribution to the discourse on sociological imagination. The history of imagination reveals that the concept has shifted its focus from a mere reproductive or imitative ability which forms images from a preexisting phenomena to a productive or creative power which produces or constructs its own image of reality. The shift underscores the role of the actor or agent in its engagement with and transformation of the world. Thus, the metaphor of the mirror in imagination has been shattered and replaced with a prism that refracts or diffracts different images. We attribute this creative power to human imagination in society capable of creating surprising possibilities beyond expectation.

Keywords: imaginary, imagination, social change, C. Wright Mills, Jean-Paul Sartre, Cornelius Castoriadis

SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION IN THE CLASSROOM

The sociologist C. Wright Mills has coined the phrase 'sociological imagination' which has entered into the vocabulary of social theory. In the 50th anniversary of C. Wright Mills' sociological imagination, Stephen Canlas and Liz Grauerholz share their experience in teaching sociological imagination to their students in the classroom:

> ...the classroom is about empowering students to become critical thinkers and to free their minds of distractions that deprive them of considering the full range of perspectives on life's challenges, exhibiting an aggressively and openly activist sociology.[1]

These scholars underscore that the classroom is made into a space for empowering the students through the use and formation of sociological imagination by developing their critical minds and exposing them to different perspectives so that they can form a critical and activist sociology. Thus, in this imagination, reflection and engagement go hand in hand.

Although sociological imagination has become a catchword in sociology, it remains unclearly defined. Steven Danadaneau acknowledges the enigmatic character of Mills' sociological imagination and admits the difficulty in its clarification. Mill merely argues that sociological imagination refers to enlightened self-consciousness.

> In the end, the sociological imagination is the name Mills gave to enlightened self-consciousness of humanity's self-formative potential, which is not so simple to explicate or, even less so, to enact.[2]

Two points are worth mentioning and highlighting in this paragraph. First, that social imagination belongs to self-consciousness of humanity; and second, that this social consciousness is difficult to explicate and enact. It is the purpose of this paper to explain the nature of this imagination as it evolves in social theory by singling out the contribution of Cornelius Castoriadis.

IMAGINATION IN THE DISCIPLINES

In order to explicate and even enact sociological imagination, we need to review the ideas of other scholars who have also elucidated the notion of imagination. Although Sartre and Mills never refer to each other's works, we can spot some parallels in conceiving and explicating imagination as self-consciousness if we compare their well-known works, namely, Jean-Paul Sartre's *The Psychology of Imagination* published in 1948 and C. Wright Mills' *The Sociological Imagination* published in 1959. For chronological reason, let us start with Sartre's concept of imagination. According to Sartre,

> For a consciousness to be able to imagine, it must be able to escape from the world by its very nature, it must be able by its own efforts to withdraw from the world. In a word, it must be free. Thus the thesis of unreality has yielded us the possibility of negation as its condition. Now the latter is possible only by the 'negation' of the world as a whole and this negation has revealed itself to us as being the reverse of the very freedom of consciousness.[3]

In this quotation, Sartre argues, among other things, that, as a requisite of imagination, consciousness must escape or withdraw from the world. In short,

it must be free itself from the confines of the world. Such freedom allows consciousness to distance itself from the world so that it can create a space to imagine beyond the world as we have it. Thus, freedom is a precondition of imagination to function. To put it in another way, consciousness cannot engage into imagination if it is tied or fixed to the world. Consciousness and the world must be severed if we want imagination to function creatively. The gap created by this severance is the space left for imagination. The disconnection of consciousness from the world permits itself to make a twofold action: consciousness can posit and, at the same time, can negate the world. Consciousness posits the world because it is a consciousness of something. This consciousness affirms the world. However, consciousness also negates the world because it is not identified with or limited by this world. This negation highlights the contribution of imagination in the creation and change of the world. This dual action enables consciousness to hypothesize unreality or nothingness or non-existence of the world. Thus, to affirm and to negate coexist in imagination.

If Sartre views imagination from a psychological perspective, Mills considers imagination from a sociological viewpoint by applying it to the scholars theorizing on society. Mills uses social imagination in a twofold way, namely, by connecting or relating biography with history and by shifting and ranging to various spheres of human endeavors from impersonal facts to personal concerns. The craft of the sociologist is gauged in her/his ability to relate or connect these two seemingly separate realms or spheres – the personal and impersonal, proximate and remote, biography and history. Thus, the sociological imagination refers to the quality of mind of the sociologists.

> What they need and what they feel they need is a quality of mind that will help them to use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summation of what is going on in the world. And of what may be happening within themselves.[4]

Thus, the sociologists should not only gather data from the field but should also reflect on them in order to connect this information into a coherent whole and intelligible manner. Moreover, they should also relate the world into their own lives. In this case, the sociologists are not detached from the world but rather they are connected with the world because they connect them in their analysis or interpretation. Mills agrees with Sartre, if not allude to him, when he locates this sociological imagination to self-consciousness.

> In large part, contemporary man's self-conscious view of himself as, at least an outsider, if not a permanent stranger, rests upon an absorbed

realization of social relativity and of the transformative power of history. The sociological imagination is the most fruitful of this self-consciousness.[5]

Both Sartre and Mills converge on the idea that imagination is an activity of human consciousness whereby the sociologists relate themselves to the world not as mere detached spectators or observers but as engaged or involved researchers in the field. The freedom or exteriority of consciousness from the world is a requisite of imagination so that it can relate itself to the world. This is similar to Sartre's idea of denial or negation of the (real) world so that the self can imagine other (ideal) world.

Based on their discussions, Sartre's psychological imagination relates with Mills' sociological imagination. If Sartre elaborated the nature of imagination by detaching or withdrawing imagination from the fixation or determination of the world, Mills applied imagination in sociology by dialectically relating biography with history. Sartre argues that freedom is the precondition of imagination which enables Mills to interplay biography and history. Thus, freedom is a constitutive characteristic of consciousness in order to imagine possible world.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL ASSUMPTION

Mill as we have pointed out refers imagination to self-consciousness. We can trace this relationship of imagination and consciousness to the philosophy of phenomenology. Phenomenology is the study of phenomenon which related the world with the actor. There exists an interaction between phenomenon and consciousness. The actor forms intentionality in the consciousness. In Mill's phraseology, he refers to the interplay between biography and history. As Lyotard points out in Phenomenology:

> The term signifies a study of phenomena that is to say, of that which appears to consciousness, that which is given. It seeks to explore the given—the thing itself which one perceives, of which one thinks and speaks—without constructing hypothesis concerning whether the relationship which binds this phenomena to the being of which it is phenomena, or the relationship which unites it with the I for which it is phenomena.[6]

Thus, consciousness is consciousness of something. Consciousness cannot be empty, it must contain something. This something impinges on consciousness as intentionality of the actor or perceiver. Phenomenology is associated with intentionality of the subject that provides meaning to the

object perceived.[7] Thus, we can derive meaning of something from the intention of the perceiver.

> The term most associated with phenomenology is intentionality. The core doctrine in phenomenology is the teaching that every act of consciousness we perform, every experience that we have, is intentional; it is essentially consciousness of or an experience of something or other. All our consciousness is directed toward objects.[8]

For Husserlian phenomenology, consciousness is always intentional, that is, it is a consciousness of something. This intentionality tells us about this something as the characteristic property of this phenomenon directed on the perceived object. It is in this sense and usage that the term intentionality is primarily employed in contemporary philosophy.

RADICAL IMAGINATION

Cornelius Castoriadis is a well-known political activist and progressive philosopher who has developed a radical philosophy that eventually criticizes the prevailing Trotkyist Marxism within the communist movement. Unable to withstand the internal divergence that exists in the movement, Castoriadis eventually broke away from it and formed his own group which propagated its radical criticisms and analyses of society. Castoriadis has inspired the historic outbreak of the May 1968 revolution in Paris, France. Cornelius Castoriadis has contributed to the advancement of imagination by turning to psychoanalysis in understanding imagination. He stresses the place of agency as the capacity of the actor to imagine new social realities using imagination in society, which he calls the social imaginary. He has capitalized the social imaginary of society in his social theory. In his perspective, the imagination or, as he prefers to say, the imaginary is the driving force for that revolution. Imagination is defined as the faculty, that is, the capacity or power to create significations and representations. When the qualification 'radical' is added to imagination, it means that imagination is essentially creative, that is, it creates *ex nihilo* or from nothing (not in nothing or with nothing). This creativity produces infinite worlds for humanity.[9]

Social Imaginary

From the outset, Castoriadis distinguishes human beings from non-human species. For him, human beings are different because they possess the creative power called the social imaginary capable of creating new worlds. This social imaginary is inherently creative and innovative exercised by human beings.

Taking his clue from the Aristotelian notion of imagination, Castoriadis locates imagination neither in the senses nor in the intellect. Imagination lies in between the senses and the intellect. This location frees imagination from the determination or fixation of perception and intellection. The imaginary is the interminably and essentially undermined creation of society. It is society's creative power that can transform the world. The imaginary exceeds that of the world as we have it because it is open to infinite possibilities. It is irreducible to any reality or language. In an essay, Castoriadis defined the social imaginary in the following way:

> I call imaginary those significations because they do not correspond to 'rational' or 'real' elements and they are not sufficiently dealt with to reference to them, but they come into being by creation, and I call them social since they only exist as instituted and as an object of participation of an impersonal and anonymous collective identity.[10]

The imaginary cannot be referred to and delineated by the rational or the real because it is undetermined and undefined. The imaginary refers to significations composed of a reservoir of social meanings created by society. Society is a social body participated by a collectivity and motivated by the imaginary. The imaginary is instituted because it is brought about by human creation where the old world order is replaced by the new world order. Moreover, the imaginary is also instituting because of the social imaginary that emits significations which recreates society. The institution of society is effected by the social imaginary by means of new significations. This signification produced by the imaginary paves the way for the creation of a new society. A society creates its own signification by relying on this social imaginary.

Social imaginary significations create a proper world for the society considered—in fact—they are this world and they shape the psyche of individuals. They create thus a representation of the world, including the society itself and its place in this world.[11]

In this sense, imagination and signification are intertwined. A society creates the world by relying on its shared signification and by representing in symbolic form. Signification is embodied and concretized in representation. The social imaginary is therefore both signification and institution. In a way, signification is reduced to representation because the latter cannot completely capture or articulate the former. Language is the par excellence medium in which signification is represented. As a human institution, language has what Castoriadis calls its ensemblistic-identitary dimension, a term synonym with

the structuralist code, which tends toward limit or closure. The code cannot capture the open, inventive and creative imaginary signification. Signification is essentially generative, excessive and productive. There is always a surplus or excess of meaning that would rupture the prevailing social code which can usher in a new social order.

> Humanity self-creates itself as society and history – there is, in humanity's self creation, creation of the form of society, society being irreducible to any 'elements' whatsoever…This creation takes place once and for all—the human animal socializes itself—and also in an ongoing way; there is an indefinite plurality of human societies, each with its institutions and its significations, therefore each also with its proper world.[12]

Castoriadis proposes an ontology of creation. A social world is created *ex nihilo* or from nothing—a burst of imaginative power—carried out by society. It is society that constitutes itself as a collectivity in founding or instituting a society. The social imaginary is a world-forming and meaning-bestowing creative force. The institution of a society begins with chaos or multiplicity which become the axiomatic staring point in a new ontology of creation. Humanity emerges from the chaos. Once society is established, representations and significations emerge. These representations are derived from significations because they signify something or they make sense to the collective. These significations are irreducible and undermined. Since the world emerges from nothing or chaos, human beings can create and recreate the world by their own making and doing through the social imaginary. Through social imaginary, human beings form the world in the present, which they can also eventually transform in the future. Thus, the social world is contingent because it can be altered.[13] This ontology asserts that society is a self-creating and self-instituting activity of society.

> It is through the collective agency of the social imaginary that a society is created, given coherence and identity, and also subjected to auto-alternation, both mundane and radical, within historical time. Each society is created differently, subsists differently and transforms itself differently.[14]

The social imaginary is inextricably linked with institution. In fact, society is the work of the instituting imaginary. To put it in another way, the creation of the world is the construction of the social imaginary, which instaurates a social world proper to that society.[15]

The social imaginary is capable of an infinite possibilities of society but this imaginary signification fashions this particular society. Moreover, individual members are made by the instituted society, at the same time as they make it and remake it. Thus, there is a mutual interplay between them. The creation of instituting society, as instituted society, is a common world shaped in a particular type or way. The imaginary is a structuring or organizing principle of the institution created in historical time. Thus the imaginary does not operate in a vacuum but is located in particular history. Each society creates its own world depending upon historical exigencies. According to Castoriadis

> This element—which gives a specific orientation to every institutional system, which overdetermines the choice and the connections of symbolic networks, which is the creation of each historical period, its singular manner of living, of seeing and of conducting its own existence, its world, and its relations with this world, this originary structuring component, this central signifying-signified, the source of that which presents itself in every instance as an indisputable and undisputed meaning, the basis for articulating what does matter and what does not, the origin of the surplus of being of the objects of practical, affective, and intellectual investment, whether individual or collective—is nothing other than the *imaginary* of the society or of the period considered.[16]

Castoriadis describes the institution as an originary creation of the social imaginary in the historical field. The social imaginary creates institutions. The social agent exists in and through society which is composed of institutions. He defines the institution as a socially sanctioned symbolic network in which a functional and the imaginary components are combined and arranged in different proportions and relations. By instituting itself, society inaugurates a new ontological form that could not be derived from the preexisting social order. This society is an offshoot of a rupture or break from the present world order in history. "For what is given in and through history," says Castoriadis "is not the determined sequence of the determined but the emergence of radical otherness, immanent creation, non-trivial novelty."[17] The self-institution of society is its responsibility.[18]

This imagination is filled with a molten rock known as magma which, when it explodes, provides an indefinite number of possibilities for society.[19] The imaginary is replete with magma bursting forth with untamed energy which flows the revolutionary potentiality of creation. The imaginary is composed of magma as a structuring matrix of meaning, which organizes the world. The existence of magma is a conditio sine qua non for the institution

of society because it provides on a certain profusion of creativity in multiple forms and ways and it actualizes these virtual possibilities or singularities into concrete realities or worlds. Thus, the chaos is transformed into an order through the imaginary. Without this imaginary, chaos will forever reign. Through the imaginary, society becomes self-instituted and self-altering.

PROJECT OF AUTONOMY

Castoriadis is known for his contribution in the theory of autonomy where he offers a psychoanalytic paradigm in understanding it. The word 'autonomy' means the condition whereby people or group is capable of self-determination or self-governance according to their social imaginary. Castoriadis distinguishes between two types of social formations: heteronymous and autonomous. He opposes autonomy with heteronomy since former emanates internally from the people themselves without relying on the external factors that would effectively operate society. In heteronomy, society hinges on external sources imposing themselves on people who merely depend on these transcendental masters. In autonomy, society creates itself, not produced by the outside. Autonomous society is instituted and transformed by social actors. For Castoriadis, society is essentially autonomous because it self-legislates its own laws. A society is autonomous when it is fully aware that there is no exogenous source for its institutions and laws but it is a self-creation or self-institution. Autonomous society is self-instituting. There is neither external nor beyond society. The laws are legislated by people themselves and, through the social imaginary, alter them. Thus, autonomy cannot be comprehended apart from the affirmation of the social imaginary because it is the matrix of innovation and novelty. The social imaginary is instituted not by a heteronymous agent but an autonomous collective that provides meaning to its social world.[20] Society must be perpetually self-instituting by recognizing itself as the source and origin of its own existence. Thus, society can undo what it has made.

The social imaginary is a creation *ex nihilo* or from nothing. There is neither foundation nor destination, origin nor end. The groundlessness of this imaginary allows itself to be susceptible to limitless possibilities.

> The question of origin, foundation, cause and end are posed in and through society, but society, like signification has no origin, foundation, cause or end other than itself. It is its own origin – that is what self-creation means; if it does not have its genuine, essential origin in something that would be external to it, and it has no end other than its

own existence as society positing these ends – which is merely a formal and ultimately an abusive imaginary of the term end.[21]

People as collective agents recognize the contingency and invention of their world and the construction of that world. Since the laws are made by themselves, they own them and alter them. They habitually call into question their own institutions as representations and the social imaginary that underwrites them. This continuing questioning would loosen the grip of these institutions which would eventually lead to their collapse that can pave the creation of a new one. However, the problem is that this self-institution is generally unknown. Thus, society is self-alienated as manifested in the social representation ascribed to an exterior origin.[22] In this case, heteronymous society is self-alienated because it does not question itself but it blindly obeys its laws. In autonomy, explicit and unlimited interrogation plays a critical role. Questions become more valued than their answers through the use of language.[23] The potential of language is boundless. Thus, it is not language that limits the creativity of human beings, but rather the answers given.[24] Autonomous society questions the representation and signification. Autonomy requires a collective capacity to question the institutional order and the social imaginary that funds it.[25] Since it is questionable, the social imaginary is not a permanent world but it is a momentary construction. Society can question its own institutions by means of the social imaginary that can provide alternative world. This new relation between signification from the social imaginary to the institutional representation ushers in the birth of a new type or form of society. This emergence is a moment of creation.

Castoriadis reject the idea of distinguishing or separating individual autonomy from social autonomy since, in practice, they implicate one another. Social autonomy implies and, at the same time, presupposes individual autonomy.[26] Individuals are socialized in society where they take part in the creation and transformation of society. This popular participation entails direct engagement where people involve themselves in the legislation and implementation of laws. Furthermore, individual autonomy is only possible when members exercise their autonomy in the context of society. Thus, autonomy means the practice of democracy defined as direct and equal participation in the exercise of power. In this sense, Castoriadis favors direct democracy, and not representative democracy, which resists any form of determinism and allows moments of rupture through self-reflexive interrogation. The agent can transcend the limits imposed by the determination of structure by sourcing the creative power form the social imaginary.

Revolutionary action is spurred by the imaginary because it is moved by a common aspiration of popular democracy in the transformation of society.

For Castoriadis, it is impossible to explain the essence of social institutions if one merely relies on the psyche. The psyche must be situated or located in society because it is essentially socialized. The seat of this imaginary is found in the psyche embodied in the collective society. No society could ever be created by nomadic individuals or by solitary psyches. He states this clearly on many occasions that society is inconceivable as the product of an individual.[27] Moreover, it is also impossible to explain the psyche based merely on social institutions. The psyche is irreducible to the individual and to social institutions. The social imaginary supplies the psyche with alternative images that can question and transform society. Thus, Castoriadis' imaginary is equipped with the faculty of resistance and opposition which defy determination and fixation. Every society in history is made up of a complex and volatile amalgamation of several forces combined to form a configuration of signification that constitutes a new society. History is the site where meaning emerges and evolves. Society constitutes itself into an order and this order is sedimented.[28]

Moreover, autonomy is related to reflection that can elucidate the artificiality of society. In order to transform itself, society must become self-reflective Although autonomy is never completely realized, it must become an impulse in the project of formation in history. This autonomy is partly and slowly realized in a democratic society whereby people chart their own history by making their own laws. Democratic society is characterized by self-reflection whereby it institutes itself explicitly and knowingly by recognizing its own laws and values.[29] Reflection provides the exercise for autonomy because it makes society conscious and the law explicit. Made conscious of itself, society interrogates the prevailing order and renews itself. Autonomy signifies the limitless self-interrogation on the laws that it has created. Autonomy is not the work of a pre-given rationality, but a reflective activity of society in questioning its foundation and that interrogation initiates the creation of a new society. For Castoriadis, autonomy means that society posits its own as its self-creation. Autonomy leads to deeper self-consciousness that ushers in a new order. In this sense, autonomy is the ability to question the social order that it has made and maintained. Once it is questioned, society is explicitly objectified. A rupture is created once society becomes self-conscious about the origin and foundation of its social institutions and laws. Society is steered by the social imaginary to create a new one. The imaginary

is driven by an interrogative impulse putting into question its institutions. Nevertheless, even though humans can never step outside of their signification system, it allows them in principle to question everything.

Society creates laws and, at the same time, recognizes itself in these laws. Thus, there operates a dual action of creation and recognition that promotes self-consciousness and social transformation because society recognizes itself as the creator of this order.[30] In order to perceive itself and work upon itself, a society has to produce a representation of itself and create a distance to itself. This is paradoxical. Society produces a mirror to look at itself and sees itself as its own creation.[31] Thus, society does not only make laws but it also recognizes itself as their source. This means that we are not just talking about self-institutions, but also about explicit self-institution of society. In other words, the social order is a product of self-reflection on the institutions and laws.[32] Individuals attempt to reflect their thought and monitor their action. We break from the old order so that we can create a new form. Thus, society moves from being instituted to the instituting, or from the structured to structuring. We need no outsider to make the world for us but we only need freedom to imagine a different world order. If the world is only a social construction, then it can be altered.

CONCLUSION

As we survey the development of sociological imagination and focus on the Castoriadisian social imaginary, we notice the human desire for social change. The social imaginary is a potent force in effecting social change in society. Society proceeds to an autonomous status whereby people can interrogate their own construction and create new social world. The social imaginary is magmatic force that can explode and create a new social order. The social imaginary cannot be contained or foreclosed in society. Society yearns for a better society where their desires are recognized and satisfied. Human desire hinges on the social imaginary. Left unsatisfied, social imaginary remains a revolutionary spirit that recreates the world. Autonomy establishes a different relationship between the human psyche and the unconscious desire. Reflection enables society to ruminate explicitly on human desire.

NOTES

1   Stephen J. Canlan, & Liz Grauerholz, "50 Years of C. Wright Mills and the Sociological Imagination" in *Teaching Sociology* vol. 37, 2009, 2.

2   Steven P. Dandaneau, "Sisyphus had it Easy: Reflections of Two Decades of Teaching the Sociological Imagination." *Teaching Sociology*, vol. 37, 2009, 14.

3   Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Psychology of Imagination.* (New Jersey: Citadel Press, 1948), 267.

4   C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination.* (New York: Penguin Books, 1959), 11.

5   C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 14.

6   Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Phenomenology*, Gayle L. Ormiston, trans. (New York: State University of New York, 1991), 32-33.

7   The concept of intentionality is derived from the philosophy of Franz Brentano. In his book, *Psychology From an Empirical Standpoint*, he says:

    "Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction toward an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not do so in the same way. In presentation, something is presented, in judgment something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on."

    "This intentional inexistence is characteristic exclusively of mental phenomena. No physical phenomenon exhibits anything like it. We can, therefore, define mental phenomena by saying that they are those phenomena which contain an object intentionally within themselves." Franz Brentano, Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint (London: Routledge, 1874), 88-89.

8   Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 8.

9   Cornelius Castoriadis, "Radical Imagination," in *Rethinking Imagination: Culture and Creativity*, eds. Gillian Robinson & John Rundell (New York & London: Routledge 1994), 139 & 184.

10   Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 68.

11   Cornelius Castoriadis, "Radical Imagination," 152.

12   Cornelius Castoriadis, *World in Fragments: Writings on Politics, Society, Psychoanalysis and the Imagination* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 339

13   Cornelius Castoriadis, "Castoriadis and Autopoiesis," in *Thesis Eleven*, Vol. 11 (2007), 88.

14   Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, *Toward New Imaginaries: An Introduction in Public Culture*, vol. 14, no. 1, 7.

15   Castoriadis reinterprets the Aristotelian phusis as an origin and principle of movement. What animates phusis is the Eros of this form. He says:

     What remains for us is a phusis that is Eros: movement toward pushing toward from, toward the thinkable, toward law, toward eidos, Phusis appears, then, as the pushing-toward-giving-itself-a-form, a push, moreover, that can never completely be accomplished, for, as Aristotle says, there is no phusis without matter and matter is the limit of the thinkable; it is the indeterminate, the, the formless the chaotic. Cornelius, Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, 333.

16   Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 145.

17   Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 184.

18   Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 132.

19   Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 343.

20   For Castoriadis, autonomy is centrally linked to the Greek philosophical invention of nomos that gives meaning to autonomy. Society creates this order or law. Cornelius Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, 332.

21   Cornelius Castoriadis, World in Fragments, 315.

22   Cornelius Castoriadis, The Imaginary Institution of Society, 327.

23   Cornelius Castoriadis, Philosophy, Politics, and Autonomy: Essays in Political Philosophy ed. David Amens Curtis (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991) 163.

24   Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 126.

25   Cornelius Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, 314.

26   Cornelius Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, 340.

27   Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 247.

28 Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 1987.

29 Cornelius Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, 340.

30 Cornelius Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics and Autonomy*, 164.

31 Cornelius Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, 340.

32 Cornelius Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics and Autonomy*, 164.

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A Plea for Sobriety in Matters Epistemological: A Critical Realist Appraisal of the Postmodern Turn in Sociology

Gerry M. Lanuza

The recent postmodern turn in sociology has been very powerful in transforming the landscape of the discipline. By questioning the basic epistemological and metaphysical character of positivism, the dominant paradigm in sociology, postmodernism has enticed a lot of sociologists in questioning their discipline. What is lost in this acrimonious debate, however, is the need to bring in back "ontological questions" to sociology. This paper therefore is an attempt to move beyond the postmodern deconstruction of sociology by having recourse to critical realism of Roy Bhaskar and others. Its main objective is to show that critical realism provides a better alternative to postmodern nihilism. To end the paper, the implications of this debate to Philippine sociology is discussed.

Keywords: *critical realism, postmodernism, sociological theory, epistemology, Bhaskar*

Sociology today has become hostage to postmodern critique. Many sociologists, who had been steeped in traditional positivist paradigm now find themselves on the defensive in parrying the postmodernist onslaught against "formalistic sociology" (Houston 2001). Hand in hand with the postmodern eruption in sociology is the ascendancy of social constructionist paradigm in social theory and research (Denzin 2002). So one can read a lot of articles being written on "social construction of homosexuality," "social construction of childhood," "social construction of gender," "social construction of knowledge," and countless others. What is lost in this orgy of

postmodern theories is the question of the ontological status of these concepts. One can also hear postmodern deconstructionists attacking the notions of truth, validity, quantitative method as suspect. Sociologists who do not badge under the postmodern pressure are accused of colluding with Western imperialism and exercising exclusionary violence against women, colonized people, and countless other subaltern groups.

This "crisis of representation"[1] (Denzin 1997: 4, 2002; Flaherty 2002) in the social sciences that undermine the traditional positivist orientation has its greatest impact on methodology (Alvesson 2001: 4). The crisis itself, albeit not new in the social science disciplines, has been accentuated by the postmodern turn (Gubrium and Holstein 1997: 87). This crisis leads to the interrogation of the fundamental assumptions that underlie the practice of social research. The crisis dislodges empirical grounding of social scientific inquiry by the neo-pragmatic question of language and representation (Potter, 1986; Brown 1989, 1987). The long-established principle that social scientific inquiry aims at capturing the underlying properties of the social world is now in doubt (Polkinghorne 1994: 151). The established view that the ultimate goal of social research is to discover regularities in the realm of the social is now perceived as misguided (Seidman 1991a). Objectivity that is supposed to guide social research is now seen as a bias itself (Bradley and Schaefer 1995). How did this crisis of representation come about? What are its implications in conducting social research? This paper will argue that there is much to be learned from postmodern turn in sociology but its philosophical grounding in nihilistic anti-representationalism must be abandoned. What is lost in exciting this debate is the question of ontology: can we really deny social reality? I will argue that critical realism offers the best way of out of postmodern nihilism. It shifts the discussion from epistemology to ontology. I endorse Jonathan Joseph's statement that "critical realism asks, given that knowledge is possible and is meaningful, what does this pre-suppose about the world itself? Does not knowledge of the world indicate that the world is intelligible, and therefore ordered in a certain way? Is not the practice of science related to the structure of the world?" Here, sociological theory must necessarily presuppose unabashedly metaphysical view of social reality.

What I will do in the following is to rescue sociology from the postmodern blackmail: you are either a positivist or postmodernist. I will do so by showing that the postmodern critique of sociology could be deflated by having recourse to critical realism.

THE ILLUSION OF POSITIVISM

Positivism as a philosophical outlook about science assumes several things. Numerous criticisms had been raised against the positivist tradition in sociology from hermeneutics, feminist theory, and Marxist critique. I will briefly summarize these criticisms below.[2]

The myth of "brute facts." Positivist paradigm of social research assumes that one can develop a theory-neutral description of the social world. Writing within the existentialist tradition within sociology, Blum observes, "if objective knowledge is taken to mean knowledge of a realty independent of language, or presuppositionless knowledge, or knowledge of the word which is independent of the observer's procedures for finding and producing the knowledge. Then there is no such thing as objective knowledge" (quoted in Phillips 1973: 143). Or, as David Maines (1993) put in propositional form: "All social science data are already interpreted data; the uninterpreted datum does not exist." This is far cry from the traditional assumption in social research that there can be "neutral facts" or theory-independent data that can arbitrate between competing explanations (Goode and Hatt 1952). Clifford Geertz describes this obsession with neutral facts as another form of rhetoric: "The pretense of looking at the world directly, as though a one-way screen, seeing others as they really are when only God is looking, is indeed quite widespread. But that itself a rhetorical strategy, a mode of persuasion." (1988: 141).

In survey research, for example, painstaking care is taken to avoid imputing subjective and extraneous biases on the questions (Nasatir 1985). Textbook writers on survey research caution neophytes that poorly constructed survey questionnaires are like unstructured interviews that are unreliable source of objective information (Moser and Kalton 1971). Critics aver that this is based on the culture of formalism – a culture that "encourages particular patterns of for asking questions, making assumptions, and using techniques, even when these are inappropriate (Bradley and Schaefer 1995: 37). This culture is responsible for the mathematization of social research. Its greatest fetish is the meticulous construction of formal models based on mathematical simulations.

Aron Cicourel (1964), writing within cognitive sociology, has noted, "All social research includes an unknown number of implicit decisions which are not mirrored in the measurement procedures used. The abstraction process required to describe a set of properties, regardless of the measurement system, automatically imposes some amount of reification" (p. 80).[3]

Instrumentalist and conventionalist philosophers of science (Duhem, Poincare, and Hanson) have also raised serious objections to the standard view of scientific method. They show that facts are always theory-determined. This is now known as the Duhem-Quine thesis: "Test of any primary hypothesis involve so many auxiliary assumptions that the original, primary hypothesis is insulated from a hard rejection" (Bradley and Schaefer 1995: 197). This means that facts only make sense within a given context or social situation. If facts are taken as "evidence," then, "evidence does not exist in a vacuum but is contextual, in the sense that "facts can only become evidence in response to some particular question" (Madjar and Walton 2001: 29). Hence even if we "have valid measures and strong associations between our variables, the sociologist [/social scientist] is still faced with the problem of making sense of accounting for these facts" (Phillips 1973: 13). Or, as Bradley and Schaefer (1995) rightly argue, "Statistical inference can offer evidence but cannot supply the criteria by which it is admitted." It does not remove the need for "insight, common sense, and persuasion" (p. 153).

The myth of fact-value dualism. Coupled with the belief in "pure facts" positivist social researchers also subscribed to the strict separation between facts and values. The reason being that facts can be objectively studied, while values are inextricably subjective. Numerous critics target the value-freedom advocacy of Max Weber and his followers (Turner and Factor 1987). Of course Weber acknowledged the value-ladenness of choice of research topic;[4] nevertheless he strongly believes that values should not intrude in the interpretation and validation of data. Critics, like Tim May (2001) argues that "In the process of data collection itself, there are decisions to be made over the strength and weaknesses of particular methods and in relation to the aims and objectives of the research project" (p. 53). He further adds, "within the data collection process itself, there are a number of ethical and political decisions to be made. Researchers may wish to concentrate on one group of people rather another, reflecting their own bias" (p. 53). Moreover the notion that "rigorous research" involves the separation of the subject from her research reflects the idea that reason and emotion should be separated. Feminists have challenged this taken-for-granted idea by pointing out that such separation fails to acknowledge the multiple ways in which the researcher is affected by the context of the research as well as the subjects themselves (Cook 1986; May 2001: 21). For some feminist researchers, ethical neutrality itself is a value-choice (Farganis 1986; Harding 1986). They also insist that values do not only intrude in the selection of research topics but, more

significantly, during the validation and assessment of the findings of the research (Potter 1989; see also May, 1993: 39). Feminists also argue that objectivity masks the masculine character of reason (Harding 1987; Kasper 1986). For dominant rationality is often equated with dispassionate distance from what one studies.

Jurgen Habermas, a member of the Frankfurt School, argues that objectivism is only possible by bracketing the hermeneutic grounding of research. Together with the assault against fact-value separation, many critics also assailed the seemingly political conservatism that ensues from fact-value dualism. Because values are considered as subjective preferences, researchers can wash their hands by shirking away from their social responsibility. Objectivity and neutrality then becomes the shield for academic irresponsibility (Kincheloe and McLaren 1998; Fay 1975). In fact some critics suggest that the researcher is responsible for how her findings are read, understood, and acted upon or not, and for who benefits and who does not as a result of the inquiry (Ray and Mayan 2001: 63).

Castrating the "physics envy." Many humanist critics assailed the unconscious "physics envy" that inform positivist-oriented research (Seidman 1991a; 1991b). This "unconscious" of social research assumes that "the scientific mode of thought is superior to others, and so represents progress in the sphere of thought to match" (Benton and Craib 2001: 46). Like physics, "textbooks on quantitative social research often say that the purpose of research which works with survey interview materials is to extract universally valid laws, to identify the causes of things" (Alasuutari 1998: 53). This "physics envy" has also infected qualitative researchers that even textbooks on qualitative research have to acknowledge that their enterprise is a "soft science."

Postpositivist philosophers of science challenged the homogenizing and reductionist character of such programme (Benton 1977; Bhaskar 1975; Keat and Urry 1975). Because it uncritically nominates the hypothetico-deductive model (originally proposed by the German physicist, Carl Gustav Hempel) as the standard form of scientific explanation. Critics point out that even contemporary quantum physics has rejected the deterministic and strict causal principle of Newtonian view of science (Crotty 1998:29ff.). As Paul Feyerabend (1970) argues, "The idea of a method that contains firm, unchanging, and absolutely binding principles for conducting the business of science gets into considerable difficulty when confronted with the results

of historical research. We find, then, that there is not a single rule, however, plausible, and however firmly grounded in epistemology, that is not violated as sometime or other…we see that they are necessary for progress [in science]" (p. 21). Moreover the adoption of naturalistic model of explanation is simply based on the enormous cultural authority possessed by the natural sciences (Benton and Craib 2001: 23). Benton and Craib assert, "Social scientists might well want to present their disciplines as sufficiently well established for them to be accorded this sort of authority [like natural sciences]…Strong claims made by social scientists about the reliability, objectivity, and usefulness of the knowledge they have to offer may be used to support their claims to be well represented in university staffing and research council funding for their research" (p. 23).

The andocentric character of social research. Alvesson (2002), summarizing the feminist critique of "male-stream" social research states,

> Male domination has produced a masculine social science built around ideal such as objectivity, neutrality, distance, control, rationality and abstraction. Alternative ideals such as commitment, empathy, closeness, cooperation, intuition and specificity, have been marginalized. Scientific rationality is thus expressing male domination, rather than superior reason (p. 3).

Allison Jaggar (1994) has offered a radical critique of outlawing emotions in Western epistemology. She points out that "Western epistemology has tended to view emotion and even hostility. This derogatory western attitude towards emotion, like the earlier western contempt for sensory observation, fails to recognize that emotion, like sensory perception, is necessary to human survival." Laurel Richardson (1993), a feminist postmodernist, narrates how her involvement in presenting the narrative of her research in poetic form changed the way she looks at sociological texts:

> I try to write sociology that moves people emotionally and intellectually. When successful, the texts violate sociology's unwritten rules. Social science writing is supposedly emotionless, the reader unmoved. But, just as other social science writing conventions (e.g., prose, passive voice, omniscient narrator) conceal how truth-value is constituted, the affectless prose style conceals how emotions are harnessed in the service of a presumed truth-value" (p. 706).

These naïve positivist assumptions have been rightly criticized by many philosophers of science beginning with Michael Polanyi's classic *Tacit Knowledge.* But positivist thinking was well-entrenched in the sociological

traditional especially social research. The latest craze of intellectual interrogation of positivist approach to science is raised by postmodernists. These are some of the crucial criticisms from postmodernist alternative:

The social construction of research. Postmodernists challenge the commonsense realism that underpins social research. Pragmatic and poststructuralist versions of this critique advocate the total abandonment of realism in favor of social constructionism. Laurel Richardson (1995: 199), a feminist postmodern researcher, for example, claims, "all knowledge is socially constructed. Writing is not simply a "true" representation of an objective reality." She further adds, "All social scientific writing depends on narrative structure and narrative devices, although that structure and those devices are frequently masked by a scientific frame, which is itself a metanarrative." Social research is also rhetorical more than reportorial (Gubrium and Holstein 1997: 92). According to this view, "all factual representations of empirical reality, even statistical representations, are narratively constructed" (Clough 1992: 3). Even "official statistics" that is considered as the most objective source of data in social sciences also reflect the cultural values of the researcher (May 2001; Phillips 1973). In the same vein, Bradley and Schaeffer (1995), after reviewing the limitations of measurement in social sciences declare: "Human information, no matter how carefully and accurately gathered, often requires discussion of values and principles before meaningful interpretation is possible." They further argue, "The impact of human information is never neutral, as it is reported in a context that involves human preconceptions, values, and beliefs" (p. 121).

Of course the postmodernists do not deny the existence of a mind-independent reality. But rather than asking whether social research is being faithful to the representation of the social world, postmodernists shift the focus on the way our theoretical description of the world are created and contested (MacLure 2003). Postmodern researchers contend that "the 'empirical world' –the world of objective facts and doings –may well exist but that it cannot be directly known. What we can know is solely a function of human interventions, mediations, and constructions" (Maines 1993: 27).

Moreover pragmatic version of postmodernism suggests that "social structures and processes powerfully shape the circumstances that become identified as problems, the way those problems are engaged, and which of the multiple options is judged the best solution" (Kuzel and Engel 2001: 119). Norman K. Denzin (1997; 1994), the bellwether of this new movement,

which veers away from representationalist tradition in ethnography, calls for the renewal of qualitative research on the "sixth moment" or post-Malinowskian fieldwork (see also Marcus 1994).[5] More radical versions of the postmodern approach encourage ethnography of textual representations themselves (Marcus 1994; Clifford 1988). The focus shifts away from the veracity of texts to the analysis of styles and authorial voices that underline the unacknowledged power relations embedded within the texts.

The "narrative turn" and the fictionality of non-fiction. There are two major reasons why postmodernists advocate the turn to the study of narratives. First, by problematizing the concept of representation in social research, postmodern research turns to the ethnography of texts or "tales from the fields" (Van Mannen 1988). Rather than attempt to establish the veracity of empirical data by checking them against what they purport to describe, postmodernists follow the Saussaurian path of severing the text from the world. The focus is the world created by the text itself (Richardson 2003; Denzin 1989). Second, recall that Baudrillard suggests that the boundary between the real and the hyperreal has already imploded. This leaves us with the existence of "society of signs." In this type of society the flow and exchanges of signs have stamped out the illusion of the "real." Everything is a simulation. Hence social research does not mirror the social world but is merely another text to be deciphered.

Postmodern researchers champion the use of discourse analysis, semiotics, grammatology, archaeology, textual and conversational analysis, and biographical methods (Manning and Cullum-Swan 1994). Biographical methods are especially favored by postmodern researchers who want to study the lives certain individuals as forms of literature (Denzin 1989). The antiessentialist posture of postmodernism makes it skeptical of any attempt to ground the meanings of narratives –either as lives of individuals or signs— in a logocentric fashion (coined by Jacques Derrida, the father of deconstructionism); that is, the belief that there is a single correct way of narrating an event or a life history/story.

To avoid the trap of logocentrism, postmodern researchers experiment with other forms of styles of writing (Van Mannen 1988). Some propose impressionistic style; others opt for confessional tales, while some feminists favor the use of poetry (Richardson 2003). In experimenting with writing styles, postmodernists intend to undermine the distinction between fictional writing and non-fiction (Rosenblatt 2003:225). The boundary between fact

and fiction itself is a socially constructed category. Postmodern writers do so by focusing on the rhetorical devices used by researchers to lend credibility to their authorial voices (Gusfield 1976).[6] This leads postmodern researchers to be skeptical about the "truths" they produce: "in our awareness of the social construction of reality, the rhetoric of writing social research reports, and the inevitable limits, biases and subjectivity (often covert) of research, we are ever more skeptical if the status of the provisional truths we have to offer" (Rosenblatt 2003: 226).

Challenging the canons of validity. Because postmodernists are skeptical about science-based definitions of validity, postmodern researchers propose new alternative ways of grounding and defining validity. They strongly reject definitions of validity that are tailored for all types of research (Curtin and Fossey 2007: 89). As Maines (1998: 29) points out, "whether an account is regarded as valid is a function of the social contexts and conventions that the members of those contexts use to construct validity as a criterion for truth claims." Hence the search for alternative forms of validity is very strong among qualitative researchers with strong postmodern orientation. Catherine Reissman (1993: 64-65), for instance, speaking within narrative research, argues that the truth of narrative research is not based on factual recording of facts. Because narrative facts are also products of interpretation. Hence validation shifts from the question of truthfulness to "trustworthiness." As she explains, "Trustworthiness not truth is a key semantic difference: the latter assumes an objective reality, whereas the former moves the process into the social world" (p. 65). Reissman lists four forms of validation, namely, persuasiveness, correspondence, coherence, and pragmatic use. Other researchers suggest more daring alternatives to validation (Altheide and Johnson 1994). Patti Lather, in particular, gives four new meanings of validity:

- Validity as simulacra/ironic validity (multiple voices of the author, non-finality)
- Lyotardian paralogy/neoprgamtic validity (emphasizes differences and contradictions, multiplicity, interruptions)
- Derridean rigour/rhizomic validity (emphasizes play and subversion from within, decentered authorship, unrepeatable directions)
- Voluptuous validity (male-female othering , marginal voices, and open texts)

While Lather looks for validity in recent philosophical currents, some postmodern researchers suggest that we must look for the source of authorial validity in ethnographic writing itself. Patricia Clough (1992: 2) provocatively

suggests, "Ethnography is the productive icon, of empirical scientific authority." Whatever definition one follows, postmodern researchers are in agreement that "it is apparent that validation in narrative studies [and other qualitative studies] cannot be reduced to a set of formal rules or standardized technical procedures" (p. 68; see also Czarniawska 1998: 5).

Deconstructing the quanti-quali divide. By loosening up the stringent demand for validity, postmodernists urge the blurring of the boundary between quantitative and qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln 1994). Traditionally, qualitative research is often seen as only a preparatory stage for serious quantitative research (Brymann 1999: 36). But feminists and critical theorists strongly argue that science itself is an interpretive enterprise. Every step in the scientific analysis and experimentation involves necessarily subjective and interpretive understanding. Even precision and the use of numbers are not pivotal to distinguish quantitative research from qualitative one. Precision and the use of numbers are all functions of a situation and context. This leads Hammersley (1999) to suggest transcending the classical dualism between nomothetic (generalizing) and idiographic research (particularizing): "what is involved [in the quanti-quali divide] is not a simple contrast between two opposed standpoints, but a range of positions sometimes located on more than one dimension" (p. 80). For instance, quantitative research need not necessarily lead to formulation of strict social laws. And qualitative research may also produce probabilistic generalization based on analytic induction (Hammersley 1999: 78). Michael Crotty (1998: 41) therefore rightly suggests that the issue is not between qualitative and quantitative research but between positivist and non-positivist orientation of research. This leads to methodological pluralism that rejects the privileging of one method over the other (Johnson and Cassell 2001: 140).

The reflexive turn: Today ethnographers, as the result of the postmodern crisis in the social sciences, have become more reflexive about the philosophical grounding of their own research practices (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Atkinson 1990; Benton and Craib 2001; Denzin 2003). Bourdieu cautions sociologists against denying the fact the she is a "cultivated subject of a particular culture" and thereby failing to "subordinate his practice to a continuous questioning of this relationship" (p. 72). He advocates a "sociology of sociology" that is widely discussed today in ethnographic research as reflexivity (Brettell 1993; Coffey 1999). In New *Approaches to Social Research*, Carol Grbich defines reflexivity:

Reflexivity can be simply defined as viewing the self and the process of data collection and interpretation in a critical and detached manner through internal dialogue and constant (ad intensive) scrutiny of what I know and how I know it (Hertz, 1997: viii) in the development of knowledge claims" (p. 71).

Alvesson (2002) offers another postmodern definition: (2002): "It stands for conscious and systematic efforts to view the subject matter from different angles, and to avoid strongly privileging a favored one" (p. 171). This obsession with reflexivity leads many sociologists to castigate themselves in confessional rhetoric and away from addressing real issues in research.

A CRITICAL REALIST RECUPERATION OF SOCIOLOGY

To be a realist today in sociology means being associated with dogmatism, Enlightenment, and Absolutism, not to mention being out of the most recent intellectual fashion in the West. But I believe that a good defense of critical realism can be mounted. Following Andrew Sayer, I also believe that critical realism is the best alternative midway between positivism and the irrational tendencies in postmodernism. If, as realists, we take it that there is a reality independent of our consciousness, then, we can be mistaken about it. But if from the beginning we believe that reality is socially constructed, then, how could we ever know we are wrong? This seems to open to the door to the floodgates of relativism.

Critical realism must be distinguished first from positivism. In fact, critical realism shares with postpositivist philosophies of science some of basic criticisms against positivistic view of science. There are many forms of realism. What I will defend here is the critical realism of Roy Bhaskar and others (Margaret Archer, Ted Benton, Andrew Collier, Andrew Sayer and others). Critical realism as a philosophical orientation of science originated with Roy Bhaskar (Steinmetz, 2004).[7] Bhaskar and other realists rightly insist that science can be underwritten by various philosophies. What is often attacked by critics of scientific sociology is its positivistic orientation. The inability of the critics to distinguish various philosophies of science that can underwrite sociology is the main source of this acrimonious debate.[8] From a critical realist point of view, philosophy requires metaphysical stance about what the world would be for science to be possible. But philosophy itself cannot tell us what the basic structures of the world are and how they differ from each other. It is the task of science (Bhaskar 1989: 7). To subsume science under philosophical analysis is to be guilty of "speculative idealism," while to subsume philosophy

into scientific logic is to fall into now-defunct positivist illusion. What philosophy can only do is to produce knowledge about the necessary condition for true knowledge to obtain.[9]

THE REAL, ACTUAL, AND EMPIRICAL: AGAINST HUMEAN VIEW OF THE WORLD

The fundamental premise of realism, which sets it apart from idealism, is there is a world out there independent of human consciousness (Keat and Urry 1989: 230). Critical realism further distinguishes between the real, the actual, and the empirical. The real is what is there independent of the way we perceive the world. The real consists of causal mechanisms that make events in the world possible (Ekstrom 1992: 116). The actual is the event that happens in a specific time and space coordinate in accordance with the confluence of specific variables. Following this distinction it becomes clear that positivism errs in equating the actual with the empirical. The Humean definition of law as "constant conjunction of events" does not obtain in nature (Harre, 1970:105). They are rare and could only be replicated in laboratories. What is actual and real may not necessarily be empirical. Moreover the empirical cannot exhaust the description of things. This is also the fallacy of positivism and its postmodern critics. Because positivists shun away any talk about unobservable essences they stay on the level of the empirical (Keat and Urry 1989: 30). The postmodernists, on the other hand, reduce experience to linguistic formulation. This is paradoxical. For by equating science with the empirical as the positivists do, and to discourse as postmodernists do, both become trapped in the "anthroporealism" (truth is human experience-based) (Bhaskar 1986: 8). Critical realists insist that the object of science is not to deal with instantiation of the laws of nature but to explain the causal mechanism and the properties of things that trigger these events. This is the intransitive dimension of science. This solves the problem of induction. The problem of induction is not the quantitative number of repetition in nature but in the investigating the properties of things that make up such regularities in an open system (Bhaskar 1986: 31).[10]

INTRANSITIVE AND THE TRANSITIVE DIMENSION OF SCIENCE

Second, critical realism distinguishes the transitive and intransitive dimensions of science. The intransitive dimension shows that the "objects of the scientific investigation are typically structured and intransitive, that is, irreducible to patterns of events and active independently of their identification

by human beings" (Bhaskar 1989: 11; see also Keat and Ury 1989: 232). The intransitive objects of knowledge are in general invariant to our knowledge of them; they are the real things and structures, mechanisms and processes, events and possibilities of the world; and for the most part they are quite independent of us ... They are the intransitive, science-independent, objects of scientific discovery and investigation (Bhaskar 1997: 22).

The major offshoot of this distinction is that science is both progressive and fallible. It is progressive because science is able to know the intrinsic nature of things (the causal mechanism that is not necessarily exhausted in the empirical), while respecting the position of postmodernists and postpositivists critics that scientific truth can never be final. Scientific discoveries are made not from immaculate standpoint but only within a given social condition. This is the transitive dimension. Science therefore is a social practice whose aim is to discover the intransitive dimension. Because postmodernists equate truth with the context of justification, they are guilty of "epistemic fallacy". That is, "decreeing that ontological questions can always be transposed into an epistemological key, i.e., that statements about being either just are or may always be parsed as statements about knowledge" (Bhaskar 1986: 6).[11]

Consequently critical realism embraces epistemic relativism on the level of the transitive. This realization has been forcefully argued by the postpositivist philosophers of science. Science is always grounded in social praxis and therefore there are multiple ways of looking at the world. But where they err is in embracing judgmental relativism. This kind of relativism, as Andrew Sayer argues, is just a pretext to avoid theoretical disagreement.

EMANCIPATORY NATURE OF SOCIOLOGY

The emancipatory role of sociology. Unlike positivist science, critical realism shares with the feminist and critical theorists the position that sociology should be able to use its findings and analysis to uncover existing oppressive structures and false consciousness. Bhaskar and critical realists agree that social science can be used to uncover false consciousness of people. Hence it can support certain values that would serve human needs. However critical realism does not argue the obverse of this position: that values can validate factual data. Of course values do intrude in the validation of certain factual claims as feminists and sociologists of knowledge would claim. But values themselves can never legislate the final validation of factual claims.

STRATIFIED SOCIAL REALITY AND OVERDETERMINATION

Critical realism is founded on a conception of ontological depth. It posits the existence of a certain layer of structures or mechanisms, but seeks to move beyond and explain what generates these events. When a stratum of reality has been described, the next step should be to examine what mechanisms underlie or intersect with this level and so on. This is a radical approach focusing on processes of emergence and change.

Because reality is stratified, causation is multifaceted. The social world is composed of countervailing tendencies and forces that might not necessarily produce uniform results (Manicas, 1987). This is premised on the distinction between a closed and open system. In an open system certain predictions may not obtain because of the overdetermination of events. Social sciences, especially sociology, operate within the domain of open systems. In the social realm, CR defines a closed system "as one in which a constant conjunction of events obtains; i.e. in which an event of type a is invariably accompanied by an event of type b" (Bhaskar 1978: 70); and it defines an open system as one "where no constant conjunction of events prevail" (ibid., 13).

Hence, unlike positivism, critical realism promotes indeterminacy. The focus of research is shifted from excessive search for regularities in social world to the causal mechanisms that trigger or inhibit certain predicted events. Critical realism argues that the social world is structured in a certain way and that it contains dominant generative mechanisms which exert a powerful influence over the social formation. So while it acknowledges overdeterminism it also believes in causal priority of certain mechanism (for instance, in Marxism, society is seen as founded on basic material relations and operates though material production, appropriation and labour).

TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL OF SOCIAL ACTION

Finally, critical realism provides a way of transcending the problem of agency and structural determinism. Bhaskar offers the transformative theory of social action as a model of social action. The transformational model of human activity argues that the social world is made up of structures and that these structures must be reproduced through human activity. However, it also argues for the open and stratified character of the social world. Because of the complex inter-relations between different structures, mechanisms and practices there is no guarantee that reproduction will take place automatically. Such a position veers away from functionalist/structuralist determinism and

the voluntarism of humanistic sociologies (phenomenology, existential sociology, and symbolic interactionism, etc.).

SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIOLOGY IN THE PHILIPPINE CONTEXT

Critical realism is premised on the hermeneutic grounded-ness of sociology. Hence it is amenable to postcolonial critique of sociology. Sociology must always be based on the interpretation of the life world of the subjects. It therefore rejects the colonial and imperialistic tendencies in positivist oriented sociological research that uncritically imposes Western categories on local cultures. This stance also follows from the critical realist notion of metacritique that is already built-in in its practice. Critical realism, by embracing sociology as a form of practice, demands from sociologists a rigorous critique of their own presuppositions derived from the social world. This is consistent with the reflexivity demanded by postmodern sociologists and the advocates of the strong program in the sociology of knowledge. But it does not follow the path of postmodern critique of Western social science: rejection of science in favor of indigenous knowledge. While social science is practiced in a definite historical and cultural location, nevertheless, it does not mean that there is no possibility for cross-cultural dialogue.

Second, it re-directs sociologists to re-define the use of quantitative methods in sociological research. Again, consistent with the postmodernist critique, critical realism emphasizes the importance of qualitative method in uncovering the causal mechanisms in explaining social phenomenon. However it does not take side in the methodological debate. Methodological dispute should not be confused with ontological questions.

Finally, critical realism can be a potent ally of radical Filipino sociologists (critical theorists, Marxists, postcolonial theorists, and feminists) who believe in the emancipatory goal of social research. It embraces wholeheartedly the intersection of values, politics, and social research. However, critical realism also provides a corrective to the otherwise nihilistic and relativistic tendencies that can arise from this recognition (that postmodernists exploit quite mistakenly). Values can be debated and sociology can contribute in resolving value conflicts. It provides a viable way out from the Humean veto against deriving value judgment from empirical analysis.

In short, critical realism is the most viable philosophical position that could re-new social theory in *fin de siècle*. It is the only position that could mediate between the now defunct positivism and the nihilistic tendencies in

postmodernism.[12] It is more persuasive than postmodernism because it is able to assimilate most of the valid criticisms against positivism, while providing a strong ontology for social research. Thus, Filipino sociologists are well advised to turn to serious study of critical realism rather than allowing themselves to be seduced into the nihilistic aporias and theoretical *cul-de-sac* of the postmodern turn.

NOTES

1   Denzin and Lincoln (1994), two major bellwethers of the postmodern movement in social research also use the term "crisis of legitimation" to highlight the circularity of validating the language of social research without appealing to external reference or standard.

2   The following discussion is taken from my essay on The Postmodern Turn in Social Research (for CHED Project Manual for Social Research under Dr. Ester de la Cruz).

3   Cicourel (1964) specifically criticizes the claimed objectivity in survey interviews. He rightly observes, "The authors [researchers] are not aware that too much stress has been placed on asking questions and recording answers, and that the interviewer is overlooking…the many judgments he made in the process" (p. 91). Jack Douglas (1985), more than any other sociologists, has been very effective in dismantling the supposed objectivity in survey interviews.

4   Max Weber would have agreed with the assertion of postempiricist philosophers of science and feminists that "At a deeper level, many scientists are motivated by respect for and wonderment at the integrity, otherness and intrinsic beauty of the objects of their investigation" (Benton and Craib 2001:45). Furthermore even "the pursuit of objective knowledge about the world itself implies value commitments–namely, not to misrepresent the results of experiment, to give serious considerations to arguments against one's views…" (p. 44). Weber however strictly distinguishes between values that inform the sociologist's choice of topic with the values that enter in the validation of empirical data.

5   This sixth moment refers to the "the moment of discovery and rediscovery as new ways of looking, interpreting, and writing are debated and discussed" (Denzin 1997:23). This is the postmodern condition.

6   Rosenblatt (2003: 231), for instance, argues that in simplifying research reports, there is already a fictionalizing process involved.

7   Critical realism is now widespread among social scientists (Dean, Joseph, Roberts, Wright 2006), educational researchers (Egbo 2005; Corson 2000), among geographers (Roberts 2001; Lovering 2007; Pratt 1995), social work (Houston 2001); historical studies (Steinmetz 2008), statistical analysis (Mingers 2006; Steele 2005), Marxist theory (Roberts 1999; Callinicos), and economic theory (Peacock 2007; Fleetwood 1999; Lawson 1994), organizational analysis (Tsang 1999; Leca and Naccache 2006), and even among qualitative researchers (Porter 1993; Hammersley 1992).

8   Critics like Clough (2009) and Denzin, for instance, two bellwethers of postmodernist sociology, fail even to consider critical realism as opposed to empiricism, which they equate with positivism.

9   So Bhaskar also calls his project "transcendental realism" to highlight its Kantian twist. Philosophy must assume the intelligibility of science and it asks the question what the world must be like for scientific practice to be possible" (1989: 9).

10 Steele writes, "By its focus upon noumena, as opposed to methods for interpreting phenomena, critical realism purports to avoid the problem of induction by bypassing epistemology in favor of ontology: "Nature's uniformity . . . derives not from the 'accidental' regularities of sequences of contingently related things but from the internal relations, structures and ways-of-acting of things themselves" (Sayer 1999: 158). Instead of regarding "events" as occurring in (observable) "conjunctions" whose lawlike repetition is epistemologically problematic, CR regards events as expressions of noumenal essences" (see Steele 2005).

11 Bhaskar (1989) lists three steps in scientific production: identification of a range of phenomenon, construction of a model to explain it and test it against reality, and identification of generative mechanism that works beneath the empirical.

12 A recent alternative is "culturalized social science" that emphasizes the performative side of research rather than uncovering the deep mechanism of social structure (Reed and Alexander, 2009). Against this "fashionable" tendency we must insist in the "obdurate" character of social structures. This alternative commits the culturalist version of the epistemic fallacy, i.e., reducing the question of ontology to cultural meanings.

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Novel or Novice: Exploring the Contextual Realities of Youth Political Participation in the Age of Social Media

Niel Niño Lim

Social media platforms, as emerging political spaces, have paved the way for the re-conceptualization of political engagement, especially among the youth. Their participatory character, particularly blogging, social networking and content sharing, has encouraged more people to be involved in political issues and has contributed to changing the mode of protest from streets to cyberspace. Studies, however, show a dearth of sociological inquiry on the social impacts of the Internet, particularly on political engagement. This paper discusses the contextual realities of political participation in the age of social media from a social perspective of the Internet and the information society, using online content analysis, in-depth interviews and participant observation. In particular, the qualitative exploratory approach of this study focuses on how the key social platforms of the Internet affect political participation and, in turn, shape social movements.

Keywords: political participation, social media, social movements, youth, social construction of technology, creative destruction

INTRODUCTION

In May 2009, a group of citizens took their advocacy against the tax and duty impositions on imported books in the Philippines to the Internet through Facebook, a social media platform which allows its users to network, post and share content and create and gather support for various causes online.

Prior to putting up the Facebook cause, advocates against the book tax have been ardent on forwarding their campaign in the mainstream media but only a few newspapers carried their message, more often in opinion columns than news reports. But within the same month, the Facebook cause which gathered more than 2,000 sign-ups online claimed victory as President Gloria Arroyo revoked Finance Department Order 17-09. Although the Internet, its social media platforms in particular, has already been used for protest on many occasions before, the antibook tax campaign was the first successful online advocacy, and what made it more remarkable was that it succeeded despite the absence of street protests.

In contrast, in June 2009, despite the overwhelming sign-ups on the Facebook cause against House Resolution 1109, which aimed to convene the two chambers of Congress as a Constitutional Assembly to amend the Philippine Constitution, the street protest which called people to action failed to gather critical mass. Crowd estimates ranged from a little over 5,000 according to policemen, to 10,000 according to a national daily, to 13,000 at most according to the organizers of the multisectoral rally held on a weekday, after working hours, in the middle of the country's central business district. It was the largest rally yet staged against moves to amend the Constitution in three years (Esguerra 2009), but the difference in number between the crowd estimates and those who joined online was apparent. At that time, close to 100,000 people had already signed-up for the Facebook cause against HR 1109.

Social networking platforms such as Facebook, Plurk and Twitter became popular in early 2008, coinciding with the exposé and investigation of a major corruption scandal involving the President, her family and several other cabinet and appointed officials, after opposition politicians alleged that the national broadband project dealt with a Chinese company was overpriced by $135 million. At the height of the scandal, Facebook groups, causes and posts and tweets on the issue spread like wildfire, particularly among the youth, encouraging increased participation in street protests organized by traditional social movements (TSM). Premium has since been put on online social media platforms, particularly blogs and social networking and content sharing sites, as tools of protest, notwithstanding the success of US President Barack Obama's online political campaign which not only gathered a mass of volunteers and donors but has encouraged the youth to get involved and vote. However, it was not until the success of the antibook tax campaign that online social movements (OSM) gained some validity as a social force.

Unfortunately, the rather dismal attendance during the rally against HR 1109 watered this down and continued to cast doubts on the effectivity of OSMs in achieving their goals or at the very least encourage active political participation, highlighting a challenge to veer away from an emerging new form of armchair activism.

This qualitative exploratory study is an attempt to present the dynamics of political participation in the age of social media given different contextual realities with a view of understanding the relation between these dynamics and the traditions and culture of protest, as well as identifying their implications and nuances.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Continuously evolving technologies as well as the changing approach of the public toward civic engagement, a social undercurrent, has redefined social movements and political participation (Rheingold 2002; Costanza-Chock 2008; Jenkins 2008), especially among the youth, who consider these technological advancements as demotic. In the context of the enduring tradition of social movements in the Philippines, such change becomes apparent as traditional approaches of civic sense are replaced with alternative expressions of civic virtues. If before young Filipinos were more likely to identify with and join organized groups with a set of ideals and express their concern through unconventional political actions, such as demonstrations and boycotts (Wattenberg 2008), the youth today are more likely to reject dogmatism, avoid commitment and express their indignation through rather conventional and convenient political actions, such as conversations, group discussions and volunteering. But this is not to say that the youth are becoming less concerned or are willing to stake less. In many ways, the social platforms of the Internet amplify these alternatives (conventional political actions) and reinforce and rationalize the view that political participation does not necessarily need to be inconvenient. Appropriately, considering a culture of protest and our long tradition of social struggles (our usual approaches being 'unconventional' for others), it is necessary to clarify, if not redefine, what social movements are and what political participation is to identify with which perspective to view the contextual realities of OSMs.

Social movements are purposive collective actions which an individual identifies with and draws (political) energies from and which outcome, in victory as in defeat, transforms the values and institutions of a society (Etzioni

1993; Castells 1997). Such a view allows us to look at social movements with a broader and more open perspective, without disputing the delineations between offline TSMs, such as civil society, nongovernment organizations, advocacy groups, political groups, spontaneous forms of mass actions and so on and being able to consider virtual communities (Rheingold 1993) and online cause-oriented groups (OSMs) as part of the category. On the other hand, political participation is an act of citizenship (Jenkins 2008) that connects an individual's views and concerns with that of the public's through active forms of engagement. This then considers intent as a fundamental determinant of one's action or non-action as a response to current situations and likewise allows for creativity both in matter and manner of expression.

CONTEXTUAL REALITIES OF ONLINE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Dispute continues on making sense of the implications of the Internet on society. There have been attempts to explore the social impacts of the Internet (Rheingold 1993, 2002; Castells 1996, 1997, 1998; Uslaner 2000; DiMaggio, Hargittai, Neuman, Robinson 2001; Kim 2007; Hassan 2008) but while some argue that its platforms and mobility has allowed for increased participation in socio-political issues, albeit in new forms and ways (Rheingold 2002; Jenkins 2008), others contend that it has desensitized civics, especially among the youth (Bauerlein 2008) and that its much proclaimed effects and gains on citizenship remains questionable (Garnham 2001).

However, the Internet's developing platforms and increasing popularity and necessity in many aspects of life has led to its inevitable appreciation. Its ability to encourage, foster and develop grassroots initiatives has attracted many TSMs to bring their cause to cyberspace. At the same time, a sense of social activism has bred itself among many Internet users, enough to develop OSMs. The mutual shaping of political participation and the Internet's social platforms, as well as their impact on social movements, may be well understood in view of three contextual realties with which members of these groups make sense of, namely: Internet as a New Technology, Internet as a New Medium and Internet as a New Space.

Internet as a New Technology

To date, Castell's (1996, 1997, 1998) work on the network society and the information age proposes the "most illuminating, imaginative and intellectually rigorous account" (Webster 2002) rationalizing the importance and impact of communication technologies on social life. He claimed that

novel and more efficient forms of communication and information storage and processing are stimuli that will drive economic, political, social and cultural changes. In particular, he envisioned that "political systems will evolve which will be responsive to the demands of a more informed population with easy access to a vast quantity of information, and less susceptible to traditional methods of persuasion" (Feather 2003). Certainly this still begs the question of whether OSMs reflect this evolution, but as far as being causative, it must be noted that Castell's view essentially echoes McLuhan's technological determinism.

Corrections to "the idea that technology affects society in a one-way relationship" have since been explored in sociology, but the popularity of deterministic thinking continues to affect how people respond to technology and innovations in their everyday life (Bell 2007). Deterministic thinking separates technology, as tools, from society. Tools, McLuhan (2007) argued, are extensions of man which in turn shape human existence. Such deterministic view was evident when radical left-leaning TSMs, considering Internet platforms as merely necessary "digital tools for digital times" (Pabico 1997), started building websites for propaganda. Pabico (1997) noted that "erstwhile technophobes of nearly Luddite proportions, *natdems* (national democrats) used to dismiss the Net as an imperialist tool to suit imperialist designs. Perhaps owing to a 'rectification' of sorts, they have now extended their belligerency status over to the Net..." With an agit-prop, top-down perspective to educate the public, they have, for a long time, struggled against the nature of the Internet; that it was designed to invite an open discussion among its users, as opposed to simply being a digital mimeograph. Such politburo approach remained fairly consequential until social media platforms, which exploit the participative quality of the Internet, became popular. In particular, blogging, which encouraged comments albeit with the option of screening, began to replace the appeal of static websites; correspondences which used to be privately done through electronic mail were increasingly being done in public, inviting other people, ideas and opinions.

Internet as a New Medium

Developing social media platforms have increased activity among Internet users, particularly in the Philippines. A global research on social media use shows that from 2006 to 2008, reading and posting blogs have increased most in the country. Despite a still low level of Internet penetration (figures range from less than 10 percent based on OpenNet Initiative (2009) to 15.4

percent based on UniversalMcCann (2008), blog readership, among those who have access, almost tripled from 33 percent in 2006 to 90 percent in 2008, while active Internet users posting blogs surged from 14 percent to 65 percent (UniversalMcCann 2008). Likewise, the Philippines posted the most number of users who have created an account in a social networking site, such as Friendster, MySpace and Facebook (83.1%), and is consistently part of the top five countries sharing and consuming other Internet content (photos, videos and podcasts) (UniversalMcCann 2008). These data show that while Internet penetration remains marginal, those who have access are increasingly exploiting the Internet as a new medium that facilitates multi-user and multi-modal forms of communication.

As the connectivity and mobility provided by the Internet increasingly becomes part of everyday routine, its use is reflected in the various aspects of social life, including expressions of protest. Indeed, technology use is essentially a form of resistance, a manner with which the way things are is challenged, that things could be done differently. The phenomenon of using the key social media platforms of the Internet for protest then does not only become a resistance to the status quo but also to the old forms of protesting against the status quo. Wattenberg (2008) noted that:

> "Young people are almost always in the forefront of new types of activities, and are typically more adventurous and open to novel ways of doing things. If there really is a new kind of political engagement, then it seems reasonable to hypothesize that young people would be among the first practitioners of new means of involvement in the political process."

Wattenberg (2008) classifies writing to public officials, donating to a campaign or cause and working for a campaign as conventional political actions, while he regards demonstrations and boycotts as unconventional. Jenkins (2008), on the other hand, contends that demonstrations and boycotts are not the only alternatives to what Wattenberg classified as conventional political actions. He argues that "crystallizing one's political perspectives into a photomontage that is intended for broader circulation is no less than an act of citizenship than writing a letter to the editor of a local newspaper that may or may not actually print it" (Jenkins 2008). In context, however, 'conventional' or the usual modes of political action in the Philippines would refer to street protests or activities which "object is not just to make opinions heard by those in power, but to actually change the status quo through means other than elections" (Wattenberg 2008) and this has been true for most TSMs

for decades and continues to be true today, albeit with dwindling participation. Unconventional modes of political participation then are those that strive to work "within the confines of the political establishment" (Wattenberg 2008), including joining OSMs, which harness the social media platforms of the Internet.

When the scandal over the national broadband project broke out early in 2008, TSMs exploited the then emerging social media platforms such as Facebook, Plurk and Twitter along with older ones like blogging and content sharing through YouTube to inform, agitate and encourage people to protest against corruption in government. At the same time, OSMs began emerging, initially through Facebook groups created mostly by individuals also involved in TSMs. Internet platforms were mainly used as media to rally the public, similar to how texting became instrumental in gathering people at EDSA in People Power Two. Blog entries, posts and tweets on the issue circulated, developed into online discussions and built enough excitement to translate the indignation of Internet users, particularly the youth, into active participation in street demonstrations. It was noticeable, however, that TSMs were struggling to reinvent street protests as they continued to experiment with different formats, including holding public concerts and silent rallies in lieu of the usual large political gatherings, which were characterized by a slew of banners, speeches and sloganeering; some even preferred holding group conversations and school forums. Excitement for street protests waned towards the end of the school year as students went on vacation but while the momentum was gone upon their return to school, protests online continued.

From being merely a tool and an alternative medium for many TSMs, the Internet increasingly began to become an essential component for emerging social movements, in particular, those formed by students and young professionals. Podcasting, webcasting or the digital distribution of recorded conversations and forums on issues became an imperative. Internet users have been re-imagining the traditional approaches of civic sense and replacing them with alternative expressions of civic virtues; a superficial transformation of indignation which accommodates convenience and consumption. Internet activity has become the mode of protest in itself. But because increased political participation through the Internet does not necessarily translate to involvement in demonstrations, much less to tangible changes in policy or government, TSMs had much discontent about it. This has particularly become a threat to the survival of radical groups as it rejects and emphasizes the

ineffectivity of mass actions and prefers changing the system through elections or institutional means.

Consumption has been traditionally regarded as opposite to citizen participation (Keum et al. 2004; Jenkins 2008). Critics from various fields contend that commercialized mass media has contributed to "the decline of civic culture", as its emphasis on personal needs consequently diminishes civic-mindedness by "creating an individualistic consumption-oriented culture" (Keum et al. 2004), the ideological opposition to (radical) TSMs. But in their study of citizen-consumer behavior, Keum et al. (2004), find that in the "social world," consumption does not necessarily oppose or diminish civics.

> "That is, consumer culture and civic culture both manifest themselves through integration into certain social roles and sets. From this perspective, it is easy to see how potentially conflicting forms of consumption are inter-related and tied to civic participation. To be clear, this study does not seek to defend or advocate a culture focused on status and materialism, nor one that requires the proper display of taste to enter into networks of engagement and social power. It does, however, seek to begin to clarify our understanding of the complex connections among these constructs and shed greater light on the role of the media in generating consumer and civic culture" (Keum et al. 2004).

These findings support Bakardjieva's (2005) revision of the argument of the social construction of technology that shaping the functions of technology does not only rely on the influence of "relevant social groups" (Bell 2007), but more importantly on ordinary users, the consumers. While many encourage grassroots participation, TSMs normally reject challenges to their framework, making political participation through the Internet and its platforms akin to Bakardjieva's correction – that the re/construction of social processes, as in protests, are shaped not only by the influence of relevant social groups (TSMs) but more so through the participation of ordinary individuals (Internet users forming OSMs).

The changing nature of protest and political participation, especially among the youth, who comprise a large majority of both the population and Internet users in the Philippines, are indicative of the "creative destruction" (Schumpeter 1950) of social movements, a likewise inevitable part of modernization where current chaos is rationalized by an imminent synthesis. Case in point is the blurring lines between TSMs and OSMs as TSMs go

online and OSMs form offline groups, albeit informally through meet-ups. But, notwithstanding the upcoming 2010 presidential elections, the most evident illustration of creative destruction is the recent rapid emergence and decline of many TSMs and OSMs. The Obama campaign's proof-of-concept for the viability of using the Internet to encourage political participation has undeniably excited the public to action both offline and online, but while many of these groups claim novelty, they are merely reinventing the wheel.

Internet as a New Space

Views that the Internet is the new "public sphere" (Habermas 1999) or that it has commodified the public sphere have been explored from different perspectives by social scientists, even before the emergence of social media platforms (Rheingold 1993). However, it was not until their introduction, which allowed for increased participation, interaction, convergence and, later on, mobility on and through the Internet, that the idea became more apparent. This has been particularly noticeable in 'wired countries' or countries where Internet penetration is high.

The notion that the public sphere is an amorphous network where people, ideas and opinions convene without coercion is realized to a certain extent in wired countries. This assumes, however, the absence of Internet censorship or laws that dissuade freedom of expression. But in a recent survey of OpenNet Initiative (2009), wired countries appear to have at least suspected levels of social or political filtering, while countries with lower levels of Internet penetration, as the Philippines, appear to be the freest, with no evidence of any censorship. This suggests that, generally, as the Internet is exploited as a medium so much so that users begin to create an alternative, communicative and political space, governments tend to regulate its development; effectively, such reaction impacts dissent online, particularly the growth of OSMs. Case in point is South Korea, the most wired country with 90 percent of its households having access to the Internet, where the Korean Communications Standards Commission started to police online content since 2008, after protests and debate on the Internet drove President Lee Myung Bak's entire cabinet to resign over his decision to lift the ban on importing US beef (OpenNet Initiative 2009). But while online censorship does impinge on freedom of expression, it does not necessarily diminish dissent, as in the case of other wired countries like Malaysia and Singapore (George 2006) and even Kuwait (Dashti 2009), where blogging thrives and is increasingly being accepted as a nontraditional form of journalism. Interestingly, the audience

of these blogs and posts as well as the public conversation it created online has developed a constituency which has sociopolitical impact (George 2006; Dashti 2009), akin to the idea of OSMs. Accordingly then, Castell's vision that in the information age, an evolved political system would be more responsive to the demands of an informed population merits a review.

While the impact of OSMs on policy makers has been marginal, its impact on the public has been enormous so much so that confidence in the potential of the Internet has only created a *virtuous cycle of credence* and this appears to be true despite levels of censorship (George 2006; Dashti 2009). In wired countries, the creation of OSMs appear to be organic to the Internet, that is, despite the absence of TSMs, constituencies are able to build on ideas and opinions posted online, although without assurance of formal organization. In contrast, there has not been any case to argue that this is true for countries with lower levels of Internet penetration. On the one hand, this suggests that the contextual realities of the Internet are evolutionary, which develops as the level of access increases; on the other, it also suggests that the contextual realities of the Internet are a function of prevailing social realities, noting the absence or at least the waned tradition of mass political actions in most wired countries, and that despite increases on the level of access will be constant as long as such realities remain unchanged.

FROM CONSUMERS TO CITIZENS

The social transitions brought about by the Internet are similar to the changes that the pervasiveness of television has brought before (particularly as a new technology and a new medium). The difference, however, is that because the Internet and its social media platforms allow for increased (faster and more direct) participation from the audience, a characteristic unique to it, and in effect for grassroots initiatives in the context of social movements, the transitions have become a concern for TSMs, particularly in the Philippines where a robust tradition of civic engagement and political participation has taken root and has developed a formula of protest. For instance, social media platforms have given the option for people to become 'passively active' online though hyperlinking or content sharing; such passive activity allows for the expression of opinions of the inarticulate who would otherwise be disengaged if not for their Internet access. Amid the chaos of transition, however, the effect of OSMs on the public seem to be more significant than their actual impact on policy makers as the virtuous cycle of credence, along with cases of successful OSMs or the remarkable use of social media platforms for

indignation, as in the case of the recent protests in Iran, continue to build the validity of political participation through the Internet.

As shown by how Internet usage has shaped political engagement in wired communities (Rheingold 1993; Jenkins 2008) and countries (George 2006; Kim 2007; Hassan 2008; Dashti 2009; OpenNet Initiative 2009), the future towards the construction of a new space online also appears to be certain. This, however, underscores the importance of at least an informed, if not an 'educated,' public. But while such space is expected to develop among less wired countries as Internet access and connectivity increases, there are several caveats. First, information overload would be apparent. Because social media platforms are essentially storages of content, Internet users are required to 'pull' from a wide array of information, not to mention opinions, made available on rapid succession and a public less 'educated' can be easily confused or be driven by propaganda. Misinformation is also likely to happen, as in the case of the reported death of American actor Jeff Goldblum on Twitter. On June 2009, 'delicioushair' tweeted that Goldblum died in New Zealand, after falling on the set of his new movie. The tweet spread fast on other social media platforms, as well as Google and other websites, and was eventually reported on Today Australia, a local morning news show, where police reports confirmed the incident. The television footage was, likewise, quickly uploaded on the content sharing site YouTube. When the news reached the US, Goldblum appeared on television to falsify the rumor and denied that he was in New Zealand on the weekend of his reported death. The complacency to accept such information as fact, especially on the part of the mainstream media which disregarded a journalistic maxim to verify rumors, highlights an adverse effect of the virtuous cycle of credence on the Internet, as people begin to respond reactively to new information and seemingly opposes the objectives of a public sphere.

Third is the cult of celebrity. Unlike in other forms of mass media, however, cults of celebrity on the Internet tend to be more defined than mass and its audiences are more likely to sustain interest, as a result of narrowcasting and owing to the pull content nature of social media platforms. While there are instances, particularly in YouTube, where a cult becomes mass, this usually happens when such content is able to crossover to traditional mass media and this is further nuanced by a convergence of media technologies (Jenkins 2008), which likewise allow for 'alternative,' multimodal content to thrive both online and in other mass medium. Case in point of such cult behavior is the success of the "Colbert Report," an American news parody shown both

on cable television and online through its website (where, also because of its popularity, Goldblum first made an appearance to falsify rumors of his death). Steven Colbert, comedian and host of the program, has gathered numerous and committed fans locally that it catapulted him in the early stages of the 2008 Democratic primaries, as a nominee.

But the most precarious, in context of a new space, is homogeneity, though it is not so much an effect of the Internet as it is a reflection of socio-cultural reality. Even as it may provide anonymity to its users, encouraging bolder behavior, language and opinions, the public appreciates the Internet as part of a larger media environment – an environment which, on the whole, is prone to reinforce certain social controls and these reflect online. Forms of censorship, which by trend develop as countries get wired, likewise contributes to homogeneity. South Korea's case is evident of both situations. In 2005, when a girl who allowed her dog to defecate on the subway and later refused to clean it up was caught on video, which was later shared on the Internet, indignant users traced and publicly exposed her. She was ridiculed as the "dog poop girl" and the humiliation drove her to quit university (Kim 2007; OpenNet Initiative 2009). Kim (2007) also noted a 'spiral of invisibility' in the South Korean blogosphere, where bloggers posting favorable remarks about the US and Japan are mobbed by angry comments from other Korean bloggers, forcing them to remain anonymous. Partly driven by such "online vigilantism," South Korea has legislated real-name registration as a requirement for any user to post a comment on blogs and public forums (OpenNet Initiative 2009). While this appears to be a proactive response to such social incidences, it has also impeded on freedom of expression, as in the cases of censorship and arrests of bloggers who were vocal, negatively and favorably, of some presidential candidates in the 2007 elections (Sung 2007).

While these caveats have lesser emphasis on OSMs, they highlight the dynamics of engaging a public of consumers to becoming a public of citizens, making the issue of a new space primordially on quality than on quantity or structure. Seemingly opposite is the case of the Philippines today where, because of traditional (unconventional in Wattenberg's classification) frames, groupings, numbers and personalities, remain to be the focus of impact of social movements. Social media platforms have undeniably paved the way for the reconceptualization of political participation in social movements, especially among the youth. Their participatory character has and continues to encourage more people to engage political issues and at the same time

contributes to changing the mode of protest from streets to cyberspace. At the very least, it has become a political barometer and an entry point for concerned and interested people but who would otherwise not join social movements.

In characterizing Asian protests, Lee (2002) described the middle class as "the main locomotive of democratization," citing in particular the opposition to former President Ferdinand Marcos led by the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections, which resulted in People Power One. The influence of the middle class is a prevailing social reality in the Philippines that despite the decades-long tradition of left-leaning TSMs, the success or failure of protests have been rather dependent on their opinion and action or non-action. People Power Two was likewise successful because of the middle class, which then exploited text messaging to gather their ranks. But between the two People Powers, both of which successful and TSM-driven, the middle class has disengaged from politics (Villegas 2009). Villegas (2009) qualified that Filipino middle classness is ascetic and should be viewed as a permeable social class that is not so much defined by income or educational attainment, but by a set of values which allows "entry points into middle-classness that transcend being rich or poor, and as such, disarm the Manichean class divide..." This characteristic complements the Internet's inclusive nature. Likewise, conceptualizing the Filipino middle class this way suggests two things in relation to its contextual realities – first, the 'digital divide' or the marginalization of those who do not have access to the Internet may not necessarily be relevant; and second, that the convergence of people, ideas and opinion towards middle classness, in effect, creates a homogenous public, as opposed to Habermas' (1999) view that diversity and debate characterize a public. Internet access in the Philippines is nuanced because of the popularity and practicality of Internet cafés but plurality on the Internet does not necessarily translate to diversity. That the opinion of a value-based middle class dominates and invites other people of different economic and education profiles to converge on an inclusive, participatory platform and level off with a compromised view also suggests that a new space will most likely be an online version of the existing social framework, a case indicative of Althusser's concept of 'conditioned helplessness.'

The difference between the success of the OSM against the book tax and the failure of the rally against HR 1109 to gather enough numbers, despite the overwhelming sign-ups on the OSM against it, offer a stark snapshot of the creative destruction social movements are experiencing in the age of

social media, particularly in terms of political participation. But other factors merit consideration in evaluating them, such as their difference in magnitude. Notwithstanding the upcoming 2010 elections, the government giving in to public pressure to revoke Finance Department Order 17-09 constituted merely an attempt to win public affirmation especially when compared with how it has rejected calls to abandon charter change through Constituent Assembly. The explicit call of the Facebook cause against HR 1109 should also be noted—condemn the representatives who filed the bill; write to your representative to condemn the bill; write to Senators, seeking support in condemning the bill; spread the cause to family, relatives, friends and colleagues nationwide and abroad; organize and attend local "eyeball events"; and remember the proponents of the bill and vote them out of office on May 2010—that it meant to encourage what Wattenberg (2008) defines as conventional political actions, as opposed to the rather traditional ways of organized protest. Moreover, the online participation of overseas Filipinos should be taken into account.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

What seems to be clear, then, is that social media platforms have enhanced political participation and that the creative destruction of social movements, an aspect of modernity, is inevitable as Internet connectivity increases and its use becomes more and more indispensable. Social movements that continue to view the Internet as a tool then are being left behind and their inability to appreciate it both as a new medium and new mode of dissent only widens the gap between them and others which embrace and exploit its potentials.

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Intertextuality and the Sociology of Religion: Amazing Sociological Contexts as Text

Eduardo Domingo

Born from concrete historical-cultural contexts, sociological paradigms have not only influenced the subject of interests of researchers but their tools and methods of inquiry as well. Hence the contexts of the sociology of Weber, Durkheim, Marx and other sociologists have also become the texts of the sociology of religion and of the studies of their respective followers. Un/consciously, however, practitioners and researchers have been im/properly appropriating these paradigms in different and/or new contexts.

Using intertextuality as key concept, this paper illustrates the importance of considering the contexts of sociological assumptions and paradigms in current studies. The new and changing conditions demand a reading not only of the new contexts for sociology but also a re-reading of the contexts of the sociological paradigms we use . Re-reading these contexts as texts to be appropriated, researchers are given a better and wider perspective to make the sociology of religion not only meaningful and appropriate but truly relevant.

Keywords: intertextuality, religion, animism

INTRODUCTION

Contexts color not only the subject matter of sociology. Language restrictions, relationship of the observer and the observed, political and religious contexts, among others, shape the sociology of religion. Concretely, historical-cultural contexts influence sociological paradigms, the subject of interests of researchers, their tools and their methods of inquiry as well. At

times, un/consciously, practitioners and researchers im/properly appropriate the contexts of the sociology of Weber, Durkheim, Marx and others in different and/or new contexts.[1] Hence, sociology of religion can not overlook the contexts they come from and are heading to.

Sociology of religion must look into contexts. Texts can not simply be transported and applied to new/different contexts.[2] Without proper reading and understanding of contexts, misappropriation of texts and sociological paradigms become inevitable. Sociology must therefore read historical events, intellectual currents, cultural shifts, and political contexts as texts to bring new light to the understanding and application of religion.[3]

Sociology of religion is rooted upon specific assumptions that necessitate the understanding of contexts. Taken out of contexts, theoretical assumptions may only lead to misapplications of theories. Thus, Davie cautions the misapplication of the secularization assumption 'that secularization (within the European experience of secularization) would necessarily accompany modernization wherever and whenever the latter occurred' to different/new Southeast Asian contexts. Taken and almost applied as a norm, this theoretical assumption is becoming a 'critical agenda' for today's sociology of religion.[4] Alatas also warns of 'errors' in the specific application of Weber's orientalist constructions and theory on capitalism to the Southeast Asian area.[5]

Individually or as community, readers create meanings or interpretations to texts. Hence, contemporary sociology of religion must not only recognize but also read these new/different contexts of religion. There may even be a need for sociology to differentiate the new contexts from the conventional frameworks. As processes are fast becoming new contexts, contextual reflections and experiences are transforming the sociology of religion.[6] For instance, the impact of the major religions, which secularization has previously belittled, is now emerging as a new context for sociology.[7]

These concrete cases of in/appropriate textual readings of historical-cultural contexts of the sociology of religion and their application to new contexts as texts indicate the need for intertextuality. Using intertextuality as key concept, this paper illustrates the importance of considering the contexts of sociology of religion in current studies. New and changing conditions demand a reading not only of the new contexts for sociology but also a re-reading of the contexts of the sociological paradigms we use. Re-reading these contexts as texts to be appropriated, researchers are given a better and wider perspective to make the sociology of religion not only meaningful but truly relevant.

INTERTEXTUALITY

Generally understood as the shaping of the meanings of texts' by other texts, Orr describes intertextuality as a catch-all word that deals with contexts, cultures, periods, theories and frameworks. Carried out in the reader's reading, intertextuality refers to the history of a prior text and how it is transformed. It is the complex relationship between a text and other texts taken as basic to the creation or interpretation of the text.

As introduced by Julia Kristeva, the theory of intertextuality assumes that texts need contexts and that the meaning found in the texts are based on presuppositions. Since texts are conditioned by contexts for possible meanings, intertextuality will involve a 'double-voiced critical dialogue' between two axes: the vertical (connecting the texts to contexts, Figure 1) and the horizontal (connecting the author/context and the reader/context of the text, Figure 2). Involving mediation and critical dialogue, intertextuality leads towards the transformation of meaning where, at times, contexts become texts or texts become contexts, too.[8]

This paper focuses on illustrating the importance of vertical dialogue in intertextuality, i.e. the relation of the texts of the sociology of religion to their contexts, and the horizontal dialogue of intertextuality, i.e. the new contexts we are facing that demand new frameworks or paradigms and how these have become new texts for the sociology of religion. The case of animism in the Philippines will be given attention.
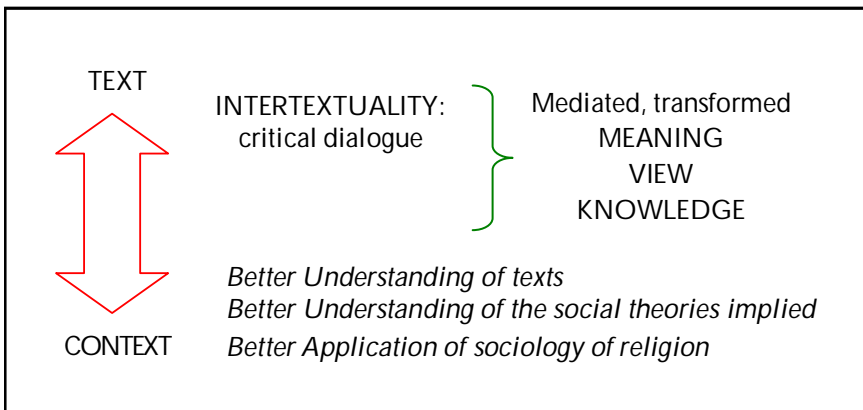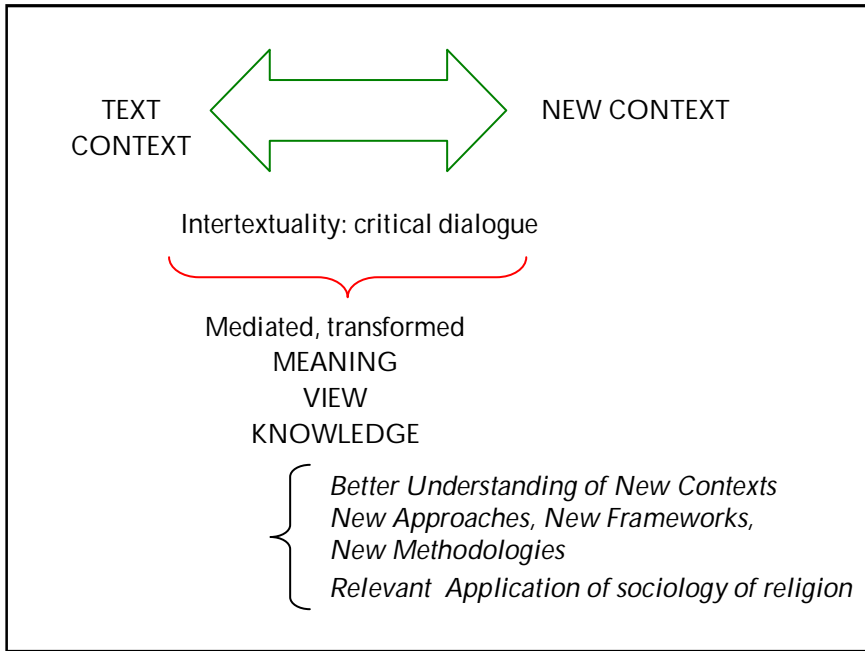
FIGURE 1 VERTICAL INTERTEXTUALITY

TEXT

INTERTEXTUALITY:
critical dialogue

Mediated, transformed
MEANING
VIEW
KNOWLEDGE

Better Understanding of texts
Better Understanding of the social theories implied
Better Application of sociology of religion

CONTEXT

FIGURE 2   HORIZONTAL INTERTEXTUALITY

TEXT   NEW CONTEXT
CONTEXT

Intertextuality: critical dialogue

Mediated, transformed
MEANING
VIEW
KNOWLEDGE

Better Understanding of New Contexts
New Approaches, New Frameworks,
New Methodologies
Relevant Application of sociology of religion

Vertical Dialogue in Intertextuality: Contexts as Texts
for the Sociology of Religion

Texts need contexts. Culture, in particular, provides the contexts within
which texts are to be understood. Without an informed context, a text could
be given many/different meanings. Contexts, therefore, can shed light on the
proper understanding of texts.

Texts communicate the embodiment of the contexts of the writer, their
preconceptions and their cultural –historical paradigm. It is in these historical
realities where the reciprocal and critical interaction of texts and contexts
take place. Thus, the very language of the texts carries their concrete culture
and becomes pivotal to the understanding of sociology. After all, language
not only reflects what people think, but also the way people think.[9]

Reading contexts as texts

Political and religious contexts, among others, shape the texts of sociology
of religion. Thus, to understand better the texts and the social theories implied

by these texts, one needs to read their contexts as texts. For instance, the reading of the texts of Hellenization or Romanization as a Universal Culture could confuse one to the seemingly contradictory characteristics of cosmopolitanism and individualism. Reading their contexts at the different periods of history, however, gives clues to the better understanding of this seeming contradiction: recognizing two distinct Hellenistic contexts, i.e. the period of Greek dominance and oriental submersion and the period of reaction of the east.[10]

Contexts as texts for sociology of religion

Sociology of religion may come from different contexts, perspectives and paradigms. Hence, reading the contexts of sociology of religion as texts can help better understand the very texts of sociology as projection or alienation (Feuerbach), as opium of the people (Marx), or psychological immaturity (Freud) among others.[11] Stackhouse also mentions other prominent contexts that are slowly becoming texts for the sociology of religion:

1. those who reject the very idea that religion could be an important factor in social history,

2. those who view religion as the by product of psychological needs or social forces,

3. those who take nonreligious, anti-theological, amoral social theories as definitive,

4. those who have high contempt for modern culture and western culture as without trace of authentic morals or spirituality.[12]

Contexts' paradigms, interpretation and methods

Different contexts of sociological theories may necessitate different attitudes, models and sources to measure research. Recent researches show that contexts should not be overlooked but be read accordingly. Misheva, Kankaras and Moors maintain that theories of sociology of religion can not be properly understood outside their sociological climate and their social and psychological contexts. Cresswell even identifies the contexts of paradigms or worldviews that have corresponding implications to the interpretation of research problems and to the methods to be used. Hence, because of different contexts, Davie warns that European theories should not be appropriated or should not be wrongly applied to Asian and other countries.[13]

Inter-Multi Disciplinary Studies of Contexts

Sociology, anthropology, political science, history and religious studies may indeed help attain a comprehensive contextual analysis of texts. Understanding contexts can in fact widen our interpretation and understanding of texts. Moreover, Inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary studies may even enlighten the re-reading of contexts to widen our interpretation and our understanding of texts.[14]

We have seen in the preceding discussions how vertical intertextuality enlightens the proper understanding not only of the texts but also of the contexts of sociology of religion, their frameworks, their social theories, their limitations, their proper appropriation and applications. It has also made us aware that contexts and texts of sociology of religion are being transformed as new texts for sociology. All these perhaps suggest different models, approaches and methods for the sociology of religion.

Horizontal Dialogue in Intertextuality: New Contexts as
Texts for the Sociology of Religion

Proper reading and understanding of new contexts of religion are important in sociology. In fact, new contexts imply new assumptions, methodologies and/or approaches to the sociology of religion. For instance, the traditional study of popular religion may need a different approach or method because of new contexts: what is popular to the masses, what people simply do, or in contrast to dominant cultures.[15]

Among the emerging contexts that sociology of religion may have to consider are:

1. the globalization phenomena,

2. new political and economic contexts,

3. The impact of the new communications and travel, and

4. The growing and deepening relationship of sociology with other disciplines: interdisciplinary and multi disciplinary approaches.[16]

The globalization phenomenon

Until recently, except for a few, sociological work in the field of globalization did not pay attention to religion at all. Working within the global perspective, however, Robertson observes not only the transformation of new contexts but the centrality of religion...that "globalization is not a

unidimensional, but multidimensional and multi- centered historical development within which religion has a central place."[17] Hence, the global perspective is transforming the study of religion, too.

Though initially seen and generally understood as an economic or business activity, globalization has been evolving and has been developing its own socio-political categories, communication-language patterns, and value systems.[18] Recognizing such complexities and multidisciplinary realities, sociology of religion may consider either its heterogenizing or homogenizing tendencies as new contexts and texts.[19]

The interplay of globalization, culture, religion and ethnicity are also transforming new contexts for sociology of religion. For as globalization comes in contact with religion and identity, deeply held beliefs and identities are challenged. Traditions and religion become blurred. Religion or ethnicity may become the elementary core to which people could withstand assaults on their beliefs.[20] And religion in itself may be an aspect of the global forces that sociology of religion has to reckon with.[21] These new contexts may demand new paradigms, new approaches, and new methods for research. Such complexities become new challenges for the sociology of religion.

New political and economic contexts

Contemporary religions are formed by post colonialism, multiculturalism, globalization, nationalism, ethnicity and transnationalism. While cultural contexts provide a worldview to see and understand the world, religious contexts shape their economics and politics, too.[22] Sociology of religion must therefore see the new economic and political contexts resulting from these.

Culture and cultural differences are crucial factors to understand religion as well. While economics may be intrinsically viewed as a value-empty discipline, cultural approaches to economics imply moral entities and values. Different contexts of 'capitalism,' with their political and economic implications, depend on their geographical and cultural roots.[23] Sociology, therefore, can not escape these parameters of particularities. It can not but read the religious implications of the cultural, economic and political contexts as new texts for the sociology of religion.

The impact of new communications and travel

The vast and instantaneous information technology also invites sociology of religion to think globally and to think differently about religion itself. The

'new' contexts of the power and influence of information technology to religion, cultures and identities are transforming the relationship of sociology and its cognate disciplines.[24]

Transnationalism or the movement of people across the globe for permanent or temporary settlement or travel is also shaping the sociology of religion. As transnational individuals and communities with different cultures and religions in diaspora experience complex situations, the study of religion may require sociology to explore a variety of methodologies, include the study of texts, and the study of contexts of societies, history and cultures. Hence, hybridity, multiculturalism, integration, fundamentalism, pluralism and traditionalization are only some of the new contexts for the sociology of religion.[25]

Relationship of sociology with other disciplines

The recent development of the sciences have led to a relativistic, holistic, transformative and dynamic revolution. Theories of complimentarity, uncertainty, catastrophe, chaos, and dissipative structures, all require the combination of alternative viewpoints. This demand multi/inter-disciplinary approaches. This can also be said of the new and changing conditions of sociology of religion.

For instance, religion, as a right, may require contextual analysis to clarify its constitutional understanding as an individual right from its collective right. Sociological materials may demand the collaborative work of legal texts to reveal the implicit presumptions and prejudices of the law.[26] Contemporary intercultural and interreligious contexts are also emerging as new texts for sociology.[27]

Indeed, horizontal intertextuality challenges sociology of religion to the possibilities of doing new areas of inquiry, of generating new ways of thinking, and even of formulating radically different sociological canons.[28] Intertextuality transforms sociology of religion to become truly meaningful and relevant.

INTERTEXTUALITY AND ANIMISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

Discussing religion, today, is a complex, multidisciplinary and inter-disciplinary task. In fact, culture, identity and religion are related in many different ways. For one, religion can be imprinted or intertwined with culture. Conversely, culture can grow out of a particular religion. Secondly, while the notion of culture implies identity,[29] religion can also become a directing

dimension of culture and identity.[30] These complex links and inter-relationships of culture, religion and ethnicity only show the many and different contexts from which religion/animism can be viewed. Animism as a religion may/must therefore be understood and studied in its diverse and multiple cultural context/s as it exists in its concrete cultural settings.[31] Intertextuality may therefore help us understand these different contexts and realities of animism particularly in the Philippines.

On the Meaning and Understanding of Animism

The intercultural process, i.e. the reciprocal and critical interaction of the various elements of culture and religion take place in a concrete historical period. The contexts of the upland and the lowland, the agriculture and seaculture, and the different geographical locations in the Philippines can become new texts for the understanding of animism.[32] Because of these different contexts of animism, vertical and horizontal intertextuality may play a crucial role in the understanding of the different historical and cultural contexts of animism and the various meanings of animism itself.

The Meaning of Animism and Vertical Intertextuality

In history, Filipinos have been denounced and demeaned as diabolical because their animism has been associated with magic, irreligion, and worship of spirits.[33] Their description as 'animistic' can be found in history books and other studies.[34] Vertical intertextuality, i.e. understanding the historical-cultural contexts of animism, may enlighten not only the historical records but our very understanding of animism itself.

De La Costa retraces the historical-cultural contexts of the language used in understanding animism by studying the historical contexts of the early missionaries' culture. Identifying their language as belonging to the 16th and 17th century Counter Reformation culture or the Age of the Baroque, he warns the cultural preconceptions imbedded in understanding animism. De Mesa and Maynigo also expressed similar concerns on the Missionaries' 'classical paradigm:' an attitude where western civilization is considered as superior and the Only culture. With such assumptions, Mercado therefore recognizes the cultural prejudice of this language, i.e. the imposition of western norms and categories when judging religious phenomenon such as in the case of animism. And Schumacher suggests that historians make allowances for misinterpretations on the very language found in historical

records due to language and cultural problems. De Mesa, therefore, calls for more understanding.[35]

Re-reading animism in historical contexts should therefore make us understand that simply transporting the preconceptions and biased understanding on animism to new researches and new contexts will surely be detrimental. There is the need for sociology to re-read the contexts of the meaning of animism in the different periods of history as new texts. Hence, vertical intertextuality in the study of animism is relevant for the sociology of religion.

New contexts and texts of animism: Horizontal intertextuality

For over a hundred years, scholars have been using 'animism,' with its negative connotations, to contrast the early religions with the more formal scripture based religions like Christianity. The shift, however, in the understanding of culture and religion led to a re-thinking.[36] While the western claim to cultural supremacy began to wane, a new context was arising: indigenous cultures striving for recognition, self- definition and assertion. Cultures were not only being recognized but were being accepted and respected simply as different life ways...

> "When we speak of animism, many of us immediately think of primitive people. The word 'animism' carries with it for many hearers a concept of ignorance and superstition which could be confronted and easily destroyed by education and Christianity.

This is simply not the case...animism is not ignorant and superstitious, but a different way in which people explain the world around them. Its strength lies in its emphasis on the everyday concerns of people."[37]

As the ideology that there is only one culture was discarded, different perceptions on reality, life, the world and religion were being heard. Animism, therefore, was slowly being understood more as a different way of viewing the world and relating to the spirits.[38] Recent writings indeed depart from this new cultural context of 'animism.' Mercado, Tesoro and Jose and even the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines view animism as neutral, a worldview and simply a peculiar way to live and to relate to spirits.[39] Hence, the importance and the need for horizontal intertextuality.[40]

This new context of understanding animism indeed leaves room for horizontal intertextuality. And the study of religion in the Philippines should consider other contexts of the meaning of animism: as a worldview, a spirituality, an indigenous religion, and/or as fusion with Christianity/Islam.

Animism in the Contexts of Popular Religion

Surely the syncretism and fusion of animism with Christianity/ Islam and other religions in the Philippines have their distinctive character and variations. As animism reacts to the eight major ethno-linguistic groups that include the Christians, Muslims and other religions in the Philippines, sociology of religion must recognize the distinctive contexts of animism as characterized by particular geographical locations, by socio-economic contexts, by different cultural and by different cultural-political-religious identities.[41] While some may see these new contexts of animism independently, others see their links or the dynamic fusion of the different contexts. All these may demand vertical and horizontal intertextuality for the sociology of religion.

Animism in Philippine folk religions

Although Christianity comprises 90 percent and Islam 5-7 percent of the population in the Philippines, peoplegroups.org describes the religion of the Philippines as basically animistic that persists despite its fusion with other religions.[42]

Folk Islam in the Philippines

The encounter of the animism of the pre-Hispanic Filipinos with Islam did little to change their worldview and manner of relating with the divine. The result was a syncretistic form where external trappings of Islam were superimposed on the original pattern of their animistic pre-Christian beliefs and rituals. A kind of accommodation process took place between these divergent belief systems of the pre-Hispanic Filipinos with the Muslim beliefs or practices. Known also as folk religion, folk spirituality or folk Islam, the outcome was the continuation of the pre-Islamic animistic beliefs despite Islamization.[43]

In his article "Snapshots of Everyday Life in a Muslim Community," Watanabe observed the difficulty of separating animism with that of the Muslim-customs. Studying a Muslim community right in the heart of Metropolitan Manila, he narrated how people continue with folk Islam. He took the case of a Tausug woman who went to a hospital for an X-Ray and check up. Eventually, she went to Abu Panday, a diviner. She told her that a *djin* (spirit) had a grudge against her and a spirit was making her ill. Abu Panday told the woman to make an offering to the spirit and bathe while chanting a *bismillah* (a prayer) to purify her body. Her illness gradually went away. Having observed other cases, Watanabe thus noted how "such 'un-

Islamic' practices are imbedded in their culture."[44] Surely, the study of animism in the Philippines will have to take folk Islam as one among the many contexts for sociology.

Folk Christianity in the Philippines

The domination of Christianity may have had its effects on the animism of the pre-Hispanic inhabitants of the Philippines, too. But animism persisted and the fusion or integration of animism with that of the dominating Hispanic Christian culture resulted in folk Catholicism or folk Christianity. William Taft, an American Administrator during the American Period in the Philippines, thus describes: "The Filipinos...have taken from Catholicism what is suited to their Oriental temperament. They have taken the form rather than the substance: they love, after all, the beautiful ceremonies, the pilgrimages, the pomp and the music of the grand fiestas..."[45] Hence Rodney Henry, a protestant minister also describes it "as the fusion of two separate thought and behavior systems and the coexistence of the two religions in the same person without inconsistencies."[46]

Hornedo's book, *The Favor of the Gods: Essays in Filipino Religious Thought and Behavior*, is equally revealing. Documenting 21 cases of christianized Ivatans (a group from the Northern part of the Philippines) who gave up their indigenous names and had diverse experiences with different forms of the *anitus* or spirits, he illustrates the fusion and persistence of animism with Christianity and describes it as..." The basic values and institutional practices of their ancestors have persisted...this persistence is evident in the contemporary Ivatan's belief in the anitus — a belief that is a living tradition that grows by assimilating new elements each time it comes into contact with a new culture."[47] Surely, a study on animism must seriously consider folk christianity in the Philippines as another context for the sociology of religion.

Philippine folk religions: Re-expressions of animism

Rooted in the indigenous religion and culture of the people, Philippine folk religions have blended with the dominating cultures. Basically a continuation of the traditional beliefs of the people, folk religions understood and expressed the dominant cultures, like Islam and Christianity, in the forms and manner of their animistic indigenous culture.[48] Despite the external trappings and the upper stratum cultural influence of the dominating cultures, the people instinctively behave with the substratum of their animistic indigenous culture.[49]

The fusion of the dominant culture with the animism of the Filipinos is noteworthy. For instance, Juan Francisco noted how some Muslims near the lake area continue to blend their traditional animistic beliefs with Islam. In one of their rituals, after reciting the Islamic prayer that makes references to Allah, the Maranaw farmer interspersely recites animistic indigenous prayers making references to various spirits and deities. He also observed similar rituals of Muslims in the Magindanaw area in Mindanao, Southern Philippines.[50]

In Cebu, South Philippines, studies were also done related to corn, camote, and tobacco planting. In spite of the recital of Christian prayers, offering practices related to the spirits were done.[51] Similar observations were also evident in the East Visayan Islands of Southern Philippines. In these places, the older form of animistic rituals related to rice were Christianized. Although the ancient elements were still noticeable, the latter was given a new meaning. In some cases, the invocation to the anitos or spirits of their ancestors and other spirits were omitted; the amulets, charms and other symbols, however, now became their symbolic expressions directed to God. In other instances, even in the Christian rituals, the farmers still attributed to the charms themselves the power of giving the rice these qualities. Hence, together with the plants or herbs that they believe would bring the desired qualities for their rice, christian prayers like the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory were recited in honor of the Blessed Virgin, San Isidro, and the patron saint of the parish.[52]

In the province of Pampanga, Cental Luzon, Philippines, Robby Tantingco has documented eight unique Kapampangan folk festivals that have christian yet animistic or indigenous origins: *Lubenas, Ligligan Parul, Aguman Sensi, Kuraldal, Batalla, Libad, Sabat Santacruzan* and *Mal A Aldo.* He describes them as 'hodge-podge of christian and animistic indigenous elements so fused so that it is impossible to tell one from the other.' His comments on the *Libad* or Fluvial Procession among the river networks of the province, only re-enforces what we have discussed all along…

"Kapampangans used to celebrate *Bayung Danum* (new water), the early floods of the season, which may have been the pre-Hispanic equivalent of new year. The Spanish friars probably Christianized this pagan practice by introducing saints like St. Peter and St. John the Baptist, whose feast days in June coincide with the ancient holidays"[53] In the study of religion, Philippine folk religions as re-expressions of animism are thus possible contexts and texts for the sociology of religion.

Philippine animism as expressions of identity

The various manifestations or forms of folk religions in different places in the Philippines do not only indicate the fusion of the animistic elements with the dominating cultures.[54] These also show the capacity of folk religions to assert themselves culturally and to self identity.[55]

In her study of Beraperangan, a popular Islamic story of Maranaos, Japanese scholar Kawashima Midori observes and documents clearly how the Islamic and Christian elements were interwoven into the native stories to make it relevant to their prevailing conditions. Supposed to encourage people to fight bravely against foreign aggressors without fear and death, the versions of the Beraperangan story were again narrated in 1969-1972. Adapting them to the social and political surrounding of the Philippine Muslim society during the said period, accommodation became an excellent means to foster the teachings of Islam.[56]

In a similar study on the *Pasyon*, a form of poetic literature used in commemoration of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, Aligan saw the creativity and ingenuity on the way Aquino de Belen, the author, assimilated the christian message into the local culture. Aligan comments that by selective assimilation of Christian tradition, the author remained faithful to the traditional teaching of the Church. Yet by inserting the christian elements into the existing local folk poetry, imagination and idiom, he proved the creativity, ingenuity and capability of local culture expressing these in a truly Filipino context and thus re-expressing their local identity, too.[57]

In the Philippines, festivals or fiestas are also rooted in the indigenous and animistic cultures/religions. Although the fusion particularly of animism with Christianity is evident in the fiestas, Reinhard Wendt notes that these were not only instruments of cultural imperialism. Philippine fiestas were also opportunities and occasions of resistance and self determination for the Filipinos. In his study, he illustrates how the indigenous population present the fiestas as means to assert themselves culturally. While imported attributes commingled with the native, the indigenous population continue their own worldviews and belief system with new forms. They adapt the festival calendar to their local climatic conditions to suit their own needs. Gradually, Filipinos appropriate formerly foreign cultural elements, make them their own and turn them into mass rallies in support of the new order.[58]

Today, animism as expressions of identity or ethnicity are seen in their persistence disguised with the clothing of the dominant Filipino animistic

culture. And these have even taken different forms of expressions and re-expressions. Tantingco, for instance, observed in Pampanga the inclusion of their animistic traditions in the yearly celebrations of the fluvial processions of the Christian images of Mary and the saints.

> "Kapampangans seem to nurture their spirit by returning regularly to the cradle of their civilization—the river after which their land was named—in the same manner that the Hindus, for example, make regular pilgrimages to the Ganges and bathe in its banks at least once a year for spiritual renewal."[59]

Despite Christianization and influence of technology, Filipinos continue to live and will continue to live with their animistic indigenous belief system.[60] Despite global cosmopolitanism, Filipino animistic worldview survives. It is their first and last line of defense against meaninglessness and disintegration.[61] The religious animistic identity of the Filipinos has not been lost. In fact, dominant cultures have contributed to the rise of many cults, denominations and churches in the Philippines.[62] Animism as identity is therefore a context to contend for the study and sociology of religion.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The importance and relevance of intertextuality in the study of religion can not be ignored. As multi/inter-disciplinary approaches enlighten the contextual analysis of texts, vertical intertextuality allows re-reading of said texts and transforms our understanding of religious issues. Similarly, horizontal intertextuality opens the study of religion to new contexts, frameworks, and methodologies. As intertextuality forewarns us of misappropriations and misapplications of texts, contexts, theories and methods, it also challenges the study of religion to generate new models, approaches and methods for the sociology of religion when confronting new realities: hybridity, multiculturalism, integration, pluralism, globalization, localization, migration and traditionalization.

The study of religion/s in the Philippines can not but face off with the survival and different contexts of animism. As vertical and horizontal intertextuality allows sociology of religion to understand the various meanings and contexts of animism, intertextuality also allows researchers to see the myriad of complexities and particularities of Philippine animism: historical, cultural and socio-economic-political- geographical settings. As the interplay of religion, culture, and identity are transforming the contexts of animism, any study of religion can not but deal with these new texts of animism.

Intertextuality therefore makes the sociology of religion not only meaningful and appropriate but truly relevant particularly in the Philippines.

NOTES

1   Grace Davie, The Sociology of Religion, Singapore: Sage Publications, 2007, 2-5.

2   Malory Nye, Religion, The Basics, New York: Routledge, 2008, 180.

3   Although Stephen Bevans' focus was on contexts of theology, the author saw them apt to sociology of religion, too. See *Models of Contextual Theology*, Manila: Logos Publications, Inc., 2003, 14-17. Max Stackhouse cites some social scientists who fail to acknowledge the impact of Christianity in shaping the dynamics and structures of society. See *Globalization and Grace*, USA: The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc. 2007, 35-38

4   Grace Davie, 2007, 1-5.

5   Syed Farid Alatas specifically points to the misapplication on the uncritical adoption of Weber-type of Inquiry and failure to understand the complexity of Weber's argument on the nature of the relationship between Protestantism and the rise of Capitalism. "Religion, Values and Capitalism in Asia", *Local Cultures and the 'New Asia.'* ed. C.J.W.-L. Wee, Singapore: ISEAS, 2003, 107-115.

6   Although John Paul Lederach specifically discusses religions, the writer saw its applicability to sociology of religion, too. *The Moral Imagination*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, vii-xi.

7   Malory Nye. *Religion, The Basics.* USA: Routledge, 2008, 182-183.

8   Mary Orr. *Intertextuality: Debates and Contexts.* USA: Polity Press, 2008, 11-15

9   Aylward Shorter. *Toward a Theology of Inculturation.* Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988, 3-13

10 Max Stackhouse, Globalization and Grace, New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd., 2007, xxi

11 Dominador Bombongan. "Cosmopolitanism, Global Ethic, and Interreligious Dialogue." *Journal of DHARMA* 33,3 (July-September 2008), 252.

12 Max Stackhouse, 2007, 33-37.

13 Michael Kankaras and Moors Keenan, "Freedom in Chains: Religion as Enabler and Constraint in the Lives of Gay Male Anglican Clergy", ed. Abby Day. *Religion and the Individual*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008, March, 159-168; July, 557-561; John Cresswell, John. 2007.

   Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design. California: Sage Publications, Inc., 2007, 15-30; Grace Davie. *The Sociology of Religion*. Singapore: Sage Publications, 2007, 3; Vessela Misheva. "Mead: Sources in Sociology." *International Sociology* Vol. 24 (Number 2, March 2009), 159-168; Milos Kankaras and Guy Moors. "Measurement Equivalence in Solidarity Attitudes in Europe." *International Sociology* Vol. 24 (Number 4, July 2009), 557-561.

14 John Lagerway, "Religion and Chinese Society, A Review", International Sociology Vol. 24 (Number 2, March 2009), 191-193.

15 Malory Nye. *Religion, The Basics*. USA: Routledge, 2008, 208-209.

16 Geoffrey Redmond. *Science and Asian Spiritual Traditions*. USA: Greenwood Press, 2008, 14-17.

17 Grace Davie, 208-209.

18 Eduardo M. Domingo. "The Homogenization of Globalization: The Survival of Animistic Religions in the Philippines." *Philippinian Sacra* Vol. XLIII No. 129 (September-December 2008), 557-561.

19 Roland Robertson. "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity." ed. Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson, *Global Modernities*. Sage Publications: London, 1995, 25-42.

20 John Super and Briane Turley, Religion in World History, New York: Routledge, 2006, 15.

21 Malory Nye, 185.

22 Malory Nye, 210.

23 Charles Hampton-Turner and Fons Trompenaars. *The Seven Cultures of Capitalism*. New York: Doubleday, 1993, 2-7.

24 Jimmy Belita. *God was not in the Wind*. Manila: Adamson University Press, Inc. Manila, 2006, 197-199

25 Malory Nye, 192-197, 209

26 Sanderg Russell. "Religion and the Individual: A Socio-legal Perspective." ed. Abby Day. *Religion and the Individual*, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2008, 157- 158.

27 Keenan 2008, 169-175.

28 Grace Davie, 209.

29 Paulo Suess. "Evangelization and Inculturation." *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006, 166.

30 James Scherer and Steven Bevans ed. "World Council of Churches, Report from the Ecumenical Conference on World Mission and Evangelization." *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1999, 200-201; Eduardo M. Domingo. "The Homogenization of Globalization: The Survival of Animistic Religions in the Philippines." *Philippiniana Sacra* Vol. XLIII, No. 129 (September-December, 2008), 557-562.

31 Malory Nye, 6-7.

32 Florentino Hornedo. *The Favor of the Gods, Essays in Filipino Religious Thought and Behavior*. Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2001, 68-102; Eduardo M. Domingo. "Re-Reading the Contexts of Historical Records: Towards a Mature and Objective Appraisal of the Early History of the Church in the Philippines." *Philippiniana Sacra* Vol. XLII, No. 125 (May-August 2007), 427-430.

33 J.Schumacher, retrieved and translated some of the early Spanish descriptions on the native Filipinos. The work is considered as a primary source by historians. See *Readings in Philippine Church History*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1987, 13-14.

34 Rodney Henry. *Filipino Spirit World:A Challenge to the Church*. Mandaluyong City: OMF Literature, 1986,1-2.; Fe Susan Go. "Mothers, Maids and the Creatures of the Night: The Persistence of Philippine Folk Religion." *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 7, 186-207. J. Schumacher, 13-14.

35 See Horacio De La Costa, S.J. 'The Priest in Philippine Life and Society: A Historical view,' The Filipino Clergy: Historical Studies and Future Perspectives, Loyola Papers 12, August 1979. 2,4-9; Victor Maynigo, Evangelization and Philippine Culture in the Light of the Second Vatican Council, Aachen, West Germany: MISSIO, 1978, 91-93; Jose M. De Mesa, 'Cultural Shifts and Filipino Values in the Post-Modern Society', Quest for Insights into Faith, ed. Jimmy Belita & Corazon Manalo, Manila: Adamson University Press, 2001, 41-42; Leonardoo Mercado. Inter-Religious Explorations, Manila: Logos Publications, 2004, 1-4.

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37 Henry, op. cit., 1-2

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Moral Mismatch: Narratives of Migration from Immigrant Filipino Women in New York City and the Philippine State

Valerie Francisco

The moral economy is a hermeneutic largely used by scholars studying premodern economies and societies. Today, the moral economy still figures into the market and social relations of globalization and migration. The Philippine state actively carves out a gendered rhetoric of "migrant heroes" in discursive and material ways as a pseudo-moral economy, justifying policies of labor export as ideologies of independence through migration. Simultaneously, Filipino migrant women construct an alternative moral economy that bridges community with the market, embody an expanded (and unfair) sense of responsibility to family and the state. While Filipino migrant women, are hyper visible as independent actors, they are tethered to gendered familial roles and social reproductive labor that translate to their invisibility as women, migrant workers and returnees. The contradictions of the moral economies of migration emerge in the treatment of migrant women workers' deaths, thus laying bare the mismatch in these moral economies and, more importantly, the mistreatment that arises from the conflict. This, then, serves as a basis for a diasporic solidarity and politics for Filipino migrant women workers.

Keywords: transnationalism, immigrant, migrant political participation and gender and globalization

The multi-purpose room of the small Filipino community center is really the basement of the office upstairs, the room has been used for different things for the community. It's dry wall and linoleum wood floors and IKEA brand chairs have been host to many occasions, but today the organization members took time to make it a little bit nicer. It looked neat with all of the chairs lined up and a picture of Putli Asjali in the front of the room. The memorial picture of the deceased

domestic worker was simple. The last picture taken of her during the last holiday, she's sitting on a chair, legs crossed, smiling into the camera. That picture was blown up to a eight and a half by eleven color copy and mounted on a white foam board, simply stating her name and the dates of her birth and death.

 Close to noon, community members, youth, seniors, Asjali's friends who took a two-hour bus ride to Queens filled up the chairs. Quickly, the room was teeming with people. The heat of the summer was just not waning and humidity stayed on until September this year. No matter what the weather was, 80 people cramped into the lower level of the community center to attend the service. All of the seats were taken up and people were standing against the back and sidewalls. Many more who couldn't find space in the room chose to stay upstairs in the common area where other domestic worker volunteers were preparing food for the reception.

Someone was passing out paper with prayers and songs on it as the priest presided over the mass. During the prayers and the songs, a box of Kleenex was passed around. In unison, we all said, "Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy." We all held hands to say the Lord's prayer and went on to sing a customary mourning song in Tagalog, "Hindi Kita Malilimutan," "We will never forget you." As we continued with the song, people were getting choked up and if it wasn't for the one person who carried the tune for the rest of the people in attendance, the whole room would've just sobbed until the priest started the next prayer.

One after another, friends of Putli went up to speak about her. They all said nice things that she was a kind person, a god-fearing woman, church is how people came to know her, she always talked about her children in the Philippines. The last speaker was Putli's best friend in the upstate New York town they worked in, Angie. She started with a tissue balled up in her hand by talking about how this shouldn't be the way that people remembered Putli. She went on by saying she found out that when Putli died, her employer found a stash of earnings under her bed amounting to $10,000. After a couple of days of arranging where Putli's body would go, the amount lessened by $4,000. "This shouldn't be, even in her death she can't get pay," said Angie. "I called the consulate after asking if they could help us, and they could say nothing to me. They keep passing me on to another and to another. At the end of it, I asked how much they could give to send Putli back, they said nothing to me. They wanted to cremate her. They could not even give her cents to go back as a whole. Wala ba tayong halaga? Do we have no value?" Angie's eyes were filled with tears now but her

face was austere, she continued. "It's lucky that we are all here. If we were not here, there would be no one to remember Putli."

In the back row, I sat with Rita, the domestic worker support network's main organizer; she took my hand as she started to cry. She bent towards me and said, "Palagi patay ang pinababalik natin. Ni isang buhay, wala." We only send back dead people. We can't even send back a live person."

(Field notes, Putli Asjali's memorial service, September 2008)

For more than 30 years, labor export has been the policy to resolve the staggering unemployment rates of the failing Philippine economy (Barber 2000). Only a few other countries other than the Philippines have 10 percent of their population, about 10 million people, living outside of the nation-state boundaries (International Organization for Migrants 2005). For the past eight years, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the Philippine president, has applauded the migrants' plight, hailing them as modern day national heroes in her annual state of the nation address. As migrants and a culture of migration have become more and more embedded in Philippine culture, politics and economy, the Philippine state has invested in the idea that immigration is the key to development (Rodriguez forthcoming). The Philippine state is convinced that migration and development go hand in hand, a symbiotic partnership that has rescued a Philippine economy on the brink of collapse. Philippine government, officials, legislators and even the president can not seem to keep migration and migrants out of their minds and mouths. And to no surprise, immigrants and migrants can not keep Philippine politics and nation-state out of their conversations either.

The phenomena of migration in the Philippines is crafted by different justifications, motivations and goals, in this paper, I will call these "moral economies." The moral economy is a hermeneutic largely used by scholars studying premodern economies and societies. Today, the moral economy still figures into the market and social relations of globalization and migration. The Philippine state actively carves out a gendered rhetoric of "migrant heroes" in discursive and material ways as a pseudo-moral economy, justifying policies of labor export as ideologies of independence through migration. Simultaneously, Filipino migrant women construct an alternative moral economy that bridges community with the market, embody an expanded (and unfair) sense of responsibility to family and the state. The contradictions

of the moral economies of migration emerge in the treatment of migrant women workers' deaths, thus laying bare the mismatch in these moral economies and, more importantly, the mistreatment that arises from the conflict.

I begin this paper with two images from the different sides of migration in the Philippines. The first, shown in my field notes, is an image of a Filipino immigrant community in New York City remembering one of their own, a fellow immigrant woman, a domestic worker that died miles and miles away from her family and friends in the Philippines. The mood of the day and the memorial service was one of despair, anxiety and betrayal. The domestic worker group, PAGKAISA (or ISA for short) meaning unity in Tagalog, organizes much of the support networks for domestic workers, including the service for Asjali and other migrant women in need of similar assistance. During that particular afternoon, new sets of claims began to arise in the midst of mourning a fellow Filipina, as participants they insisted that this is not the kind of treatment Asjali should get. Indeed, they insist that this is not the kind of treatment that they should get as overseas workers. They claim that the consulate, the responsible governmental body for Filipinos abroad, should be more present and nearby at tragic moments like these. Their demands on the Philippine government are based on the fact that, "Without overseas workers, the Philippines is like a sinking boat in the middle of the ocean. And we are the ones saving them," as Helen, a member of the domestic worker support network said. But in the cases of Putli, Mayet and Fely, three domestic workers in the New York City area who died in the span of between 2006 and 2008, there was no government around to rescue them as their bodies were thrown overboard.

The second image is one of the Philippine government lauding migration and overseas workers as the saving grace of the country. Scholars have long argued that the colonial history of the Philippines has set up conditions making migration an inevitable option for many educated and professional Filipinos (Rodriguez forthcoming; Espiritu 2003; Barber 2000). The rhetoric of "migrant heroes" has stretched from the Philippines all the way around the world, following Filipinos seeking work abroad. Filipino enclaves globally are lined with remittance centers and consular offices offering legal services to Filipinos abroad to remind them of their heroic duties and financial obligations to their families and country. The type of institutionalized support bolstering the Filipino immigration and immigrants has become a huge investment for the Philippine government. However, considering the cases of these

abandoned New York City domestic workers, the investment falls short when it comes to immigrants who die abroad. Their heroic duties remain wanted and recognized, however, their deaths go unnoticed and ignored.

This article draws on field observations, interviews and focus groups wherein Filipino immigrant women talk about their reasons and justifications for leaving home. The women in this study have grown from children into adults, went to school and graduated, bore children and left their homes within a familiar culture of state-sponsored migration. They have lived through the Marcos dictatorship and the introduction of the Labor Export Policy under his regime and the extension of this policy through each administration thereafter. These immigrant women, products of the systematic labor-migration-as-development policy, work as domestic workers in New York City, a majority of them middle-aged with children in the Philippines. Most are working without legal documents, searching and finding jobs in the networks they create and sustain for themselves. A main driving force for each woman is the remittances they send monthly to their families in the Philippines. Daily, on their walks to work, their thoughts turn to their transnational relationships with families back home. They are at once catapulted into the global stage, yet tied to the nation state through a financial tether.

Filipino immigrant women still look to the Philippine government to demand certain rights and attention they feel are owed to its diasporic population. Most of the women know that their absence from their country contributes greatly to its survival; this is the intimate relationship between immigrants and their sending state. I will argue that in this relationship we can perceive contradictory conceptions of the moral economy of migration from the vantage points of the transnational lives of Filipino immigrant women and the transnational governance of the Philippine state.

Past studies show how gendered Philippine migration has colored the national identity and discourse of the Philippines, asking how have women as the constituted body in the Filipino diaspora affected the subject-status of the Philippine state (Rodriguez 2002, Tadiar 1997)? In a critical turn, scholars have exposed the labor-brokering machinery of migration inside the Philippine state, combing through various governmental institutions, officials and the rhetoric they produce (Guevarra 2006; Rodriguez forthcoming). In this paper, I will extend these scholars' projects to develop how contradictory moral economies deployed by both the Philippine state and Filipino women

immigrants create a gendered discourse around responsibility and obligation (Guevarra 2006). I insert the narratives of Filipino domestic workers in New York City to illuminate the ways in which institutional mechanisms, discourses and processes become embedded and embodied experiences (Harding 2006). Through a juxtaposition of state and immigrant narrative, I show the negotiations of moral economies when violation and contradictions come to the fore. To this end, some questions that guide this paper are: what types of moral investment is the Philippine government fermenting to buttress labor emigration? What are the moral economies of migrant women workers in the diaspora? What does it look like when these moral economies collide and contradict? What are the consequences of these conflicts?

I begin with a critical engagement of theories of the nation-state in transnational and diaspora studies as the theoretical frame for this study. Throughout this paper, I will employ the analytic model of the "moral economy" to illustrate how different moral economies are created and launched as reflections of their own moral communities. In the second section, I provide a discussion of the Philippine state and its investment in a particular kind of moral economy (Guevarra 2006). Third, through the narratives of Filipina domestic workers in New York, I juxtapose the construction of the moral economy of Filipino immigrant women working as domestic workers based on family, responsibility and latent nationalism (Cheng 2006). In the final section I close with what I began with, the matter of conflicting moral economies deployed by both Filipino immigrant women living in the US and the Philippine nation-state, the life and death implications of this contradiction. Lastly, I discuss the lives of Filipinos in the diaspora in terms of the economies embedded in their lives as a possible terrain of rupture and action.

THE NATION IN THE DIASPORA

Scholars in the transnationalism and diaspora literature suggest to decentralize the nation-state in studies of the diaspora. Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut posit that many first generation immigrants' political participation are concerned with homeland issues (2001). Depending on their economic goals and occupation in the US, Portes and Rumbaut also argue that political motivation of immigrants vary, hinging on the idea that more economic security means more political participation. Nancy Foner has long argued that immigrants' political mobilization have always targeted homeland issues since much of migration is informed by the political economic climate

in sending countries (1997). She has continued to suggest that immigrants make good use of their location abroad to highlight political issues at home.

Diaspora scholars however have expanded the conception of transnational political participation by looking outside of a binational formulation of sending and receiving states (Smith 2006). As migrant communities from the same sending states have settled in different countries, Paul Gilroy, for example, argues that migrant populations develop a culture that fosters relationships between communities in diasporic locations (1993). In the Filipinio case, this shift in transnational politics is important because it reflects the empirical reality of numerous Filipino diasporic communities politically interlocked with one another outside of the bounds of the nation-state. Diasporic cultures begin to inform one another as they proliferate within the global dimension of diaspora. For Filipinos, the longstanding labor diaspora has and continues to produce relationship between diasporic ties, independent from the Philippine nation and betwixt migrant communities around the world.

Similarly, Yen Le Espiritu states, "A critical transnational perspective also provokes us to think beyond the limits of the nation-state, that is, to be attentive to the global relations that set the context of immigration and immigrant life" (2003: 4). In her book *Homebound,* Espiritu begins with a move away from the model of the nation-state to examine the diasporic cultures and migration trends of Filipinos across communities and countries. Her "critical transnational perspective" heeds the challenge of diaspora scholars to look at the ways in which communities and cultures develop inside nation-states other than the homeland. In Espiritu's study, the racialization of Filipinos in a new host land allows for the US to emerge as a focal point for defining a Filipino American community. Espiritu's project shifts away from a diaspora and nation-state dyad, by pointing to a history of US imperialism in Asia to understand the trends of Asian immigration to the US and the variation in racialization of Asians in America. Specifically, she argues that moving Filipinos away from the nation-state allows for a deeper discussion of US imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism in the context of the Filipino diaspora.

These scholars have provided healthy conceptualizations of nation-states in immigrant and migrants' transnational and diasporic political cultures. However, in all of these frameworks the model of nation-state is assumed as a reified and bounded entity. In terms of the Philippine and US relations, maintaining a model of disparate nation-states does not address the historic

imperial interests and current neocolonial relationship of these enmeshed governing bodies. It is necessary to couch the discussion of both Filipino migration and forced migration in terms of a permeable Philippine nation-state intertwined with US political economic interests. To assume that the Philippines is a nation-state that serves as the referent for many Filipino diasporic subjects assumes that its colonial relationship with the US was severed when the US granted its nominal independence in 1946. However, the trends in migration and foreign investments demonstrate that active negotiations and exchange between the US and the Philippine produce people as cheap labor for the US and Philippine natural resources as investment opportunities. Substantive evidence of US intervention in the Philippine is blaringly present in the constitution and national politics (San Juan 2000). The supply of specific workers to meet the needs in the US labor market is ample evidence to see the partnership between the Philippines and the US. Therefore, there is a danger in considering the Filipino diaspora an autonomous nation-state as it obscures the "collaborative empire," as E. San Juan would say, that the Philippines and US nation-states work under.

Although in this paper, I will not treat the US-Philippine collaborative empire in much detail, I think that expanding the notion of the nation-state for the Filipino diaspora in this way is a useful tool to think with as we move forward to examine the types of moral economies activated through Filipino migration. In other words, the moral economy fostered by the Philippine state is always in concert with US economic interest and labor demands, under the conditions of neoliberal globalization. The moral economy of migration of the Philippine state allows it to seem as if it is a sovereign body since it is producing its own citizenship as a export product. However, in this paper I will show that when the moral economy of the seemingly independent Philippine state collides with the moral economies of its laboring migrant citizens located in US, the enmeshed governance and economic interests of the Philippines and the US put migrant women workers in vulnerable and dangerous positions.

Taking from immigration scholars, historic transnational politics have plenty to do with binational relations and governance and migrants' speaking back to homeland issues. And still, as diaspora scholars suggest, moral economies of the state are informed by the ever widening relationships between diasporic sites and locations, thus influencing political participation of migrants. In a complex relationship with the US, the treatment of diasporic Filipino communities is couched in the terms of the Philippines' historic and

continuing relationship with American politics. In looking at the moral economies of both the state and migrant workers, I find that the migration and the labor diaspora is a social process continually contested and constructed by nation-states, immigrants and migrants. Still, even under the intense collaboration with the US, the nation-state and diaspora dichotomy is important as it produces a moral economy of the Philippine state and Filipino immigrant women that often leads to a moral mismatch and, even worse, material mistreatment.

THE PHILIPPINE STATE'S MORAL ECONOMY

On 12 December 2007, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo lauded the efforts of *Bagong Bayani*, literally translated as modern-day heroes, by presenting 12 awards to different overseas contract workers (OCW) for particular categories. In the "Most Outstanding Employee" category, two women—Josefina Villarey, a housekeeper in the US, and Hazel Reposo, a housekeeper in Kuwait—were given recognition alongside nurses, seamen, teachers and factory managers. This celebration of OCWs is representative of the Philippine state's view on migration: celebratory. One, the occupations that the OCWs held are representative of the type of global labor niches that employ Filipinos: nursing, domestic, maritime, education and managerial industries of the world. Second, most importantly, the recognition given to the 12 OCWs honored represents a trophy rhetoric given to migrants, an affective citizenship of dignity, empowerment and duty to the millions of OCWs worldwide. The Philippine state invokes a type of moral economy to manage and regulate the most important industry in the rubric of the Philippine economy, the migration industry. Through the formalization of migration institutions like the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), the Overseas Workers Welfare Agency (OWWA) and the all encompassing Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Philippine state cements the culture of migration as an institutional process (Smith 2003). Cultural benchmarks like the Bagong Bayani award night or the red carpet at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport welcoming returning OCWs are building blocks in the migrant nationalist discourse that frames migrants and migration as national trophies.

As scholars have studied it in premarket economies, the moral economy secured livelihood, community and citizenship through non-economic institutions like family, kinship, religion and politics (Polanyi 1957). Market relations in premodern and modern societies functioned with the moral economy as a mechanism for exchange, obligations, gifts and moral reciprocity

directed the processes, social relations and objectives of people's actions and behaviors (Thompson 1971). In this "premarket" society, money economy was not a central feature of the social world, it was not a preeminent component in people's lives. Instead the economic interactions were lodged into other institutions, like filial piety or reciprocity (Scott 1977).

William Booth describes the embedded economy as the integration of patterns of distribution and production, division of labor and exchange inside "noneconomic values and institutions" in families or communities (1994: 654). In a premodern moral economy, there is no clear distinction between economic and noneconomic institutions like family, kinship or religion. The totality of social phenomena, social, economic, political and traditional, renders the economy theoretically indistinct, intermingled with the rest of society's institutions. Until the substantive market economy became formal, human action and behavior was oriented towards a pursuit of a good social life. People's decisions, actions and moves, economic or not, were geared towards sustaining their communities.

The shift from a premodern to a modern market economy pushes economic transactions from moral to mechanical. Goals and objectives within the social world become purely economic-oriented (Scott 1987, Rozario 2007). The transactions in the modern market economy do not necessarily hinge on developing a social livelihood, nor do their goals become embedded into social life, the transactions are discussed and executed plainly on economic terms. An inversion occurs in which, the primacy of economy becomes apparent over noneconomic institutions in the social world. In a market society, the economy has a "self-regulating" character, wherein as an isolated and independent entity, it is equipped to regulate itself, no longer enveloped by noneconomic institutions, values and processes (Scott 1977). In this shift, the economy, with its self-regulating character, pulls itself out of the community where it was situated in for much of human history (Booth 1994).

The implication of the economy emerging as an autonomous institution is that it becomes another force for social actors to contend and negotiate with. Without the embeddedness of the economy in social life, as Booth would say, the economy possibly becomes the driving force for social life. In his studies of the transformation of the moral economy under market relations, Karl Polanyi, argues that, "the market threatens to become the dominant mechanism integrating the entirety of society" (1957). The market as an

unnatural phenomenon, according to Polanyi, points to the construction of economic impetus with its basis in social relations built on social processes and institutions. In the Philippines this integration has meant the governmental institutionalization of managing and regulating the thousands of immigrants leaving daily (Guevarra 2006).[1]

Beginning in 1898, the DFA was one of the first departments set up by a postcolonial Philippines to be recognized legitimately on the international stage. The DFA becomes a fixture in Philippine history facilitating many international relations agreements, a number of them in concert with US interests in military support and natural resources. A key player in formalizing Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 1989 and in establishing the ASEAN Free Trade Area, the Philippines continues to rely on an external geography as to build the nation and its "global exposure." Starting with the administration of Ferdinand Marcos in the late 60s, the presence and possibility of overseas workers broke open infinite economic and political expansion opportunities for the Philippines. Not only could overseas Filipino workers contribute to the national economy, they could also support the Philippine state as cultural ambassadors. During Fidel Ramos' administration from 1992-1998 he named "the enhancement of national security, promotion of economic diplomacy, protecting Overseas Filipino Workers and Filipino nationals abroad, the projection of a good image of the country abroad"[2] as chief goals for foreign affairs.

The primacy of foreign affairs and overseas workers was sealed into Philippine culture and society through the institutionalization of migration as development. In 1982 under Ferdinand Marcos, the POEA was created through Executive Order 797, the "Labor Code of 1974," institutionalizing labor export as a policy for the Philippine state. The impetus for this policy was the changing market and economic conditions (into neoliberalism) and the need to regulate and facilitate the migration of Filipinos out of the country. The focus of this institution was to facilitate employment outside of the Philippines, regulate the migration industry and "protect" workers.[3] Through this policy, the Philippine state is getting its bearings in the global economy through institutionalizing the movement of bodies out of the country; pushing forth a type of moral economy that hinges on a twofold conception of migration: one, on the surface, the idea of protecting citizens through programs and, two, agencies to maintain the social fabric of Filipino society. "When nature and persons, the world and human activity are made into objects of sale—when that is the dominant mode for their transaction—the remaining

barriers to marketization must be frail indeed" (Booth 1994: 656). The market has pervaded the intentions of the Philippine state to produce people as commodities.

E.P. Thompson argues that the measure of the dominance of the market over the social can be found in the commodification of every and any thing, and further its ability to spread around the world in and out of local, national and global markets (1971). For the Philippines, the pervasive character of the economy now envelops the whole society, the economy is what sets goals, processes and objectives of social life down to the decisions to move from one place to another, duty to the family and sacrifices in quality of life. These are the moral norms in which the Philippine state carves out its moral economy, the mores of the market economy. Globalization and neoliberalism is the bedrock of its production of a diaspora. The moral economy of the Philippine state is first anchored down to its loyalties to economic production and profit in the increasingly neoliberal world.

The feminization of migration and the gendered labor market demands has established labor niches for Filipino women around the world as domestics, housekeepers, nannies, nurses and caregivers to the elderly (Pratt 2004; Parrenas 2001). At least three thousand migrant workers leave the Philippines daily, over half are women and their highest concentration is in global cities in the US like New York City, Chicago and San Francisco, to name a few (Chua 2009). Filipino women are manufactured, marketed and sent out as "domestic bodies" as Neferti Tadiar calls it, inscribing them and the diaspora with a gendered code of the Philippine nation (1997). I note this particular conceptualization of Filipino women as the mobile bodies catapulted onto the world stage because this is where the "gendered moral economy" of the Philippine state begins (Guevarra 2006). Instead of shying away from a nation-building project that is based largely on women and feminized labor, the Philippine government, a culturally patriarchal institution, has embraced it. In fact, it has capitalized on women.

The visual cues and emblems of Philippine economic progression are embodied in the Filipina flight attendant, Filipina wife, Filipina nurse, Filipina domestic worker, Filipina mother and Filipina daughter. Robyn Rodriguez argues that these gender labor niches have had implications for the nation-building identity of the Philippine via migration (2002). The neoliberal ideology suffused into this gendered construction of the Filipino diasporic subject is in the ideology of individualism the neoliberal state doles out. The ideology of the labor-brokering state supports the global demand, policies

like the "Supermaid program"—training hundreds of Filipino women to become better domestic workers—facilitates the production of women bodies as the representative of the Filipino diaspora. No longer are women just nannies; on the government's dime they have the potential to be the best nannies in the world. This policy confirms that instead of economic strangulation, a Filipino woman's individual freedom and choice become the deciding factor in migrating. This ideology of individualism is what David Harvey would call a "neoliberal principle," a claim that people should get whatever they want at the expense of others (2001). The supermaid program emphasizes options and choices of Filipinos have to achieve an individual dream through moral obligation, hard work and merit. Disguised by the discourse of merit and morals, the role of the economy is embedded into life choices.

The above picture on an OWWA website of a Filipino nurse not only constitutes the Filipino overseas worker as a woman but a woman that has a bright future in the US. For the Filipina in the picture, and the hundreds of thousands of Filipinas in the Philippines gazing at the picture, the moral economy is hinged to an empowerment that can be achieved through migration (Guevarra 2007). The woman's smile and the stethoscope go hand in hand with the biggest word on the ad, "employment," therefore coding the migration labor market with a Filipino woman's body and her ability to care for others.

These types of state-sponsored advertising are how the Philippine state reinforces gender in two ways: first, a woman's role to care for others in the productive economic sense is depicted in the photo, an extension of the

social reproductive labor that scholars have tagged "women's work" (Dalla Costa 1972; Beneria 1996). And second, the discourse of personal responsibility, similar to welfare rhetoric in the US, Filipino women's responsibilities and work in the private sphere. Filipino women, comprising 60 percent of the migrants leaving the Philippines daily, often leave their home to go abroad in the name of their families and later as I will show, a latent nationalism. In the next section, I explore what the consequences of this moral economy are on Filipino immigrant women and how they are constructing one of their own.

AN IMMIGRANT WOMAN'S MORAL ECONOMY

> There are many reasons why people leave. But the main reason is to help your family. That's why when I'm here, instead of studying and going to school you save money to send money to help. Because they can't make it without me. Yourself is the second. Always the priority is the family. (Lily, an ISA member, October 2008)

Lily is echoing the very gendered moral economy dished out by the Philippine state. In this statement, Lily asserts her reasons for leaving the Philippines as an economic impulse but first and foremost, it is her responsibility to her family that justifies her migration. At the age of 24, Lily left the Philippines to work overseas. In 1987, jobs for college graduates were so few and far between that working as a teaching assistant was the only job Lily could get with her college diploma. Her family was being threatened with eviction if their mortgage on their house and small field was not paid for quickly. And with her brother and sister only in elementary and the beginning of high school, respectively, Lily felt that she had no other options but to leave the country to support her brother and sister. As a sister and a daughter, Lily's moral responsibility was to support her family. Hearkening back to the traditional model of the moral economy, Lily's decision to leave the Philippines was not out of economic lust to become richer. Rather, the decision she made was integrated in sustaining a life for her family. In this sense, the moral economy bolstered by Filipino women more resembles a traditional moral economy wherein decisions are created to maintain a social life for a particular family or community. However, the nature of these decisions is undoubtedly compounded by the influence of the state's moral discourse around gender and responsibility. I suggest that a traditional moral economic stance contributes to Filipino migrant women current moral economy since migration decisions are informed by generations

of migrant workers. These generations of migration narrate the transnational lives and sacrifices of many Filipino families for decades thus embedding decisions to leave as a part of familial obligation. However, since these moral economies have been constructed under the conditions of globalization, they are always nested in the economic impetus of capitalism.

Broadly, "...the moral economy concerns the way in which people conduct themselves that articulate relationships in positive ways for both actors and the market economy" (Smyth 2006: 1). Chief in the construction of Filipino immigrant women's moral economy to stay actively participating in the market economy is their obligations to their children and families. It is their number one priority to be the breadwinner for their families, and this act of duty is not scorned or resented, it is just plain duty, a moral obligation to their family. The separation and sacrifice are afterthoughts, taking care of their children, putting brothers and sisters through college and paying for a mother or father's operation has primacy over loneliness and depression. Potential migrants do not think about being lonely, they think about helping their family survive.

These are the moral norms that surrounded them as they grew up around relatives and neighbors who left their families to support them. Dutiful daughters and wives who must pitch in to provide for their families find that migration is not only a viable way to do it but sometimes, the only option for them. Regardless of how long the separation is or can be, some of the women see their families' futures as the main reason why they must sacrifice. For different players in the migration schema, the moral economy shifts ethical frameworks based on the objectives and goals an actor wants to achieve through participating in the market economy. In the case of the immigrant women, building a moral economy on the basis of supporting their families allows them to make affirmative decisions towards migration.

Still, nuanced dynamics of family play into this moral economy. After years of parents being away, raising children from afar and observing a society wherein each family has at least one person working abroad, children of migrants come of age with the possibility of migration in their future. When tables turn and children must step up into being providers and they take any opportunity they can get:

> My story of migration started the year 92, 1992. I just graduated college, started work, the pay was really low. And at that time I had a sister who was overseas already. Our eldest sister was in, uh, ISRAEL already.

From Turkey, she went to Israel. So our family is a family that goes abroad, nagaabroad, is what they call it in the Philippines. Families that go abroad, because my Mom, she went abroad, she went to Saudi for eight years, she put us all through school. That's why she left to go abroad…That's why I went. (Rita, main organizer for ISA, August 2008)

Rita comes from a family where almost all of the members migrated. Her mother and all three of her sisters, including her, left in turns to keep a steady flow of income for the family. Like many of the domestic workers, Rita traveled around before she came to the US. In her narrative, many of the decisions she and the women in her family made to migrate were based around what would be good for the family. For families whose characteristic is to go abroad, the filial duty to take care of the family, whether its your children or your parents or your siblings, is passed down from generation to generation. Like an unwanted inheritance, family members must consider the importance of migration over their own desires, "to help the family," as Lily said. When the job market is bankrupt the home country and there are abundant options abroad, the morally correct choice is to take the latter.

This cycle of family migration is normalized in many households, thereby setting a standard of what supporting a family looks like for Filipinos. Even though Rita possess a college degree which gave her a small leg up in the job market in the Philippines, her mother and sister have set a precedent as to what kind of breadwinning can prove useful to the family's sustenance and growth. Rita's reciprocity to give back for her mother's sacrifices, resonates with E.P. Thompson's discussion of gift economies across class lines (1971). The gift of obligation through migration is a cornerstone in Rita's moral economy around family and migration:

Who's gonna send money back to support our family? What'll happen? What'll really happen? Eh, my Mama had already gone home by then from Saudi. Mama had already gone home, while I was in Israel, and I sent for one of my other older sisters. Because that's the only way. (Rita, main organizer for ISA, August 2008)

She wants to pay, literally and metaphorically, her mother back for the sacrifice she made to put her children through school. Rita wants to let her sister have a break from being the sole breadwinner, reciprocate her sacrifice by making one of her own. Much of the women's sacrifices have to do with love for their family and hope for the future.

In her study of single Bangladeshi women migrants and the moral economies they live and work under, Santi Rozario states, "For these women,

spending their resources on their families is a reflection of their love and faith in their families" (2007: 165). Rozario's argument rings true for Filipino immigrant women, their sacrifices are out of love and duty thus an essential building block in their moral economy.

Now, we have seen how the moral economy for immigrant women reflects back on an ethical framework based on their need to support their families. But how do the constraints of the moral economy of the state inform their framing of morals and migration? Scholars have studied how gender and sexuality have constituted the Filipino worker in the diaspora and its reverberations back to the nation-state (Pratt 2004; Parrenas 2001; Rodriguez 2002). The diasporic female body is the overseas representative of Filipino laborers. Neferti Tadiar argues that the "domestic body" of the Filipino woman is implicated in the "contradictions and congruences among several systems of value and differentiation which motor the production of domestic helpers as well as the production of the nation, which is a constituent and constituting part" (1997: 154). Filipino overseas contract workers, male or female, are inextricably linked to producing a nation through various practices like return migration and remittances.

> Joy: You know fortunately, when I leave my kids they are big already. My youngest then, is 12 years old and they're big already. And when I talk to them, they understand. When I came here, when…when…when we separate, I found out that my daughter did not go outside of our house for one week. (She starts to tear up). My daughter, you see she's 16 at that time, one week she did not outside because I'm not there anymore. (She's crying now). But they don't say to me, (I nod) When I call, "We're okay Mama, don't worry about us." We're very close. That's why when I left, I needed to. Because all we were doing was waiting to die there, like that? You know, waiting for a hand out. And all my kids go to school. So I have to go because I could. So even if its tourist visa, at least I can work now as a woman, I took it. I needed to. There was no option. That's my story with them and they bounced back. When I call they say, "We're okay now."

> Valerie: What else do you think about when you're here in the US or other countries?

> Joy: Especially now, I always think about the rest of the people in the Philippines. What will they do if we come home? Especially now, when the economy is low. What will they do? If we lose our jobs here, how about all of the children of the Philippines. This is for the Philippines. Sacrifice for the Philippines. One third of our earnings

will be left to us. And all of the earnings go to the Philippines. (ISA member, October 2008)

Filipino women overseas workers are thus not only responding to gendered global labor demands but to a Philippine-based rhetoric of heroism for their country and family. Here, Joy talks through her tears as she remembers her children, a sensitive topic for many of the domestic workers who talk through their migration story with me. The moral economy for the women reflects back the obligations they have to their children and families. Again fitting in with the traditional moral economic model, Joy incorporates her decision to migrate as part and parcel of producing and reproducing a life for their families in the Philippines. Much of the women's sacrifices have to do with love for their family and hope for the future, however, they also carry a broader moral burden. In the same breath, Joy is also talking about how women's migration also carries implications for the socio-economic changes and shifts in their country as part of the moral economy they construct for themselves.

As Joy continues discussing the issues that swirl around in her head as she thinks about being away from home, she mentions that she also feels responsible for the situation of the young people in the Philippines. When Joy speaks about job insecurity, she acknowledges a generalized conception that overseas work is a mechanism for rescuing the future of the Philippines. When women leave the Philippines to support their family, the nation becomes an extension of one's family. Instead of focusing solely on the family as the reason to migrate out of the Philippines, the prosperity of the country is also folded into the reasoning of migration. With the family and future generations of children as the rhetorical basis of migration, mothers become the narrowest target for the migration. In a staunchly Roman Catholic country, women's responsibility over the home and the family has not waned with the progression of women's rights and visibility in the public sphere. Ultimately, this dynamic has worked paradoxically, the visibility of women as economic agents compounded on their domestic responsibilities makes them the most available and reliable workers to be sent out to the world market. Women, as the responsible parties for the growth and success of their children and family, are compelled to step up to earn because "they can" and they "need to."

Robyn Rodriguez examines two specific moments in the labor migration history of the Philippines as evidence of the nation-state's loyalty to capital and more importantly, as a beginning discourse that craft migrants as heroes

of Philippine society (2002). As emigrants were exported under the Marcos dictatorship, *balikbayan* or "returnees to the nation" (literally translated) programs were set up for emigrants who lived outside the Philippines allowing them to invest their money back into the country in remittances and frequent visits back home (2002: 346). As laborers are sent to any and all the corners of the world, the Philippine state reminds her global citizens of their obligations to save the failing economy. Working under the mechanisms of personal freedom and agency, the state encourages workers to choose their destinations, simultaneously tying down those freedoms to the Philippine national debt. Rodriguez argues that the neoliberal program of the Philippine state insists on making heroes out of migrant workers thus imposing sanctions on these global citizens to be responsible for the Philippine economy. The dynamic of gender, motherhood and responsibilization woven into the Philippine state's rhetoric of migrant heroism found in these interviews extend Rodriguez' project and critique of a (productive and reproductive) labor-brokering state.

Joy's job as a domestic worker in New York City is a faint echo of the millions of jobs around the world for other Filipino women as domestics. The construction of the Filipino woman's body as an overseas worker hinges on both a gendered imperative and the neoliberal conception of labor as a privilege. Anna Guevarra has argued that this contradiction is a Philippine state ideology wherein Filipino women are at once taking an "empowered" step to earning money and also compelled to leave because of filial obligation (2006). The state rhetoric continues to project women's independence through migration as a characteristic of heroism. Cloaked in feminist ideals, the state has easily brokered women into a global gender division of labor in the name of women's progress. In a sense, feminist calls for equal work opportunities and mobility for women been inculcated by the state's ideology of neoliberal development (Eisenstein 2009).

Here is where the moral economy of the state and immigrant women rub up against each other: Philippine governance claims the Filipino woman in the diaspora becomes evidence towards the advancement of women's economic opportunities and individual freedoms to work and, for Filipino women, migration is an avenue to fulfill their moral obligations to their families. When juxtaposed, they seem to work together to bring better work opportunities for Filipino women and better lives for families in the Philippines. "So I have to go because I could," Joy states in our interview, that if she as a woman has an impetus and the opportunity available to her, she will choose

to leave. The point I want to make is that folded into the moral filial duty of Filipino women, there is an implied national duty they also carry. In the introduction, I quoted Helen when she said, "Without overseas workers, the Philippines is like a sinking boat in the middle of the ocean. And we are the ones saving them," echoing Joy's embodied knowledge, she understands that migration is dual in its purpose, family first and the nation at a close second.

Nevertheless, a contradiction stands: the Philippine government lauds migrant workers while refusing to provide security and basic rights to their migrant heroes. Although there are regulatory institutions like the POEA and the OWWA, the lack of protection and attention to migrant workers once outside of the Philippines, fracture the rhetoric of heroization crafted by the state. Further, the splinters of this breakage spread into the moral economy of immigrant women that find some of its basis in a state-sponsored discourse of *bagong bayani,* modern-day heroes. The violations in these moral economies are apparent in the diasporic locations of Filipino immigrant women as they tackle issues in their receiving state. These ruptures are our next stop, specifically, the death and repatriation of deceased domestic workers.

A CONTRADICTION: SENDING MORE THAN JUST MONEY BACK

PAGKAISA (or ISA) was born in the midst of despair and out of the need to fight for what Filipino domestic workers identified as an integral part of their dignity. In 2007, a small group of domestic workers at a community center in Queens came together around the suicide of a Filipina domestic worker, Fely Garcia, in the Bronx. Through the network of Filipina domestic workers, word spread that Garcia was found by the police in her rented room face down on her bed already deceased and that her body was aimlessly waiting at the morgue since all of her family and friends lived in the Philippines. ISA's inception was to rally around Garcia's death because of the Philippine consulate's refusal to help Fely and the Garcia family. The domestic workers fought a hard campaign with the consulate to retrieve repatriation fees for Garcia to go back home, through rallies, petitions and meeting with consular officials. They fought an even more painful campaign with the community to explain why a modern-day hero of the Philippines was getting such a brush off. ISA's community-based memorial service for Garcia drew hundreds of Filipino immigrant and Filipino American community members who felt a relative connection to an immigrant woman so far away

from her family. Especially at a time of death, the Filipino American community in Queens, New York embraced Garcia as one of their own even though they had never met her, and consequently, the community embraced ISA as an organization of domestic workers that were working on a death of someone who they didn't know personally but could be any one of them.

Because of ISA's steady work to get Garcia's body out of a morgue into a funeral home and then all the way to her province in the Philippines, the campaign to send her home gained international attention. Many angered families in the Philippines came together through an organization called MIGRANTE that revived a national fervor to protect the rights of overseas contract workers. There have been similar incidents of migrant workers isolated in their host countries and then abandoned by the Philippine government in times of need still percolating in collective memory of the families left behind, for example, the hanging of Flor Contemplacion in Singapore (Rodriguez 2001). In the Philippines, Fely Garcia's case added to the deteriorating moral economy in the minds and hearts of Filipino families sacrificing their family members to go abroad. While the paradox of the state-sponsored modern-day heroes is ever pervasive in the halls of government institutions and media, families and migrant workers were feeling the inconsistency in their bodies and represented in the dead body of Fely Garcia.

What moved domestic workers, mostly Filipino immigrant women, to action two years ago is a conception of justice for migrants that brings together what Morton Deutsch would call "equity, equality and need" (Deutsch 1975). Dignity and respect are foundational components of the gendered moral economy of migration and labor according to Filipino domestic workers, deployed in two ways. First, for ISA members, the dignity of being migrant workers was fostered by the Philippine government's heroization of their overseas occupations wherein, "positions of authority lend dignity to the occupant, but the person needs to behave ethically in order to earn respect, thus maintaining the dignity acquired in their role" (Smyth 2006:4). As the Philippine state lauded the service of their overseas heroes, Filipino women workers abroad work hard and sacrifice much, gaining the respect and dignity promised to them. Second, the domestic workers themselves develop an ethical framework to earn respect through sacrificing their lives with families to go abroad. The blend of a state rhetoric and narratives of filial obligation in the lives of Filipina domestic workers insists on dignity and respect.

"At the end of it, I asked how much they could give to send Kadija back, they said nothing to me. They wanted to cremate her. They could

not even give her cents to go back as a whole. Wala ba tayong halaga? Do we have no value?" (Field notes, Kadija Asjali's memorial service, September 2008)

Let us think back to the memorial service for Kadija Asjali I opened with earlier in the paper. In Angie's testimony, the dignity of Asjali had been formally violated through the consulate's immobility when Asjali's case was unfolding. Angie asks a rhetorical question to the crowd at the service about the value of "we;" the collective she refers to represents broadly the categories of parents, domestic workers, immigrant women and overseas workers, calling into question the kinds of dignity attached to the moral economy so cultivated by the Philippine state. Through their separations, loyal remittances and daily labor, domestic workers feel that they earn the respect of the Philippine state, requiring the dignity that should be afforded to them. But a year and a half and three deceased Filipina immigrant domestic workers[5] later, the Philippine consulate's reticence around repatriation was another slap in the face for ISA. The dignity bestowed upon migrant workers was effectively expunged by the consulate's lethargic response to the deaths of domestic workers in the community. The bankruptcy of the Philippine government's moral economy communicated through their satellite representatives is visible when the state ignores domestic workers' dire need for assistance at a time of death.

The distrust of the domestic workers towards the consular office and the Philippine state in general is apparent. The DFA claims that the consulate offices around the world are the representation of the Philippine government abroad, all of which claim to extend the regulatory responsibilities of the aforementioned institutions. Consular offices state that they are the responsible parties to "provide services to support Filipino immigrants" (Philippine Consulate General, NY website 2008). And in contrast ISA members laughed at my suggestion that the consulate office could help them out on their concerns about legal status, low wages, remittances and security. They all agreed that the consulate offices were the representations of the Philippine government but all understood that that these institutions were not invested in their welfare:

Valerie: Eh, what about the consulate?

Rita: (silence for 3 seconds) No, they weren't giving us any help. Because we had a friend there at the consulate...and ...we asked him, why is it that when people are raiding houses...there's no...they don't condemn those raids. Because the things Israeli police do when they raid...is they come barging in at two in the morning, really like wee

hours in the morning. Sometimes, they follow you from the disco, they follow you home and then they come and get you—the people who don't have papers. So we complained one time back then, why does it have to be like that? Our friend, Jose, I forgot his last name, he said, "When that happens, you have to report it!" Eh, it's done! What I mean to say is that there's nothing…no…"Before the raids happen this is what you are supposed to do." Nothing eh! No one informs us, what are our rights anyway, nothing. We feel like, you don't have rights because you don't have papers! (Rita, main organizer of ISA, August 2008)

In Rita's story about her time in Israel, she clearly looks to the Philippine consulate to denounce the unfair treatment of migrant workers. Although undocumented Filipino immigrants are legally in the hands of their receiving state, Rita renders the Philippine state as a responsible governmental body because she sees that institution as a repository of information for migrants' rights, at the very least. However, the lack of response from these offices, wherever they are in the world, is evidence that the moral economy the state invests in through the rhetoric of balikbayan and migrant heroes falls short of providing dignity to migrant domestics in New York. The consulate's reticence around repatriating the bodies of Asjali and Garcia violates the trope of "migrant heroes," rendering immigrant women workers as disposable and dispensable within the global economy (Wright 2006). The value of Asjali and Garcia's laboring bodies in the global economy expired with their death and therefore the moral orientation of heroes expired for her as well, in the eyes of the Philippine state.

The metaphorical significance of the bodies of Asjali and Garcia for this group of domestic workers is succinctly summarized by Rita's comment at Asjali's memorial service:

In the back row, I sat with Rita, the domestic worker support network's main organizer; she took my hand as she started to cry. She bended towards me and said, "Palagi patay ang pinababalik natin. Ni isang buhay, wala." ("We only send back dead people. We can't even send back a live person.")

Rita's tearful aside is not only mourning the fact that ISA's balikbayans are all deceased but that their trip back is riddled with strife, struggle and a denial of financial support for the return. Following the logic of immigrant women's moral economy, many of the women overstay in the US as long as they can bear it before returning, knowing that going home means never

being able to come back to the US to make the kind of money they are making as domestics.

In a mixture of exile due to the constrictions of legal and economic conditions, the moral economy of domestic workers to be providers trumps their rights to be with their families. They leave the country and their families to support and provide from afar. They know they cannot go back until they have saved enough, put enough kids through school, secured a house and lot, and the list goes on. Their desires to be with their families and to provide for them are set under the conditions of separation. But even in death, a dignified burial and return home is up for contention? This is the violation of the moral economies that lock horns during these moments of grief. The dignity and respect due to heroes are readily abandoned as the immigrant women demand claims to the state's moral economy. Symbolically, the bodies of immigrant women as overseas workers are invisible as long as they leave for work, remit and return for visits. But the dead bodies of Filipino migrant workers magnifies their visibility because at that point of vulnerability, the state ought to be primary in fulfilling the moral economic promises they set forth for the country's modern-day heroes. Taking the corpses of immigrant women workers back home to the Philippines and to their families for burial is the very basic sign of dignity and respect that domestic workers demand of their government when they are abroad. And yet, this is even too hard a task to complete for the Philippine's heroes.

CONCLUSION: MORAL ECONOMY AS CRITIQUE AND REVISIONS

Even though the Philippine state invests in institutions like the DFA, POEA and OWWA to "protect" migrant workers and their rights, why do the deceased bodies of migrant workers present such a problem? The conflict that presents itself in these particular cases demonstrate the contradictory moral economies with the state, immigrant women and between the conceptualization of the two. The moral economies do not match. For the neoliberal state of the Philippines, a pseudomoral economy of migrant heroes is a strategy to integrate into a global capitalist economic stage at the cost of citizens, migrant rights and domestic "development". While the wave of migration-as-development is the rule of thumb in an era of globalization, the state will most likely deliver their Filipino citizens to the global economy. If immigrants send dead bodies back, the moral economy of the state is likely to be tarnished. Anything more than remittances, goods and stories of success is not welcome. The Philippine state is invested in a certain type of moral

economy and therefore the lifeless corporeal objects of citizens are rogue representations to their savior rhetoric. Therefore the state disengages. Repatriation and resolving migrant issues and rights outside of their own territories are not part of developing a global economic status.

The neoliberal state often plays a clear role when it comes to facilitating export-led growth and short-term answers to deeply toxic issues of globalization but it is also often unstable and incongruous in the application of quick fix strategies provided by neoliberal theory (Harvey 2001). The evidence in this paper proves that the strategies of migration as development is fundamentally flawed as it is compromises people's safety, dignity and rights to be respected as family members, workers and citizens of a nation. Trends of Filipinos continuing to leave the Philippines suggest that people are exercising agency towards cosmopolitanism, however, if asked, Filipina migrant workers themselves answer that they would rather be with their families in their home country.

For immigrant women, a moral economy based on the family and the Philippines as a nationalist referent allows them to leave their homes, knowing that dignity and respect is afforded to them for making such a sacrifice. Their migration is based on being good providers, parents who offer a better future for their children and, undoubtedly woven into their stories, good citizens to their nations. However, in times of desperation and need, like in the cases of Asjali and Garcia, the government's negligence around assisting its diasporic subjects confirms the contrasting objectives of the Philippine state and immigrants. The women of ISA understand this as a violation of their own moral economies even if they did not buy in wholly to the state's discourse of immigration. The refusal to repatriate the bodies of domestic workers in New York is a breach of dignity and respect they have earned by leaving the country in the name of their families and the nation.

I am not suggesting that the Philippines, or any sending state at that, be responsible for all the citizens of the country that choose to leave for various reasons. I am aware that transnational governance is constricted by bilateral relationships between nation-states and host countries must also assert their own sovereign governance over people living in their territorial bounds. However, if the Philippine nation-state is so invested in exporting its citizens to the world through fostering a moral economy of migrant heroes, they must hold up their end of the deal as they claim that migrant regulation and protection is a part of that campaign. Or else the moral economy touted by the Philippine government is an empty and promissory one.

The violations in the moral economy of the state towards their migrant citizen expose the limits of the modern-day hero rhetoric. The investment of the Philippine state in maintaining a migrant labor-brokering machine stops within the bounds of the country as soon as overseas workers leave.

Valerie: What is the role of the government when you get to your destination?

Andrea: Basically, you're on your own because when you're working already they're not gonna ask you what happens to you every hour, day to day. If you get sick, they wouldn't ask you about that. If you get a sickness, which is a big deal now, to them, NO! They wouldn't ask that. They would just say this is what they want from you and that's it! (Andrea, ISA organizer, November 2008)

Andrea recounts the expectations that domestic workers have towards the Philippine state, and she honestly describes the types of treatment they expect to get. There is common knowledge between the domestic workers that as soon as you leave the country, claims for rights are scarce and inaccessible from the Philippine government, despite the existence of numerous nationally funded migrant institutions. However, if we look through the lens of the moral economies that are the foundation of a vast Filipino diasporic geography, we find that conflict centers like the struggle to repatriate fellow domestic workers become a moment of anger, unity and perhaps redefinition of rights and justice.

Instead of a forthright process of repatriation, the situations of Asjali, Garcia and many other overseas workers dying abroad, brings to light a break down in the morality promulgated by the state. These failures by the state allow a revision of the moral economy for immigrant women. The deaths of Fely Garcia and Putli Asjali brought ISA together in ways that continues to splinter off into different revisions of a moral economy for immigrants. An example of a re-vision of is the blossoming of a sisterhood that allows immigrant women to support one another emotionally, spiritually and physically. ISA is expanding the meaning of justice by including immigrant women's holistic needs, fostering a moral community based on their economic work, familial and personal relations with their families and with each other. In expanding the conception of what is included in their moral economy and community, ISA members are revising the issues they can claim justice for (Opotow 1995). Justice does not only mean decent conditions for labor and a living wage, but it means respect and dignity for their bodies, their families and their health.

The moral community in ISA is forged in the spirit of solidarity and equality; it becomes a culture of accountability to each other through job security, health and safety. These are exciting steps. Immigrant women are finding support from one another through collective action and organizing. The women share a common sympathy for their collective story of transnational families and children in the Philippines, thus looking out for each other in their diasporic community revises the conception of the moral economy defined by their obligations to the Philippines, both family and nation. For the women of ISA, a diaspora-based moral economy is a welcomed revision as they continue to build a foundation based in their neighborhoods, borough and community. They reimagine the geography of the community they are accountable for, starting all the way from their families in the Philippines and now include their peers and community in New York. The creativity of ISA is not just a reaction to the collusion of the Philippine and US states to engender invisibility to workers like them. It is a reimagining, restorying and revising of models of diaspora and moral economy. The home-host dichotomy is braided into each other through ISA's edits of the scope of their moral community and therefore justice. The active construction of justice and moral community is a production of diaspora. ISA is the manifestation of networks, spaces and collectives created by immigrant women that is then filled up with their diaspora-grown purposes: political critique, friendship, a yearning for home, establishing a home away from home.

This paper offers an insight in the ways economies and governance intersects in the lives of Filipino immigrant women. I have shown that in the efforts of the Philippine state to integrate into a global capitalist economy, discursive, moral and political economies must also be mobilized to buttress such an effort. These state practices can be traced through the institutionalization of neoliberalism in migration and governance (Smith 2003). Further, and perhaps more importantly, this paper reveals the implications of neoliberalism and migration as development on the everyday lives of Filipino immigrant women. Proven by intense conflicts like the deaths of domestic workers and the contradictions in the construction of moral economies, the state's practices to push out people and then, their incapacity to take care of their global workforce haunts the present and future terms of immigrant women. However, ironic as it may sound, the possibilities for political mobilization from inside the violations of moral economies abound, in that, these moments of crisis allows domestic workers to critique the moral economies of the state as it stands. These moments hold the potential for a

revisioning and reimagining of a diasporic moral economy that fuse place-based issues with transnational concerns. In looking at the different processes that produce diaspora, rhetoric of modern heroes and the morality of leaving and return, demonstrate the diaspora is a contested conception, space and lived experience. Lastly, this study offers a methodology of juxtaposition to illuminate the transformation of socio-economic relations occurring in the current moment of globalization and neoliberalism. Putting the narratives of the state side by side of overseas workers tells us much about the implications of neoliberal governmentality and governance on the lives of the people who live in and through the consequences.[6]

NOTES

1   For a deeper discussion on the Philippine state's creation and management of migrant institutions, please read Anna Gueverra's illuminating work, "Managing 'Vulnerabilities' and 'Empowering' Migrant Filipina Workers: the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency."

2   This quote comes directly from the DFA website history page (http://www.dfa.gov.ph/about/about-us.htm). For a deeper discussion of the these institutions, please see Robyn Rodriguez, forthcoming.

3   Executive Order 797 can be found in these internet archives (http://www.lawphil.net/executive/execord/eo1982/eo_797_1982.html). The services of the POEA can also be found on their website.

4   The picture is published on a nursing recruitment agency website (http://www.iqteam.com) sponsored by a government institution, the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA).

5   Between the deaths of Fely Garcia and Kadija Mansali, another domestic worker, Margerie Talumban, committed suicide in another mysterious case just as her son had come to join her. Talumban's arrangement with an American citizen for green card status and employers were never investigated.

6   The incongruence in immigrant narratives juxtaposed to state storylines litter homes, neighborhoods and communities. The promise of citizenship for undocumented youth for their service to the US military has taken many young Filipino men and women to Iraq. The claim that they are American heroes and the refusal in showing their faces or their caskets when the dead bodies come home serve as a iteration of the hero narratives and economies. It compels me to further study how the parallels

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in heroisms and moralities and bodies as corporeal objects and ask under what conditions are citizenship and membership so up for grabs?

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Empowerment/Disempowerment vis a vis Material Resources: Internal and External Influences Shaping Community Change

Marie Noel Ngoddo

Studies on resources often take a top-down approach which reduces the relationship between people and their resources "to the machinations and workings of the macro-state or the global market" (Sajor and Resurreccion 1998: 3). The top-down approach unwittingly blurs the significant role of micro-level factors and denies social actors of their agency in shaping events. This paper departs from the top-down approach and contributes to a more nuanced and in-depth study of the resource use of target communities at the micro- or at the most basic- level (see Prill-Brett 2006; Sajor and Resurreccion 1998; Long 2002). The paper emphasizes the concept of agency in looking at the relationship between the community members and their resources. Community members, as social actors, have the capacity to change the course of events no matter what the seeming constraints they face. When presented with development projects, social actors do not passively receive the intervention. Rather, they provide differing and calculated responses according to the perceived advantages that they could get from it. Community members are active agents who process and modify development projects according to their existing needs and realities (Long and van der Ploeg 1994).

Keywords: empowerment, disempowerment, material resources, agency, legal pluralism

Most studies that have been conducted on empowerment are on three themes: women's empowerment, empowerment in governance and community participation (Holland and Brook as quoted in Alsop and Heinsohn

2005: 26). This study aims to contribute to research on empowerment by focusing on material resources, since there is a lack of studies that focus particularly on this theme. Fewer still are studies of communities where significant changes—brought about by factors from within and outside of the community—in the use, management and control of material resources are occurring. It is important to consider these changes because most studies on resources especially of indigenous communities have been what Sajor (1998) refer to as static and ahistorical; that is, these studies fail to recognize that even so called traditional communities are changing, as well as the norms, rules and values accorded to resources.

This study was conducted in Sabangan *Ili* (village) in the town of Sabangan, Mt. Province. In this community, there have been changes in the internal regulatory orders (which cover the customary laws, norms and values) regarding the use, management and control of material resources. As a semi-autonomous social field, the community has also been open to regulatory orders from outside that have had considerable effect on its material resources. These include market forces, state legal system, interventions of development agencies, etc. Regulatory orders are being created and recreated as a result of the interaction between the different forces at work. The changes occurring in the use, management and control of material resources brought about by several forces and factors from within and outside of the community created a condition of legal pluralism, and thus the operation of multiple regulatory systems is observable in Sabangan Ili.

Given that the behavior of the community members is influenced by multiple regulatory orders (Vanderlinden 1989), the concern of this paper is to look into how the members of the community Sabangan Ili take advantage of the changes with regards material resources occurring in their midst, as well as the existence of several regulatory orders to promote their interests and secure their position. This is best illustrated through cases. Cases elucidate the different regulatory orders at work and how, on the one hand, these regulatory orders assert their power over the different players, and on the other hand, how the different players invoke these regulatory orders to gain power and advantage. From this, the paper looks at who are empowered/ disempowered in the process.

Legal pluralism is utilized as a tool for data analysis. I borrow Keebet von Benda-Beckmann's (1997) definition of legal pluralism: "It is when in a social field more than one source of law, more than one 'legal order' is observable, that the social order can be said to exhibit legal pluralism. Legal

pluralism does not presuppose that one legal system is superior over another. It only states that in actual situations, actors do not always make a clear distinction between differing legal systems and regulatory orders (Sajor and Resurreccion 1998).

EMPOWERMENT

The concept of empowerment is a relatively new development catchphrase.[1] It has been emphasized that meaningful development is not possible unless accompanied by empowerment. Thus, although relatively new, empowerment has become the active advocacy of many government and non-government agencies working with grassroots communities. However, the challenge with empowerment is that while it is widely used, it is rarely given a clear definition because it is assumed that people already know what it means (Rowlands 1996).

According to Uphoff (2005), an analysis of empowerment looks into the following concepts:

power resources: assets that can be accumulated, invested, expended, transacted, and exchanged, creating possibilities for achieving objectives; [2]

power results: whatever is achieved by the use of these resources or assets; and

processes whereby resources (power inputs) are converted into results (power outputs). This can be done with more or less skill, with more or less certainty, with more or less efficiency. The roles, relationships, activities, strategies, etc. that structure and achieve this conversion.

Two people having the same resource base do not achieve the same desired results. Furthermore, resources in themselves do not lead to results unless efforts and will are exerted. This makes the capability in the utilization of resource base an equally important determinant and should be considered in the analysis of empowerment. Uphoff provides two types of power capabilities – individual skills and collective organization. Individual skills may include literacy level or entrepreneurial skills. Collective organization is any cooperative activity in the community intended to achieve goals more efficiently. For Uphoff, capability is not the same as resources.[3] Capability is what steers resources into good use. Even if a person is provided with information or is endowed with land, capability is still needed in order for the information to be beneficial or for the land to bear fruit.

The World Bank's measuring empowerment (ME) framework as discussed in Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) is complementary to Uphoff's conceptualization of empowerment. In a nutshell, the framework looks at empowerment as:

> a person's capacity to make effective choices; that is, as the capacity to transform choices into desired actions and outcomes. The extent or degree to which a person is empowered is influenced by personal agency (the capacity to make purposive choice) and opportunity structure (the institutional context in which choice is made). Asset endowments are used as indicators of agency. These assets may be psychological, informational, organizational, material, social, financial, or human. Opportunity structure is measured by the presence and operation of formal and informal institutions, including the laws, regulatory frameworks, and norms governing behavior. Degrees of empowerment are measured by the existence of choice, the use of choice and the achievement of choice.

The ME framework focuses on three interrelated concepts: asset endowment as indicator of agency, opportunity structure, and degree of empowerment. Agency and asset endowment are complementary to capability and power resources discussed earlier. Note however that Uphoff looks at capability as different from resource while the measuring empowerment framework regards asset endowment as equivalent to agency. Furthermore, what Uphoff regard as capability—individual skills and collective organization—is subsumed under assets—human assets (e.g. skills or literacy) and organizational assets (e.g. membership in organization)—in the measuring empowerment framework.

Opportunity structure has similarities with Uphoff's processes in that both pertain to the structure (the rules, roles, regulatory frameworks, etc.) that, on one hand, determines a person's access to resources and, on the other, facilitates or deters a person's achievement of desired outcomes. Degree of empowerment is about choice and chance – whether a choice exists and whether the person takes the chance to use the choice as an opportunity to achieve objectives.

Material Resources: Land is the primary material resource dealt in this study. Other material resource include sand and gravel, forest products particularly timber, and financial resources. Financial resource is not a material resource per se. It is also, according to Berthoud (1993: 79), a social and political resource, but it is nevertheless referred to in this study as a material resource. Material resources are means that are employed to achieve needs

and wants. Possession of these resources, e.g. financial resources, enables a person to attain some level of physical well-being. Thus, the possession of material resources can be ends or desired outcomes in themselves.

Opportunity structure covers the 'laws, regulatory frameworks, and norms governing behavior with regard the use of material resources. These can be 'laws, regulatory frameworks, and norms' inherent in the community. They can also be 'laws, regulatory frameworks, and norms' influenced by external factors and agencies. The opportunity structure determines a person's access to resources and can facilitate or deter the achievement of results he desires.[4]

Material resources in themselves do not accrue to results. In the same way, opportunity structures are only as good as how the community members take advantage of them. Capability is how the community members employ their material resources in order to achieve desired outcomes with more efficiency. Individual skills and collective organization make the achievement of needs and wants more efficient. Capability also refers to how community members take advantage of the opportunity structures that are presented as a result of the changes in the use of material resources that are occurring within their community as well as the opportunity structures presented as a result of the interventions of outside agencies in order to promote their interest and secure their positions. Capacity is the ability to make effective choices.

The concept of agency as espoused by Norman Long and Jan van der Ploeg (1994) expounds the concepts of capability and capacity. The concept of agency explains the "differential responses" of social actors to similar structural circumstances. This means that a given intervention by outside agencies can meet different responses given the different experiences of the target beneficiaries as well as their capacity to manipulate the intervention so that it fits their existing needs and realities. Long and van der Ploeg consider this a form of power.

This study looks at empowerment as a process. A person or a group is said to be empowered if their material resources and capabilities are enhanced so that the probability that they will achieve what they need and want is higher. That is, a person or a group is said to be empowered if they are able to make more effective choices and decisions to achieve what they need and want. Disempowerment occurs when a person's or a group's access or use of material resources is constrained, giving them less or zero probability in achieving their goals. The changes in the use of material resources and the intervention of outside agencies can be sources of constraints.

CHANGES IN PROPERTY SYSTEM

The changes in property system illustrate the multiple forces from within and outside Sabangan Ili that have impacted on the use, management and control of material resources and created a condition of legal pluralism. The most significant material resource in Sabangan has always been land; its significance has never waned. But there have been changes in the land property system which mirror the changing perception of the people towards the resource. In the early 20th century, land in Sabangan was still classified into three types, according to ownership.[5] First are the individual or family-owned lands *(bukod)* which can be passed on as inheritance. A land declaration or a land title can be applied for it and it can thereby be sold, exchanged, or offered to serve as collateral. Individual or family-owned land include the *payew* (irrigated ricefield), the *uma* (nonirrigated field), the house lot, and any land that has been purchased by the individual or the family. Some timberlands and pasturelands are also individual or family-owned.

Second, there are still a few plots of land that could be classified as corporate or clan property in the early 20th century. Clan property is referred to as *albobo* and this belongs to all those who trace their descent to a common ancestor.[6] Each of the clan members is given usufructuary rights to the albobo. Thus, in theory, it can not be land-declared; it can not be sold or exchanged. Clan properties are usually timberlands where clan members can gather timber needed in building their houses. Some clan properties are grassy which can be used as pastureland. There are albobos planted with mango trees, whose fruits the clan members share. A clan member can also make swidden farms for camote and legumes in clan properties. Interested member-families take turns in the swiddening or utilization of swidden farms found in albobos.[7]

The third type of land is the village communal land to which every member of the community is given access and rights of use and benefit. Communal lands are those within the domain of the ili which have not been claimed as an albobo or are not privately-owned. Community members can make swidden farms in communal lands and no one disallows it. Communal lands are forestlands used as timberlands and hunting grounds, or they can be grasslands used for pasture. Portions of village communal lands can be converted to family-owned lands after permanent improvements have been done on them. Permanent improvements include levelling the terrain, construction of ricefields, building and channelling of irrigation canals, and stonewalling. A person who grows pine trees in a barren portion of a

communal forest can claim ownership of that portion. The portion of the forest can no longer be part of the communal land once permanent improvements have been done; it is now declared individually or family-owned timberland.

A significant change in the land property system is the loss of corporate or clan property (albobo), and this is the result of several factors. The first of these is the introduction of state laws that put primary importance to land declaration as a means of security of land tenure. Early on the people of Sabangan realized the supposed benefits of land declarations. Years before World War II, there were already many residents who had their lands declared. Likewise, the people of Sabangan realized the power that a signature has on land ownership. It has been told that, in the 1930s, when the wealthy landed woman Kalingban (who did not have a single family member alive) was on her deathbed, some people went to the extent of getting her thumb mark as proof that they were her heirs. Informants also recall the land assessment conducted during the incumbency of Pres. Manuel Quezon as a significant event. In this land assessment program, the government asked the residents to register their lands; otherwise, they would become part of the public domain. This was a cue to the residents of Sabangan to declare their lands.

The albobos were greatly contested in land declarations. Member-relatives decided to subdivide their albobos among themselves and had them declared. Some calculating members declared entire albobos without their relatives' or other clan members' knowledge. Some took advantage of the absence of some members who were working outside the community such as in the mines[8] or in the city. They introduced permanent improvements on the albobo which legitimized their sole claim to the land. Some elderly informants estimate that there were already no clan properties after the war, save for some mango trees whose fruits were all shared by the clan members. The albobos either became payew or uma or they had already been subdivided among the relatives (*nabato-batog* or *namungsan*). By then, albobo came to refer to an extended family land, which usually took the form of a wide payew or uma which siblings can take turns farming.[9] But even payew and uma owned by an extended family were eventually subdivided among siblings. At present, albobo is a nearly forgotten concept.

Aside from land declarations, the entry of Sabangan residents to wage labor in, for example, the booming mining industry in Benguet, and the outmigration of residents to the cities were factors why it was difficult to

maintain clan and extended family properties. Finin (2005: 173) mentions that many of the highlanders who worked in the mines in Benguet decided to settle permanently in Baguio City. This was true for the I-Sabangan who worked in the mines. When these residents settled permanently in Baguio City or in other places, they saw it fit to sell their portion of the land to siblings staying in the ili. They felt they did not have a stake to the land anymore. At the same time, those who were working in the mines afforded them wages that enabled them to buy the share of their siblings. Thus, together with land declarations, land alienation was common as early as before World War II which further shows the changing notion of community members towards land.

Population increase was also a contributory factor to the loss of clan and extended family properties.[10] Before, it was possible to manage the properties because fewer members took turns in utilizing the land. But when the demand for land increased with the burgeoning population, the members simply could not afford to wait for their turn to use the land. Bennagen's observation that "with agricultural intensification resulting from population pressure and the penetration of concepts of individual property rights, not to mention the pressure to meet new consumer needs, even swiddens are now being used permanently by the original cultivators" (1996:19-20) applies to Sabangan Ili.

The designated village communal lands were also contested in land declarations. Village communal lands were not private properties; thus, they were not supposed to be tax-declared. But there were cases where certain individuals or families declared portions of village communal lands under their names. For example, Cada was a mountain designated as a communal area, but in the 1970s, there were individuals who declared some portions of it as theirs. In another instance, one elderly woman declared a portion of Danum, the mountain directly facing Poblacion as hers when it became clear to her that SMART Telecommunication would build a signal tower there. The mountain was part of the designated village communal area. Now, the elder woman is reportedly collecting a P10,000 monthly rental from SMART. Community members did not only lay claim to portions of the forests, but to other areas of the ili considered public areas as well. It has been observed that pigpens or small storehouses have been constructed above the drainage canals passing the different sitios. Some newly constructed houses have also been extended covering the upper portion of the drainage canals.

The application for land declaration attests to the changing notion that community members have to land. The reason community members give for having their lands declared is to ensure and legitimize their claim of ownership to the land. It would be easy for other people to claim the land as theirs if they do not have land declarations.[11] This shows that land declarations have become the basis for land ownership. It is no longer the case that actual use of the land provides security of land ownership. The customary norm that declares that the more labor and improvements that are invested in an area of land, the greater the right of claim to ownership (Prill-Brett 1993; Enkiwe, Baldino, Pogeyed 1998) does not hold true anymore. Informants constantly mention that the government claims land as part of the public domain of the state if the person does not tax declare it. Moreover, a land declaration enables the titleholder to alienate the land using the current market price. And it is not always the case anymore that land be offered for sale first to kin members at a lower price.

Aside from tax declarations, community members have learned to utilize other means to ascertain security of land ownership. Community members who are working or who have settled permanently outside of Sabangan Ili feel that a tax declaration may not be enough as security of land ownership. This for instance in the case of community members who work and live in Baguio City, but who still own lands in Sabangan. These community members use free patent issued by DENR to protect their land in their absence.[12] Free patents are considered better than tax declarations. Surprisingly, based on the observation of the DENR-Sabangan personnel in charge in the Lands Management Division, even those who are living within the community but who have just a few agricultural lands also actively apply for free patents. They do so perhaps to protect the few plots that they have. Community members who have had experiences with land dispute cases are also the first to apply for free patents. These community members have learned that a land title or a free patent provides a stronger claim in land disputes as compared to a tax declaration.

Some community members have also learned to make use of the Certificate of Stewardship Contract (CSC) issued by DENR to claim resources.[13] The Sorianos, for example, declared their farmland in Bebe-an, located above the national road in the Ili. However, they included in their declaration the farmland of the Marianos which has not been tended for some time. Mrs. Mariano learned of this and complained. Her complaint was futile because she did not have a land declaration. The Sorianos secured a Certificate of

Stewardship Contract to further secure their interest in the land in Bebe-an. There are pine trees interspersed in the farmland so it qualified for the CSC. As a form of land tenure, the CSC in the hands of the Sorianos have totally crippled the entitlement of the Marianos to their farmland.

It is important to note that the Chico River runs along Sabangan. The river is part of the village communal resource, so community members are allowed to benefit from its resources. Community members who want their houses cemented can readily avail of the sand from the river. Infrastructure for the community such as pathways, flood control dikes, etc. can also make use of the sand and gravel from the river for free.

However, pursuant to the Mining Act of 1995, the extraction of sand and gravel is now regulated. A permit from PENRO (Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office) is required before anyone can quarry sand and gravel. The issuance of permit, however, has been taken advantage of by business-minded community members. They secure a permit from PENRO, by virtue of which, they possess the authority to collect payments from those who quarry sand and gravel from the area covered by their permit. Thus, the river which is a communal resource is now under the control of a few individuals. Other community members can not now freely have sand and gravel from the river.

CASES

To show in detail how community members of Sabangan Ili take advantage of the existence of several regulatory orders to promote their interests and secure their position with regards material resources, two cases are presented below. These cases involve land disputes, and they provide a picture of how community members at the micro-level employ different normative systems and regulatory orders in order to gain material resources or protect the material resources that they already have.

Dagiwdiw Land Dispute Case[14]

Dagiwdiw is the name of a hill situated in the Eastern part of Sabangan Ili. It became an albobo of the followers of the Aglipayan Church, referred to as the *Kumbaba*, which was very active in Sabangan during the first half of the 20th century. Kumbaba members would travel by foot to Sabangan to join fellow Kumbabas in the ili for praise and worship. Kumbaba members from many parts of Mt. Province—as far as Agawa and Tamboan of Besao;

Tetep-an and Amkileng of Sagada; Alab, Balili and Gonogon of Bontoc; Otucan, Bila and Bagnin of Bauko, etc.—all worked on Dagiwdiw transforming the hill into terraced ricefields and unirrigated farms. The transformation of Dagiwdiw was accomplished through the leadership of Baket Kalingban, a *kadangyan*[15] and a noted leader of the Kumbabas. Baket Kalingban used his resources to feed the Kumbaba members during the entire time they were working on Dagiwdiw. A house was built on the hill as the group's headquarter.

Baket Kalingban designated Pedro Da-o, a Kumbaba member, to serve as caretaker of Dagiwdiw. Since the Kumbaba members paid only seasonal visits to Sabangan, it was Pedro Da-o and his family who tilled the lands in Dagiwdiw. A share of the harvest from the land was allocated for the use of Kumbaba members during their visit to Sabangan or when they went to other places to worship with other members. A portion of the harvest was given to Pedro Da-o for his work as caretaker.

In theory, the land in Dagiwdiw could not be land-declared because it was a group's albobo. However, Lakay Pedro Da-o declared the land in Dagiwdiw under his name. He declared a total of 1.5 hectares which was the largest land ever declared by one person in a single area in Sabangan. The lands were declared before World War II, but it was only after the war when the Kumbaba members learned of it. They took notice when Lakay Da-o was not giving them a share of the harvest. Lakay Pedro Compalas, the leader of the Kumbaba after Kalingban's death, and the other Kumbaba members from different parts of Mt. Province challenged Lakay Da-o in court and hired Atty. Pio Marcos to represent them.

According to one account, Lakay Da-o declared the land under his name, on the advise of an Ilocano judge/lawyer. Another account said that it was the elders of Sabangan Ili who advised Lakay Da-o to do so. The elders' advice to Lakay Da-o was triggered by their fear that there would come a time when the Kumbaba members from many parts of Mt. Province would flock to Sabangan and claim the land as theirs.

The case was heard in the sala of Judge Berganza at the Municipal Hall in Nacagang, Sabangan. Informants recall that there were many people who flocked to the court hearings. The Kumbaba members reasoned that the land belonged to them by virtue of the labor that they had invested in transforming the hill. Pedro Da-o countered that the land belonged to him, because he had been farming and managing it. He also reasoned that Baket Kalingban

gave him blessings to own the land. The Sabangan Ili elders knew that the Kumbaba members improved Dagiwdiw; they had observed the latter working on the land. They even refer to Dagiwdiw as the albobo of the Aglipayans. Still, they supported and testified in favor of Pedro Da-o because they felt threatened that if Dagiwdiw remained in the hand of the Kumbaba, Kumbaba members from other parts of Mt. Province would flock to Sabangan and compete for the already scarce resources of the community. Their support of Pedro Da-o was therefore a move to secure the material resources of the community.

The court ruled that the land belonged to Pedro Da-o.[16] Naturally, Pedro Compalas felt bad about the decision of the court and regarded Lakay Da-o as a usurper. Marriage was used as a method for peace settlement. Da-o had a daughter. Compalas also only had a girl. However, his wife had a nephew, and they married the nephew to Da-o's daughter. Some plots of land in Dagiwdiw were given to the couple, and this promptly ended Compalas' animosity towards Lakay Da-o.

Pisto-an Land Dispute Case[17]

Another case of land dispute involved some residents of Sabangan Ili and the Episcopal or Anglican Church. The land in question was Pisto-an, located in Sitio Lengey, Poblacion. Pisto-an was a flat and a relatively large tract of land that belonged to the wealthy landed woman Kalingban (the same woman mentioned in the first case) and her husband, Pulayos. Pisto-an consisted of several parcels of non-irrigated fields owned by several individuals. Kalingban and Pulayos owned a field in the area. In need of a larger area for the construction of the Aglipayan church, Kalingban exchanged with the owners of the fields found in Pisto-an her land located in other parts of the ili. The other field-owners agreed and thus, the land in Pisto-an came to be owned by Kalingban and Pulayos (*inamong da*). The Aglipayan members built a church in Pisto-an. It was actually at this time that the area came to be known as Pisto-an, because it was the *pwesto-an* (site or spot) of the church.

Informants recall that, Father Edward Longid came to Sabangan in the late 1950s and met with Lakay Pedro Compalas who became the leader of the Aglipayans after Kalingban's death. Father Longid requested that the Anglican Church and Aglipayans take turns in using the church built by the Aglipayans. It was thus agreed that the Aglipayans would use the church in the early morning, while the Anglicans would use it later. Fr. Longid also suggested that they build a house for Lakay Compalas near the church. The

Aglipayan members took charge of the "body" and the Anglican members were responsible for the roof. At the death of Lakay Compalas, the house served as the dormitory of the Anglican resident priests. Most of the followers of the Aglipayan church became Anglicans when the Aglipayan faith weakened after World War II, and many of the descendants of the earlier Aglipayans joined the Anglican Church.

The dispute started in the late 1980s when some residents of Sabangan challenged the legitimacy of the Anglican's stay at Pisto-an and questioned their ownership of the land. These residents were contractors of infrastructure projects. By 2005, the case became a full-blown law suit. The contractors started building a gymnasium covering the whole of Pisto-an resulting in the demolition of the Anglican Church. The Episcopal diocese was forced to file a suit of forcible entry at the Bauko-Sabangan Municipal Circuit Trial Court. The construction of the gymnasium proceeded even while the Bauko-Sabangan Municipal Circuit Trial Court was hearing the case. Later, the Regional Trial Court ruled that the land belonged to the diocese. The case is now on appeal with the Supreme Court.

This case illustrates the different normative orders that are invoked by the different actors and how they take advantage of opportunity structures to promote their interest and secure their material resources. The Anglican's claim of ownership of the land in Pisto-an was based on legal documents. This is seen in a statement issued by the Convention Secretary of the Episcopal Diocesan of Bontoc:

> The lot was transferred through a deed of donation executed on 1 April 1958 between Aglipayan leader Pedro Compalas Aglipay and Fr. Edward Longid representing the Episcopal Church in the USA which had jurisdiction of the Philippine Episcopal Church at that time. The church building was transferred through a deed of sale dated 3 November 1958 (Ananayo 2006).

The contention of the few residents who challenged the Anglican's stay at Pisto-an was that the land belonged to Kalingban and the Aglipayans. After the death of Kalingban and the Aglipayan members, the land should have reverted as village communal land. As communal land, its use should not be limited to the Anglicans, but for other community members as well. They do not regard the land as belonging to the Anglican Church. Indeed, my interviews with elder informants reveal that they still regard the land as belonging to Kalingban and the Aglipayan Church, and they are not aware of the deed of donation and deed of sale that was executed between the

Aglipayans and the Anglicans. Some elder informants mention that it was only the church building that was sold by Lakay Compalas, not the lot.

The few residents who challenged the Anglican's stay at Pisto-an (herein referred to as challengers) could have intentionally ignored the deed of donation and deed of sale between the Aglipayan and the Episcopal Church because they had vested interests in the land in Pisto-an. As contractors, they had long been interested in building a gymnasium in the area. It was a big-budget infrastructure project that they found difficult to resist. The challengers were supported by the late long-time Mt. Province Congress Representative Victor Dominguez, and it was in fact the latter's Community Development Fund that financed the project. For the challengers, the backing of a long-time congress representative legitimized their claim and actions in Pisto-an.

The relationship of the challengers with Rep. Dominguez can be said to be reciprocal. The challengers are avid and long-time supporters of the congressman. They mobilize forces during election campaigns. The congressman in turn has allocated infrastructure projects to them. Such reciprocal relationship may be considered extra-legal, but it is one concrete manifestation of the diverse normative systems that residents employ to secure and consolidate material resources. As Moore (1978) claims in her study of a garment industry, "the flow of prestations, attention and favors" are directed to "persons who have it in their power to allocate labor, capital or business deals."

Meanwhile, the Anglican Church has also mobilized the forces of the church for support. At the height of the issue of the demolition of the St. Peter's Church, Anglican priests and bishops gathered in Sabangan as a form of protest. Among those who attended were two Anglican bishops who were natives of Sabangan Ili. The Episcopal Church posted announcements on the issue on their website, gathering support from the international Episcopal community. The issue of the desecration of St. Peter's Church brought about by the demolition was emphasized. Because the image of the desecration of religious entities was an effective tool to rally support to stop the building of the gymnasium.

Even more interesting was the thorough research done in the history of the Aglipayan and the Anglican Church which was utilized by the Episcopal Diocese to strengthen their claim of Pisto-an. This was evident in the statement issued by the Episcopal Diocese of Bontoc. They traced the history of the establishment of the Kumbaba faith in Sabangan, Baket Kalingban's

consolidation of the lands in Pisto-an, the coming of the Anglican Church in Sabangan, and the development of a so called "concordat" relationship between the two churches:

> The Aglipayan Church and the Episcopal Church were in the process of developing a concordat relationship characterized by mutual help and respect for each other. This started with the bestowal of the gift of apostolic succession to the Aglipayan bishops, and the acceptance of Aglipayan seminarians at the Anglican theological seminary in Q.C. in 1947. The "Concordat of Full Communion" between the Aglipayan Church and the Episcopal Church was signed in September 1961.

> It was in the context of developing the concordat relations that the Aglipayan congregation welcomed the Anglicans to use their church in Lengey for worship and devotions. At the start, the two congregations held separate worship services but eventually, the Aglipayans and the Anglicans prayed and worshipped together. The relationship was nurtured by a succession of Anglican priests starting with Fr. Edward Longid when he was the priest-in-charge of St. Michael and All Angels Church, Tadian in the 1950s (Ananayo 2006).

The cases just presented illustrate the interactions of the concepts discussed earlier – material resources, opportunity structure, and the interrelated concepts of agency, capability, capacity and empowerment. Uphoff's analysis and measurement of empowerment and the World Bank's measuring empowerment framework informed these concepts.

In the Dagiwdiw Land Dispute and Pisto-an Land Dispute Case, the agency and capability of the community members is observed in how they choose and employ several of the different normative systems to support their claim to resources and secure their interests. They use the rules inherent in their community (customary laws), rules that were introduced in the community (state laws) or rules that were created as a result of the interaction between customary and state laws. They utilize norms that are considered outside of the legal system such as marriage, the use of religion, and 'reciprocal obligations' (seen in the relationship between the contractors and Congressman Dominguez). And if these were not enough, they create their own discourse or knowledge claim. This is seen in their use of historical research as a form of authority to advance their claim. Through the cases, it is seen that the community members are affected by the current states of affairs. At the same time, they are agents who have the capacity to influence and affect such states of affairs. Long and van der Ploeg (1994: 66) see this as a form of power.

A person or a group is said to be empowered if their material resources and capabilities are enhanced so that they have a higher probability of achieving what they need and want. In the Dagiwdiw Land Dispute Case, the decision of the elders of Sabangan Ili who testified in favor of Lakay Da-o in order to prevent the Kumbaba members from different parts of Mt. Province to flock to Sabangan and compete with the already scarce resources of the community can be said to be empowering. The elders believe that having too many people competing for resources would eventually constrain the access of community members of Sabangan Ili *to* resources, so they prevented this from happening through their decision to support Lakay Da-o. This case manifests the agency of the elders because, they were able to influence the outcome of events.

A person or group is said to be empowered when they are able to make more effective choices and decisions to achieve what they need and want. There is a gamut of normative systems operating in Sabangan Ili which provides opportunities for the community members. However, in the final analysis, it is in how the community members invoke these normative systems that they can really be considered as opportunities. Community members invoke different regulatory orders depending on the issue at hand. Community members invoke the regulatory order where they can gain better leverage. Thus, "[f]rom the point of view of social practice, normative orders—whether customary or statutory—are only as good as how social actors instrumentalize them in concrete social interactions and contexts (Sajor 1998: 171). Again, the agency of community members is manifested here.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The changes in land property system are seen to provide avenues for the empowerment/disempowerment of community members. A condition of legal pluralism can be said to be empowering to the residents of Sabangan Ili in as much as it allows them more choices or what Long and van der Ploeg (1994) referred to as room for maneuver and space for one's interest. The capability of the community members is seen in their employment of several normative systems when their material resources are challenged. For instance, community members can choose to make use of a land declaration or a free patent if they feel that the customary law is insufficient as security of land ownership.

The disempowering aspects include the loss of institutional arrangements that are responsive to the poor members of the community. This is seen for

instance in the conversion of land from corporate to individually-owned properties. According to Prill-Brett (2006), village communal lands and corporate properties are important support mechanism for the poor members of the community. When their individually-owned lands are not enough to support the needs of their families, community members can invoke their usufructuary rights in the village communal lands or the corporate properties where they are members. The clearing for swidden gardens in communal lands is thus an additional source of subsistence for the family. With albobos now gone, opportunities and options for poor members of the community has been lessened.

Some interventions of outside agencies, such as DENR are also said to be disempowering, because they open opportunities for a few members of the community to be in sole control of the community's common resources thereby preventing the others equal access to and use of the resources. The regulation of PENRO covering the quarrying of sand and gravel provided opportunity structure or avenues for the businessmen and contractors to gain control of the sand and gravel resources of the community through the application of a permit. This is a far cry from the customary institutional arrangement that regards the sand and gravel as village communal resource to which all community members have equal access.

As a consequence of the regulations issued by PENRO, the other community members have to pay to those who have permits if they want sand and gravel. They are therefore said to be disempowered using the definition of disempowerment provided earlier – disempowerment happens when a person's or a group's access to or use of material resources are constrained giving them less or zero probability of achieving their goals.

NOTES

1   The concept of empowerment started to be given attention to in the 1980s following the idea of providing a 'human face' to development (Rowlands 1997).

2   Uphoff provides his summary of the different power resources based on his review of social science literature. The power bases are categorized into six: economic resources which cover "control over land, labor and/ or capital as well as the goods and services produced therefrom:" social resources which refers to "social status or standing;" political resources

or the benefits that comes from being in authority as well as being able to influence authority; informational resources or knowledge; moral resources or legitimacy; and physical resources or physical force be it coercion or violence. Power resources are referred to in other literature as bases of power, power assets, asset endowments, etc.

3   Other literature (See Friedmann 1992; Alsop and Heinsohn 2005, in their discussion of the measuring empowerment framework being used by the World Bank) classify individual skills and forms of cooperative organizations as power resources or assets.

4   Giddens refers to these structures as rules and resources – that is, the socio-cultural and legal environment that rules out who gets access to resources (Illo 2003).

5   See Prill-Brett (1993) for a thorough discussion of the property regimes (common property, corporate property and individual property) of the Bontok which share similarities with the property system of Sabangan Ili.

6   Albobo was also used to refer to lands owned by an entire group such as the lands developed by the Aglipayans or Pakumbaba followers in Dagiwdiw, a hill situated at the eastern part of Sabangan Ili. More discussion of this in the Dagiwdiw Land Dispute Case.

7   No one individual or family can claim an albobo as his/her own even if s/he is utilizing it. A particular clan member is discouraged from holding an albobo for more than three years, lest it will give the impression to that particular clan member's heirs or family members that the land belongs to them. In the case of swidden farms found in albobos, it is advised that after two or three years, the land be passed to other clan members who are willing to cultivate it.

8   The big mines of Suyoc, Antamok, Baguio Gold and Benguet Consolidated were already in full-blown operation before the break of World War II (Finin 2005: 91). Many residents of Sabangan Ili worked in these mines.

9   People from other parts of Mt. Province describe the people of Sabangan Ili as *nagedgegedged an lagayan da*. When literally translated, it means their wrap-around skirts are tattered. The expression is a reference to the lands of the people of Sabangan being subdivided among the relatives. It is also used to refer to the practice of equal inheritance—lands being equally divided among children in contrast to the the tradition of primogeniture—the first child inherits the bulk of the property, and homoparental rule—the female child inherits the mother's properties while the male child inherits those of the father's—of neighboring communities.

10 Land declaration and population increase are also mentioned by Prill-Brett (1993) as reasons for the dissolution of corporate property resources among the Bontoks

11 Prill-Brett (2006: 17-18) says that the Ibaloys provide the same reasons for having their lands declared.

12 The issuance of a free patent is part of the government's effort to convert chosen areas of the public domain into private ownership. It is the opinion of the government that it is better for the country "to have a large public domain come under private ownership" (Dominquez 1990: 7). Once portions of the public lands are classified as agricultural lands, it is declared alienable and disposable and these are the lands covered for free patenting.

13 The awarding of CSC to individuals is part of the Integrated Forest Management Programme of the government. The CSC is "a contract entered into by and between an individual forest occupant ... and the government allowing the former the right to peaceful occupation, possession and sustainable management over a designated portion of the forest land for a period of 25 years" (Dominguez 1990). As a contract, this certificate serves as a form of security of land tenure. Land declaration was a prior criterion in the awarding of the contract. The application and awarding of CSC to residents of Sabangan Ili started in the early and mid-90s. Most of the informants were born years before World War II at the time when the Aglipayan Church was still active in Sabangan. The image of visiting Aglipayan members in their white upper garments and white knee-length pants (porontong) carrying fruits and vegetables when they visited Sabangan for praise and worship were still clear in the minds of the informants. They heard from their parents and elders that the Aglipayan members transformed Dagiwdiw.

14 Informants for Dagiwdiw case: a) Paolo Colaling, date of interview: 24 August 2007; b) Andres 'Damollog' Degay, dates of interview: 4 October 2007 and 17 December 2007; c) Wale Las-ig, dates of interview: 22 August 2007, 3 October 2007 and 15 December 2007; d) Cornelia Palicos, date of interview: 23 August 2007; and e) Layan Palicos, date of interview: 4 October 2007. All interviews were conducted in Sabangan.

15 Kadangyan refers to the landed gentry.

16 Some informants say that the decision of the court was based on the testimony of the elders of Sabangan Ili. Others say the decision was based on the land declaration of Pedro Da-o. One informant says that Mr. Dao won because he presented a signature of Baket Kalingban authorizing him to be the owner of the lands in Dagiwdiw.

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Research in Progress:

A Feminist Reading of Filipina Sexuality in LitErotika Novels

Elinor May Cruz

This paper conducts a feminist reading of Filipina sexuality, specifically in the erotica novel genre that produces explicit representations of women and sexuality. Three Tagalog LitErotika novels are analyzed and a reflection and deflection of society have become apparent. Contrary to pornography's misogynistic and deceptive nature, the three novels embody the Filipina sexuality in a more appreciative and honest sense. As an added force in the creation of power-knowledge on Filipina sexuality, the ephemeral nature of discourse gives hope for a reconstruction of the realities the Filipino people inherit and take for granted. In using an untapped source of the representation of Filipina sexuality, this study hopes to contribute to future studies on similar topics.

Keywords: feminism, sexuality, LitErotika novels, "chic lit," popular culture

INTRODUCTION

The representation of women is said to be another tool in the promotion and sustainment of inequality and discrimination (Deabanico 2003). And this phenomenon is entrenched in the modern locus of pervasive signs and symbols more commonly known as popular culture. Among its other means to one end on female sexuality, popular culture produces and reproduces an

'eroticized' representation of women. As a result, only false official versions of female sexuality are found in popular culture:

> "Popular culture shows almost none of female sexuality. It censors representations of women's bodies so that only the official versions are visible. Rather than seeing images of female desire or that cater to female desire, we see little about true female sexuality. Women rarely—and almost never outside a competitive context—see what other women look like naked; we see identical humanoid products based loosely on women's bodies" (Wolf 1992).

The representation of women by and in society emphasized in prominent feminist works, in conjunction with the consequent responses of feminist movements over time, shows that this monolithic capitalist and patriarchal institution—a socioeconomic political enterprise consisting of veiled omnipresent structures—constantly reinvents itself to keep a stronghold of its influence on the imposed sexuality of women.

In 1792, philosopher and feminist Mary Wollstonecraft (2004) wrote in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* on the dehumanization of women through their roles as properties traded in marriage or as mere ornaments. Wollstonecraft has been a large source of inspiration for first wave feminists in their advocacy for suffrage (Art and Popular Culture n.d.). In 1963, activist and feminist writer Betty Friedan (1983) wrote in *The Feminine Mystique*[1] about the dehumanization of women through their representation as frigid housewives. Friedan is considered the 'Mother of the Movement' of second wave feminists in their advocacy for civic and economic equality (Boucher 2003). In 1992, political consultant and feminist writer, Naomi Wolf (1992) wrote in *The Beauty Myth* about the dehumanization of women through their representation as the bruised and elegant Iron Maiden. Wolf is the leading spokesperson of the third wave of the feminist movement in their use and critique of media and popular culture (Heywood 2006).

It seems that the prevailing underlying issue, encompassing the advocacies of the first, second and third waves of the feminist movements, as a consequence of the operations of the prevailing societal institutions, is this: 'Why is the nature of women's desire perceived to pose a threat to society?' And equally important, as a result, 'Why do representations of women by and in society focus on their sexuality?' If sex is often understood as the hidden truth of who we are (Foucault 1978), and if society is in a constant state of denial of women's sexuality, then can we also infer a willful denial of their own being?

These are looming questions. Although post-feminism became a buzz word since the twentieth century, there still are beliefs on the existence of new traditionalism where stereotypes of women are embodied in new and yet strangely familiar forms. Wolf's (1992) examples of beauty pornography and beauty sadomasochism discredit the claims of post-feminism.

Although there is a vast number of scholarly studies in the Philippines on the representations of women in different mediums of popular culture, it is surprising and disappointing to note that there is a serious lack of research on Filipina sexuality (Tan 1998; Estrada-Claudio 1996). In hopes of making a significant contribution to the discourse on Filipina sexuality, an exploratory analysis of a largely untapped source – LitErotika novels, a relatively new publication in the erotica genre, provides a wellspring of representations of Filipinas and their sexualities by and in the context of Philippine popular culture. If Wolf wrote that popular culture shows almost none of female sexuality, then how does erotica, as a form of popular culture, qualify in its explicit representation of female sexuality? However, due to the limited number of published LitErotika novels during the time the research is carried out, only three LitErotika novels are explored and analyzed: *One Night Stand*, *Mingaw* and *Foursome*.

This paper presents the initial findings of the analysis comprising the LitErotika novels' reflection and deflection of society. Towards the end, a dereification of institutionalized Filipina sexuality is called for in the exploration of erotica as an added force in the creation of power-knowledge in the unraveling of a free Filipina in popular culture.

FILIPINA SEXUALITY IN LITEROTIKA NOVELS: A REFLECTION AND DEFLECTION OF SOCIETY

The three LitErotika novels are found to widely contain terms commonly used by and in Philippine popular culture. This literary device helps equip the stories, much like any fiction, with a realistic account of the characters and their experiences. But more importantly, whose accounts do the novels attempt to reflect, and, if any, deflect; in accordance to, or in contrast with, society in their representation of Filipina sexuality?

The main characters of the stories personify 'single young middle class women,' and a breakdown of this construct shows an emergence of the following factors pertinent in the novels' representation of Filipina sexuality: class, age, appearance, attitude on sex and sexuality, and relationships with the opposite sex.

The characters in the novels are women in their late teens and early 20s and all are understood to possess beauty that is either noticeable or concealed. They have 'sexy' figures despite some who have already given birth and some who are not as obvious because of the preference to wear less revealing clothes. This age group, aside from being commonly associated with youthfulness and an active sex life; is likely to have an independent and indulgent lifestyle which boils down to purchasing power. It is therefore clear that those who are casted in the stories are the target market. This representation is at the same time an absence of those who do not meet these qualifications, they become invisible in the novels. In the same way that poor and older women are never identified with their sexual nature in society, they are singled out with their wrinkled faces, unfashionable clothes, worn-out bodies, wailing children and never ending drudgeries of housework. On the other hand, those who were taken into account as represented in the female characters of the LitErotika novels are shown to be in control of their own bodies. These single young middle class women have brown complexion, petite figures and average cup sizes that do not deter them from exploring and defining their sexuality and ultimately themselves.

On attitude towards sex and sexuality, the female characters attribute the loss of virginity to becoming a complete woman. The context of losing their virginity is also alluded to romantic or ideal love. Moreover, the female characters carry the burden of contraception during sex and female masturbation in itself is mostly described as less satisfying compared to genital penetration. Nonetheless, the LitErotika novels do not portray the female characters as victims in their first sexual encounters. The glorious discovery of orgasm supplants the mournful loss of virginity. In fact, the female characters play active roles during sex, are promiscuous, oftentimes play more straightforward roles than the male characters, and their pleasure is given importance by their male partners. They are very much inclined to pursue pleasure for themselves, with the common repressive guilt among women nowhere to be found.

In relationships with the opposite sex, reversed gender roles are also featured in the novels but not without attempts to stabilize this gender trouble through instances of 'rape' or rough sex, devirginization, a female character foregoing her own orgasm, etc. One metaphor of a female character 'developing her own penis' during sex even becomes a testament to penis envy.

In the context of heterosexual love, female characters initially depicted as strong and independent become soft and conventional. In an extreme sense, heterosexual love is regarded as the ultimate chance for a new lease in life. *"Sex with Paolo is like crying after 'City of Angels,' and then being given the chance to change the ending...Like watching 'Sweet November,' and hearing the news that love can cure any terminal illness"* (English translation). LitErotika novels illustrate the female characters' dependence on men to the point that they find their identities only when they fall in love. Furthermore, it is only in the context of a monogamous and romantic relationship that sex and orgasm are most pleasurable in the stories. Monogamy then becomes a way to control the female characters' bodies just as much as their lust needed to be punished and contained by wearing tight or skinny jeans; except when the time comes that the right man is there to unzip it. Interestingly, a PMA-er becomes a symbol of the state in degrading the promiscuity of one female character. Moreover, a portrayal of the insatiable cunt is depicted in a male character's day dream of sewing on penises all over his body to stop a female character, his girlfriend, from cheating on him. Then again, the novels do not imply that these female characters want penises only in their promiscuous lifestyles. Those who did not end up with their fairy tale endings, chose to leave their relationships, not yielding to the confines of heterosexual love, and retaining their strength and independence in solitude.

Lastly, the LitErotika novels attempt to engage readers on the issues of sexuality and morality. One female character challenges the stereotype on promiscuous women by saying: *"People say I am out of control, but from what? From good manners, from moral lessons, or from being a woman? Is there an encompassing, single definition for a woman except for the fact that they all have vaginas? And because I have been called a slut, I no longer belong to this definition? For me, I see women as different individuals. A single definition cannot define every woman. For me, what is important is I am free in being a woman and I am not boxed by a single definition of what it is to be a woman in the society I belong to"* (English translation). In addition, a debate takes place between two female characters, the promiscuous one accorded the title of a philosopher and the virginal best friend accorded the title of a student. The philosopher describes society's restrictions on women and the need to break free from them. She looks at the question of morality as just another manacle society places on women and lets her inner self dictate her actions towards happiness, even if it means

sleeping around with different men. Seemingly, in hopes of a self-fulfilling prophecy to the dialogue's impact on readers, the student later on becomes the philosopher's prodigy.

A CALL FOR AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING POSITIVE SEXUAL CULTURE

In conclusion, the LitErotika novels, as a form of Philippine popular culture; represent Filipina sexuality in an appreciative and honest sense. Contrary to Wolf's idea, the female experience is not incidental relative to men's; it is in fact the center in which the LitErotika novels revolve in.

As 'chic lit,' a literature genre aimed at young single women, readers are able to see themselves in the stories that cater to their own desire, and not a man-pleasing model perfected according to foreign standards. In the LitErotika novels, young women can express their desires of sex and love freely. They listen to their inner selves and not to the dictates of society. In other words, women in lust can be women in love; and this is not considered a threat to society. Moreover, women's lust is equal to, if not stronger than, men's. Their sexuality is not denied but is given the same nuances found in men's, it is not double-edged but an innate quality that empowers them. What's more, the women are not bounded by fabricated happy endings; they create their own unraveling in love with a worthy partner or on the path to solitude where they know they can find contentment by themselves.

Nonetheless, LitErotika has little cause for celebration. It has only garnered limited success with its partial account of the experiences of Filipino women. Although LitErotika seems to be on the right track in inciting discourse on Filipina sexuality in a predominantly Catholic state, there is a fervent need to go beyond the confines of chic lit. LitErotika Editor-in-Chief Obie Obias' interview statement (Lim 2008) of a steadily increasing patronage shows that the readers are open to what LitErotika has to offer. Through LitErotika's creative license, it can participate in the creation of power-knowledge in the representation of Filipina sexuality. This can be done by widening the spectrum of representation in the LitErotika novels, by making the absent present – those who have become others in the process. Maybe someday the LGBTQI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning and Intersex) will also find themselves basking in the literary space of the novels. But ultimately, this would open up the possibility of beginning the nullification of popular culture's false official version of female sexuality.

Finally, LitErotika has implicated itself in starting a chain reaction which should be sustained, if it is to be a powerful force in the representation of Filipina sexuality in popular culture. In doing so, it has the potential to start the creation of a positive sexual culture if it is not to be dictated by profit alone; where women can turn to for sexual exploration untainted by capitalistic and patriarchal practices where "both women and men eroticize only the woman's body and the man's desire." In this possibility, women will be free to explore what they want to desire and express what they do desire, instead of confusing "sexual looking with being looked at sexually, confusing sexually feeling with being sexually felt, and confusing desiring with being desirable." In the long run, a sexual reality with "a full spectrum of erotic images of uncoerced real women…in contexts of sexual trust" (Wolf 1992) will have the power to collapse the status quo and recreate an authentic representation of Filipina sexuality in popular culture marking the emergence of a free Filipina in popular culture. I challenge LitErotika to go beyond chic lit, in its claim to "elevate the depiction of eroticism and lovemaking in literature," and own up to its potential to create and sustain a positive sexual culture for all Filipino women. Otherwise, its potential would only be claimed by the capitalististic and patriarchal system as its own in the perpetuation of its ingenious schemes of new traditionalism disguised as promising change.

NOTE

1   However, Friedan had been criticized for her self-indulgence in excluding poor, working non-white women in her analysis. See Joanne Boucher 2003.

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Notes and references

Prospective contributors are requested to observe the following guidelines:

1. Standard length of papers is 6000 words (approximately 20 pages typed double spaced with generous margins at the top, bottom, and sides of the page), but shorter contributions are also welcomed.

2. Include a brief abstract of 100-200 words summarizing the findings and at most five key words on a separate sheet of paper (without author information).

3. Title, author's name, affiliation(s), full address (including telephone and email address) and a brief biographical note should be typed on a separate sheet.

4. *Notes* should contain more than a mere reference, although it is recommended to use notes only for substantive observation and to limit the length. They must be numbered serially and presented at the end of the article in a separate endnotes section that appears before the References.

5. All illustrations, diagrams, and tables to be referred to as "Figures" and "Tables" and numbered according to the sequence in the text. Figures should be referred to by number (Figure I) rather than by placement (See Figure below). Each table and figure must include a descriptive title.

6. Please use The Chicago Manual of Style, 14th ed.

   a) The following examples illustrate the format for referencing in the text:

   (Banzon-Bautista 1998: 21)
   (Lynch and Makil 1968)
   Zialcita (2005)

   For Filipinos, the "outside" world is "a place of power, wealth, cleanliness, beauty, glamour and enjoyment" (Cannell 1995: 223). Source: Saloma 2001

   "After all," he said, "*pinoy* can be seen along national lines." Source: Saloma 2001

b) List two or more works by different authors who are cited within the same parentheses in alphabetical order by the first author's surname. Separate the citations with semicolons.

For example: Scholars (Karaos 1997; Porio 1997; Tapales 1996)

c). All references cited in the text must be listed in the *References* section. The details should be listed in full, alphabetically by author. The following examples illustrate the format for references.

Journal or Magazine Article

Marcuse, P. 1989. "Dual City: A Muddy Metaphor for a Quartered City." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 13: 697-720.

Newspaper Article

Estopace, D. 2005. "The Business of Poverty." *Today*. 25 January, pp. B3

Article from the Internet

Mershon, D. H. 1998. "Star Trek on the Brain: Alien Minds, Human Minds." *American Scientist* 86, 585. Retrieved 29 July 1999, from Expanded Academic ASAP database.

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Berner, E. 1997. *Defending a Place in the City*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

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Racelis, M. 1988. "Becoming an Urbanite: The Neighborhood as a Learning Environment." In J. Gugler (ed.) *The Urbanization of the Third World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 219-224.

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Sassen, S. 1994. "Identity in the Global City: Economic and Cultural Encasements." Paper presented at the conference on The Geography of Identity. University of Michigan, 4-5 February.

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Official Journal of the Philippine Sociological Society

PREFACE

This issue of the *Philippine Sociological Review* includes some of the papers presented at the Annual Conference of the Philippine Sociological Society held at the Philippine Social Science Center on 16-17 October 2009. It begins with two of the keynote addresses that opened the conference. The first, "Sociology as the Reflexive Side of Culture," was delivered by Randy S. David; the second, "Neoliberalism as Hegemonic Ideology in the Philippines: Rise, Apogee, and Crisis," by Walden Bello.

The text presented here of **Randy David**'s talk, as was the address itself, is in English and Filipino, since according to David, the latter better communicates with the culture being observed. He expounds that through Filipino, sociologists are able to address "the growing clamor to bring scientific reflection to the stream of public discourse" for he holds that sociological research and reflection should have concrete effects "sa aktwal na takbo ng pang-araw-araw na buhay ng ating lipunan" which can be achieved through a genuine dialogue between sociology and culture.

David proposes that although "culture is a way of seeing, . . . it is also is a way of being blind." Every culture has blind spots – "mga bagay na labas sa saklaw ng ating nakagisnang kultura." And for him this is the task of sociology: "ang palitawin and nakatagong reyalidad," for "sociology is a way of seeing differently."

By employing C. Wright Mills "sociological imagination," sociologists can observe personal problems "sa konteksto na umiiral sa lipunan . . . The translation of private troubles of milieu into public issues of structure is the kind of 'gestalt switch' that prompts decisive action." In this way, sociologists "bring the findings of social inquiry in to the stream of public discourse."

Walden Bello, for his part, asks three questions: "how ideology achieves hegemony, how this hegemony is maintained, and what happens when the claims of an ideology are contradicted by reality." He answers these questions by analyzing neoliberalism in the Philippines.

Bello suggests that neoliberalism began to gain ascendancy in the Philippines during the Aquino administration as it was espoused by activist

intellectuals and technocrats—influenced by free-market economics notably in the US and Britain—associated with her administration. This perspective was also "in synch with the popular mood." Finally, "there were simply no credible alternatives . . . Keynesian developmentalism was compromised by its personification in the Marcos dictatorship . . . the left's 'nationalist industrialization' or the 'national democratic economy' hardly went beyond rhetorical flourishes . . ."

The Asian financial crisis of 1997 as well as "the recent collapse of the global economy owing to the absence of regulation of financial markets" resulted in criticisms of neoliberalism and eroded its credibility. However, it continues to maintain its dominance. One reason for this, according to Bello, is that Philippine underdevelopment continues to be explained by the "corruption discourse . . . The state is the source of corruption, so that having a greater state role in the economy . . . is viewed with skepticism." Another reason is that "there has been no credible alternative paradigm or discourse that has emerged . . ." Finally, neoliberal economics projects the image of a "hard science" which results from its "having been thoroughly mathematized."

Delfo Canceran's "Social Imaginary in Social Change," provides a discursive analysis of the concept of imagination as it evolves in social theory by focusing on the contribution of Cornelius Castoriadis, a political activist and progressive philosopher. According to Canceran, to understand imagination, Castoriadis turns to psychoanalysis; he places great importance on agency, "the capacity . . . to imagine new social realities." To him, imagination is "the driving force" for radical change, making imagination "essentially creative . . . it creates . . . from nothing . . . This creativity produces infinite worlds for humanity." Thus, imagination "is a potent force in effecting social change in society. Society proceeds to an autonomous status whereby people can interrogate their own construction and create new social world. The social imaginary is a magmatic force that can explode and create a new social order. The social imaginary cannot be contained or foreclosed in society. Society yearns for a better society where their desires are recognized and satisfied. Human desire hinges on the social imaginary. Left unsatisfied, social imaginary remains a revolutionary spirit that recreates the world. Autonomy establishes a different relationship between the human psyche and the unconscious desire. Reflection enables society to ruminate explicitly on human desire."

Gerry Lanuza begins "A Plea for Sobriety in Matters Epistemological . . . ," by acknowledging the recent ascendancy of postmodernism, which is a reaction against the positivist tradition, in sociology. Positivism, for example, espouses the production of objective knowledge "which is independent of the observer's procedures for finding and producing knowledge." Positivist sociology also subscribes "to the strict separation between facts and values . . . that values should not intrude in the interpretation and validation of data. "Finally, positivism uncritically adopts a "hypothetico-model . . . as the standard form of scientific explanation."

Thus, "postmodernists challenge the commonsense realism that underpins social research. Pragmatic and poststructuralist versions of this critique advocate the total abandonment of realism in favor of social constructionism . . .the postmodern approach(es) encourage ethnography of textual representations themselves . . . The focus shifts away from the veracity of text to the analysis of styles and authorial voices that underline the unacknowledged power relations embedded within the texts."

Lanuza, however, finds "irrational tendencies in postmodernism." He offers a version of critical realism – "as a philosophical orientation of science" . . . as the best alternative midway between (the fallacies and errors of) positivism" and postmodernism's excesses. Lanuza urges Filipino sociologists to adapt critical realism as "it is amenable to postcolonial critique of sociology," rejecting "positivist oriented sociological research that uncritically imposes western categories on local cultures," redefining "the use of quantitative methods" and "emphasizing the importance of qualitative method." Finally, critical realism is useful for Filipino sociologists "who believe in the emancipatory goal of social research . . . (as) it embraces . . . the intersection of values, politics, and social research."

In his article, **Niel Niño Lim** does precisely as he has titled it – "Exploring the Contextual Realities of Political Participation in the Age of Social Media." He argues that the different social media platforms—in particular blogging, social networking, and content sharing—are evolving as a new political space especially among the youth. Owing to their participatory nature, these social media platforms are encouraging larger numbers of people to get involved in political issues and seems to be moving the venue of protest from the "streets to cyberspace." He cites the revocation by President Gloria Arroyo of tax and duty impositions on imported books after 2,000 sign ups on Facebook, a social media platform. A characteristic unique to social media platforms such

as Facebook is that they allow "faster and more direct participation. . .and for grassroots initiatives." They also allow people to become 'actively passive,' giving opportunity "for the expression of opinions of the inarticulate who would otherwise be disengaged if not for their Internet access." Lim, however, cautions that because social media platforms are primarily "storages of content . . . (of a) wide array of information (and) . . . opinions . . . a public less 'educated' can be easily confused or be driven to propaganda." Lim also argues that ". . . plurality on the Internet does not necessarily translate to diversity . . . That the opinion of a value-based middle-class dominates and invites other people of different economic and education profiles to converge on an inclusive, participatory platform and level off with a compromised view also suggests that a new space will most likely be an online version of the existing social framework, a case indicative of . . . 'conditioned helplessness'."

Eduardo Domingo, in "Re-reading Sociological Contexts as Texts: Intertextuality and the Sociology of Religion," emphasizes the importance of taking into account the contexts in which sociological theories and paradigms arose when these theories and paradigms are appropriated as texts in current research. For, "taken out of (their) contexts, theoretical assumptions . . . lead to misapplication of theories." Domingo refers to this task as intertextuality – "the history of a prior text and how it is transformed . . . the complex relationship between a text and other texts taken as basic to the understanding of the text." Two processes are involved. Vertical intertextuality – "the relation of the texts of the sociology of religion to their contexts" and horizontal intertextuality – "the new contexts . . . that demand new frameworks or paradigms and how these have become new texts for the sociology of religion." He then illustrates these processes through a case study – animism in the Philippines.

According to **Valerie Francisco** ("Moral Mismatch: Narratives of Migration from Immigrant Filipino Women in New York City and the Philippine State") ". . . migration . . . is crafted by different justifications, motivations and goals" which she refers to as "moral economy," a concept she borrows from studies of peasant economies and developing societies. She suggests, on the one hand, that the Philippine State has evolved a moral economy "justifying policies of labor export as ideologies of independence through migration." On the other hand, Filipino migrant women have developed one "that bridges community with the market, embody an expanded (and unfair) sense of responsibility to family and state." In arguing the existence of a "mismatch"

between these moral economies . . . and "the mistreatment that arises from the conflict," Francisco cites the treatment of the deaths of three migrant workers in New York City. For migrant women, the refusal of the Philippine state "to repatriate the bodies of domestic workers in New York City is a breach of dignity and respect they have earned by leaving the country in the name of their families and their nation." Thus for Francisco, "the dignity bestowed upon migrant workers was . . . expunged by the consulate's lethargic response to the deaths of domestic workers . . . The bankruptcy of the Philippine government's moral economy . . . is visible when the state ignores domestic workers' dire need for assistance at . . . death."

Marie Noel Ngoddo's "Empower/Disempowerment vis-à-vis Material Resources contributes to the study of empowerment by focusing on material resources on which it is claimed not much research has been conducted. Specifically, Ngoddo looks at the changes in the land property of Sabangan *Ili* in the Mountain Province. In this village, Ngoddo finds a condition of legal pluralism where "more than one source of law, more than one 'legal order' is observable." This allows the people of Sabangan Ili "room for maneuver and space for one's interest." Thus, for example, they "can choose to make use of a land declaration or a free patent if they feel that the customary law is insufficient as security of land ownership." Ngoddo, however, also found disempowering "the loss of institutional arrangements that are responsive to the poor. . .of the community" which can be seen "in the conversion of land from corporate to individually-owned properties." With corporate lands gone, poor members of the community have fewer opportunities and options. Ngoddo also finds "some interventions of outside agencies disempowering "because they open opportunities for a few members . . . to be in sole control of . . . common resources thereby preventing the others equal access and use . . ." Such interventions as well as other regulations are said to be disempowering because "a person's or a group's access to or use of material resources are constrained giving them less or zero probability of achieving their goals."

In the last article in this issue, "A Feminist Reading of Filipina Sexuality in LitErotika Novels," **Elinor May Cruz** presents the initial findings of her on-going investigation of Filipino sexuality as this is expressed in LitErotika novels, "a relatively new publication in the erotica genre . . ." In her "feminist reading" of three such novels, she finds that they "represent Filipina sexuality in an appreciative and honest sense" where "the female experience is not incidental

relative to men's" but which "is in fact the center in which the LitErotika novels revolve in." In these novels, the target audience – "young single women . . . are able to see themselves in the stories that cater to their own desire;" they can express their desires of sex and love freely. They listen to their inner selves and not to the dictates of society." Women's sexuality is not denied" but "an innate quality that empowers them."

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