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REPRESENTATIONS OF EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY PHILIPPINES IN  
AMERICAN WOMEN'S TRAVEL NARRATIVES

By

Cecilia A. Samonte

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Program in American Studies

2003

## **ABSTRACT**

### REPRESENTATIONS OF EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY PHILIPPINES IN AMERICAN WOMEN'S TRAVEL NARRATIVES

By

Cecilia A. Samonte

In this dissertation, I argue that within colonial settings in the Philippines, American women occupied distinct positions from which to construct geographic, ethnographic and political knowledge justifying colonial rule during the years 1899-1913. The uniqueness in their positions was determined by several factors. First, as agents of empire, they considered themselves racially superior and yet subordinate to the prevailing patriarchal order. Second, although in most instances they were identified in terms of their domestic and private spheres, they performed roles that allowed them to transgress into public and political domains. Third, these women's positions were largely determined by roles they initially assumed at the start of their journeys. These included duties ascribed to wives of administrators, tourists, and professional women.

Unfortunately, the traditional devaluation of women's writing has prevented these writings from being considered important sources of knowledge and receiving the same

credit as narratives written by male travellers. But there is no doubt that the women of this study make a very significant contribution to contemporary accounts of the colonial history of the Philippines. American women travel writers embarked on journeys that allowed them to negotiate between traditional spheres and epistemological shifts and assume specific positions within the American colonial order in the Philippines. Finally, in making these complicated journeys, these women were able to provide knowledge about gender, colonialism, and the representation of empire in American history.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation could not have been written without the assistance and support of numerous individuals and institutions. I am very happy to express here my deepest appreciation.

I wish to thank Dr. Jyotsna Singh, especially for her tremendous guidance, support, and mentorship in the production of this project. This project would never have been realized without her relentless encouragement and uplifting inspiration. I am also very grateful to Dr. Roger Bresnahan, Dr. Sheng-mei Ma, Dr. Sayuri Shimizu, Dr. Scott Michaelson, and Dr. Ann Larabee, the other members of my committee, for all their invaluable guidance and support.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks for the financial support and job experience given by the various departments of Michigan State University. I wish to thank the teaching assistantships given by the Center for Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities, the Department of American Thought and Language, the Thoman Fellowship, and the Journal of Popular Culture.

None of this would have been possible without the support of my wonderful family, friends, and colleagues. My father, Ablelardo Gorospe Samonte, has always been a major

source of inspiration in my academic career. I want to express my deepest gratitude to my mother, Celia Astraquillo Samonte, for the constant love, encouragement, strength, and faith she provided in seeing me live up to my fullest potential. I want to thank my sisters, Maria Graciela and Maria Victoria, for all the motivation and constant support. I'd also like to express my deepest appreciation to La Trese Adkins, Monique Chism, Anne Heutsche, Pamela Martin, Chantalle Verna, Cathy Obien, and Monika Tothova, my sisters in fellowship, for the gift of faith and "sisterhood," especially through the most trying times in the production of this text. Very special thanks also go to Xiuwen Wu, Sunghye Kim, and Cathy Fleck for their all their incisive feedback and insights about the earliest versions of the draft. And last but never the least, I want to express my deepest thanks and love to Anthony Sze-Fai Shiu, *ang pinakamamahal kong kabiyak*, who is and who will always be at the core of my faith, inspiration, and joy.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

It has been a great and rare privilege to meet and get acquainted with these people who, though often fierce and cruel, are helpless and weak like little children; and when properly understood, are courageous, kindly, hospitable, artistic, and religious in their way - a people in need of patient and tender guidance. . . . I have learned to love this land for which America has become the foster parent. May America be faithful to her trust, and . . . watch over her charge until it has grown to maturity, and is ready to take its place in the world's great family of nations.<sup>1</sup>

When Maud Huntley Jenks wrote this entry in 1904, she and husband Albert had just concluded two years of travelling in the Philippine Islands. Albert Jenks, chief of the Bureau of Ethnology in the Philippines, was part of a team tasked to accumulate information on the various Filipino groups inhabiting the Mountain Province in the northern part of the islands. It was their findings (both "native" artifacts and their "native" makers), in fact,

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<sup>1</sup> Maud Huntley Jenks, Death Stalks the Philippine Wilds: Letters of Maud Huntley Jenks (Minneapolis, Minnesota: The Lund Press, Inc., 1951) 204.

which were used for the Philippine display at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, dubbed as the "greatest and best Exposition in the history of the world".<sup>2</sup>

Before the Jenks' narratives came out, there were other sources of knowledge about the archipelago that functioned in the same way. Various travel writings published from 1898 onwards used various facts about the Islands to support the American policy of annexation. One of these was journalist Murat Halstead's 1898 work entitled The Story of the Philippines; Natural Riches, Industrial Resources, Statistics of Productions, Commerce and Population. In his book, Halstead shows the correlation between the country's natural resources, American investment, and the welfare of the Filipino populace. According to him, "There is a profusion of the riches that await the freedom of labor and the security of capital, and the happiness of the people. Under American government the Philippines would prosper."<sup>3</sup> Essentially, Halstead used empirical and scientific data in supporting the capitalist motive for expansion. In Our New Possessions; A Graphic Account, Descriptive and Historical of the Tropic Islands of the Sea Which Have Fallen Under Our Sway, Trumbull White

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<sup>2</sup> Benito M. Vergara, Jr., Displaying Filipinos (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1995) 111.

<sup>3</sup> David Spurr, The Rhetoric of Empire; Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 1993) 118.

also supports the economic agenda as he links commercial development to the "uplifting of a swarming population of alien races".<sup>4</sup> Like the Commission members' reports, many travel narratives such as these used information pertaining to the Islands' natural resources and peoples to justify American colonial rule in the archipelago.

Until the present time, there has been little, if any, significant attention given to travel narratives on the Philippines and their relation to "colonialist history".<sup>5</sup> Scholars in Philippine-American history continue to neglect these materials in their studies. This is especially true in the case of American women's travel narratives. These women were certainly asserting their presence as early as 1899, in both the Philippine Commissions and in the arena of travel writing. There exists, in fact, a sizeable bulk of published writings by American women who traveled to the Philippine Islands from **1899 through 1946** as wives of administrators, missionaries, nurses, teachers and tourists, but these have rarely been made subjects of any comprehensive study (Rafael, "Colonial Domesticity," 640). Because these materials have been largely neglected, the history of early Philippine-American relations is still fundamentally based on a traditional framework whose

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<sup>4</sup> Spurr 118.

<sup>5</sup> Paul A. Rodell, "Image Versus Reality: A Colonialist History," Philippine Studies 37 (1989): 511.

organization is based on the development of political and economic institutions. The inclusion of women's travel writing in the present literature is integral in broadening, reconfiguring, and even challenging the old narrative to reveal incongruities and complicate generally accepted truths and knowledge about the processes of colonial administration, assimilation, and resistance.

The present study dedicates itself toward exploring and analyzing a select group of materials that has been marginalized from the "master narrative" of Philippine-American history. Focusing on select texts written by American women who traveled to the Philippines as wives, tourists, and professionals at the beginning of the century, it analyzes how the various locations of white women within the racial, gender, and class hierarchies in the Philippines influenced the way they represented imperialism. Specifically, it aims to address the following set of interrelated questions: What is the significance of this project to the scholarship on Philippine-American history? How were the subject positions of American women travel writers constructed in terms of racial, gender and class difference? How did American women travelers represent their private and public experiences within the imperial context? How did these experiences produce

knowledge as a form of colonial discourse? What narrative themes recur in the writings of women travelers and what do these reveal about their attitudes toward American colonialism? Did they function as ethnographers who implicitly enabled colonialism? How do their writings impact the scholarly literature of Philippine-American relations during the early twentieth century (1900-1916)?

In approaching these questions, this introduction will proceed to accomplish four things. It will provide:

1. A historical survey of American rule in the Philippines.
2. A survey of works discussing the correlation of colonialism, postcolonial theory, and travel writing.
3. An overview of texts that examine the relationship between gender and imperialism
4. A discussion of accounts of women travelers and the production of knowledge in their travel writings
5. A brief overview of the organization of the entire dissertation.

## I

The Spanish-American War marks a significant watershed

in the history of Philippine-American relations. With the victory of U.S. Commodore George Dewey over the Iberian forces at the Battle of Manila Bay, three hundred years of Spanish rule over the Southeast Asian archipelago had finally come to an end. On June 12, 1898, General Emilio Aguinaldo, a rebel leader from Cavite (a province south of Manila) and elected President of the newly-established republic, proclaimed Philippine independence "under the protection of the mighty and humane" United States (Blitz 22). But Philippine sovereignty was short-lived. Before the newly inaugurated republic could even begin to assert its authority, U.S. President William McKinley issued his policy of "benevolent assimilation," which declared that Americans were coming "not as invaders or conquerors, but as friends, to protect the natives in their homes, in their employments, and in their personal and religious rights" (McFerson 75). In addition to this, U.S. forces had also begun to assert their presence near Manila, initiating half a century of American conquest and colonialism which in turn, provided the political context for the various travel writings produced by American women.

In January 1899, American expansionists who advocated the annexation of the Philippine Islands had become a stronger force than the anti-imperialists in the U.S.

Congress. In the meantime, President William McKinley was preparing to have the body ratify the Treaty of Paris that provided for the cession of the archipelago to the United States for twenty million dollars. Back in Manila, tensions between Filipino and American forces were threatening to come to a head. Though McKinley had issued his "benevolent assimilation" policy and had ordered troops to maintain the peace, General Elwell Otis, head of U.S. operations, proceeded to lead an army regiment into territory claimed by Filipinos, as he authorized troops to use force if necessary for self-defense (Blitz 32). On February 4, 1899, a confrontation between American troops and several Filipino soldiers resulted in the death of the former and the "official" commencement of the Philippine-American War (also downplayed as the "Philippine Insurrection" in American historical narratives).

American forces began to attack key strategic locations in Luzon, killing about 3,000 Filipinos on the first day of hostilities. With Otis and later, Brigadier General Arthur MacArthur at the helm, operations were extended to the Visayas region and eventually advanced significantly to capture the Filipino seat of government. Back in the United States, events in the archipelago were becoming part of a serious debate. Despite their defeat at

blocking the passage of the Paris treaty, the Anti-Imperialist League, led by stalwarts such as former president Grover Cleveland, Senator George Hoar, Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie, launched a serious campaign that denounced the administration for its brutal and irresponsible handling of the war. As their membership grew, opposition in the domestic front also grew larger.

Despite increasing protest, the foundations of the new imperial power had already been laid. As early as January 1899, McKinley appointed Jacob Gould Schurman, president of Cornell University, to be head of a commission tasked primarily to investigate conditions in the islands and to recommend measures and policies necessary for the establishment of peace, order and public welfare (Cortes, 242).<sup>6</sup> Commissioners conducted daily meetings in Manila with prominent Filipinos and foreigners as it attempted to establish the grounds for an acceptable form of government in the archipelago. After a month of research, the commission came out with its findings which were used to advocate for the end of military rule and the establishment of civil government under U.S. supervision. They proposed the organization of provincial governments headed by local

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<sup>6</sup> *The Report of the Philippine Commission*, published on January 31, 1900, indicated that "there was no Philippine nation but only a collection of different peoples, that there was no general public opinion in the archipelago, and that the men of property and education who alone interest themselves in public affairs in general recognize as indispensable American authority, guidance and protection" (Cortes 245).

officials, with American surveillance, and the formation of a national legislature under an American governor who would possess the right to veto.

As military rule slowly gave way to civil governance, the U.S. Congress pressed McKinley to pave the way for a system of governance in the Philippines that would incorporate congressional authority. As McKinley attempted to have a bill that would guarantee extensive executive powers passed in Congress, he also assigned a second Philippine Commission to assist in establishing the bases for the new government. This commission, also known as the Taft Commission, was presided over by Ohio federal judge William Howard Taft and composed of various administrators, scholars and their respective families.<sup>7</sup> Three months after their arrival, the commission used the information gathered from various provincial visits to recommend the enactment of laws in such areas as taxation, education, civil service, local government and the legal system. From September 1900 and August 1902, it passed a total of 449 laws (McFerson 247). As the Commission made full use of their legislative powers, it also tried to enlist the

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<sup>7</sup> The Commission was also composed of Dean Worcester, who was the only member of the Commission with personal experience in the islands; Henry Ide, formerly a chief justice in American Samoa and who was a jurist in Vermont; Luke Wright, veteran of the Confederate army and a lawyer in Tennessee; and Bernard Moses, University of California professor of history. The group was accompanied by their families and secretarial staff. Mrs. Moses would in fact, be one of the few who recorded the investigations performed by the Commission.

support of the Filipino elite, which would organize the Federalista Party in realizing its objectives.

By the last part of 1900, the Filipino resistance had gotten considerably weaker, and McKinley's colonial policy began to be fully enforced. Empowered by legislation to exercise full authority over the islands, McKinley appointed Taft on July 4, 1901 as governor of the Philippines. McKinley's executive rule was cut short when he was shot in September by anarchist Leon F. Czolgosz. Theodore Roosevelt, the man responsible for the annexation of the islands, ascended to power (Blitz 42). A "period of suppressed nationalism" marked by guerilla repression, censorship of the press, a ban on the establishment of political parties, and "compadre colonialism" (referring to the collaboration of members of the Filipino elite and American officials) characterized this first stage of American imperialism (Agoncillo and Guerrero 243-261).

With the enactment of the Cooper or Organic Act in 1902, U.S. rule was officially established on the islands. From this time till about the twenties, policies and legislation were geared towards "Westernization" which included the organization of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, the establishment of free trade and industrial development, and "social and

civic improvements as seen through the programs of free public education and health improvement (Cortes 270-321). Filipinization ("gradual substitution of American with Filipino personnel in the in the government") was also implemented through the establishment of the Philippine Assembly in 1907, which constituted the Lower House of the legislature.

The issues of Filipinization, self-governance and independence were probably the most crucial issues underlying the American women's construction of their travel writings. Filipinization was thought to be part of the Republican Party's strategy to maintain the support of the Filipino political elite and provide the "political education" for future self-rule and independence, while making no real assurances about the granting of complete autonomy (Churchill 2). The strategy worked until 1907 when the all-Filipino legislative body also called the Philippine Assembly was formally inaugurated. With its formation, Filipino political leaders were able to find a space to "cultivate political sentiment for independence" (Churchill 4). Prominent Filipino politicians began to make increasing demands for less American tutelage and a bigger role in government.

But it was not until 1913 when American administrators

seriously considered granting independence. Before this year, American leaders did not believe Filipinos possessed the political capability nor the economic independence needed for self-governance. They also perceived the demands to be a result of Filipino partisan interests (Churchill 5). Convinced of these reasons, Republican leaders envisioned the maintenance of American rule alongside partial Filipino representation, for a longer time.

With the Democratic victory in 1912, however, the situation completely changed. The Democrats, after all, had always been staunch supporters of absolute and complete independence and it seemed it was the perfect time to finally realize these goals. The appointment of Governor General Francis Burton Harrison in 1913 initiated a process whereby Filipino politicians became more empowered in the island's political and economic affairs. In 1916, more advancement was made toward the goal of self-determination. The Philippine Autonomy Act or Jones Law bill was signed into law by the Democratic Congress. It became the "first formal and official commitment" to grant political autonomy to the Philippines, made by the United States (Cortes 326). Through this legislation, Filipinos gained extensive legislative powers and virtually complete control of all branches of the government. Harrison had indeed propelled a

tremendous change in colonial policy which in turn sparked a serious debate in all quarters. Several sectors criticized Harrison for his extreme Filipinization policies which according to them significantly weakened U.S. governance and Filipino potential for "responsible conduct" (Churchill 7). Before the whole process eventually culminated in the enactment in 1934 of the Tydings-McDuffie Act which was designed "to provide for the complete independence of the Philippine Islands," the implications surrounding the issues of independence and self-determination would significantly impact various kinds of discourse, including those expressed by American women in their travel texts (Golay 326).

## II

No study on imperial representation would be complete without recognizing the contribution made by Edward Said's influential Orientalism, which paved the way for the reconceptualization of the relationship between knowledge and power. According to Bart Moore-Gilbert, it is Said "who so often sets up the terms of reference of subsequent debate in the postcolonial field" (35). In fact, even Said's most ardent critics acknowledge the work as a seminal text, "the influence of which must be undone before what is considered to be more adequate modes of

analysis of the relation between culture and (neo)colonialism can be elaborated" (Moore-Gilbert 35).

In his work, Said argues that Western rhetoric about the East was basically used to reinforce colonial rule. He shows the direct correlation between Western forms of representation and knowledge on one hand, and Western material and political power on the other. Consequently, Said asserts that "ideas, cultures and histories cannot seriously be studied without their force, or more precisely their configurations of power, also being studied" (5).

Western **systems of knowledge and representation** have been complicit in the West's material and political subordination of the non-Western world, positioned as the West's inferior "Other." According to Said, the Orientalist discourse grounded the Other's identity on such features as voicelessness, sensuality, femininity, despotism, irrationality and backwardness and depicted these to be absolute and unchanging (Moore-Gilbert 39).

Said grounds much of his work on ideas developed by Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci. Foucault's influence is seen in two principal ways. He establishes, first of all, the crucial relationship between knowledge and power. Authors like Sara Mills have continued to pursue his line of thinking. According to Mills, travel writing produces

knowledge that inevitably does two things. As it inscribes the "otherness" of "alien" peoples and places, it also essentializes them in a more "commonsensical" manner. Mills also shows how travel writing functions as a form of colonial discourse. In her article entitled "Knowledge, Gender and Empire," she posits:

Travel texts also produce a great deal of other "commonsense" knowledge, for example, knowledge about the home country, and knowledge about the relations between males and females both within the imperial context and in the home country. Much travel writing implicitly proposes a set of commonsense assumptions to which the reader is supposed to assent" (Blunt and Rose 34).

Here, she uses a Saidian formulation in explaining the formation of colonial subjects. Foucault argues that discourse "constructs" the objects of its knowledge. In response to the contention that the study of colonial discourse translates into an unquestionable "reality" or given "truth," he states:

We must not imagine that the world turns towards us a legible face which we could only have to decipher. The world is not the accomplice of our knowledge; there is no pre-discursive providence

which disposes the world in our favor. (Mills 9)

By providing a sharp distinction between the "world" and the process of acquiring knowledge about it, Foucault shows how the "world," in fact, is fundamentally defined by the way society has constructed and represented it" (Mills 10). The "real" East is transformed into a "discursive Orient;" and travel writing becomes an important site of this representation.

Despite his monumental contribution to the field, Said has been criticized largely for falling short of addressing crucial issues like gender. As Jane Miller states:

Said [. . .] sets out with care and delicacy the parallels and analogies developed in this field between colonial relations and sexual relations, and he shows how illuminating of the reality of the imperial adventure whose parallels have been for both West and East. What he does not confront are the sexual meanings on which those illuminations depend. It is possible to feel that within his analysis it is with the distortions of male sexuality [. . .] produced by the language of Orientalism that he is chiefly concerned. [. . .] The question remains: why does

such an analysis not entail a concern for women's loss of political and economic status, in itself? [Women's history] does not become part of the history which is being rewritten.<sup>8</sup>

Although Said had dealt with the correlation between empire and sexuality, like Miller argues above, the women in his accounts occupy a secondary and subordinate position, and hence, fail to be fully represented.

Despite this shortcoming, there is no doubt that Orientalism has made an enormous contribution to the field of colonial discourse and continues to provide the bases for more and more studies on colonial discourse analysis and travel writing. Indeed, the association between travel texts and the **"production of knowledge, power relations and identity formations"** reinforces the need to engage in this kind of post-colonial inquiry and interrogation (Blunt and Wills, 198).

One aspect of this colonial knowledge, was the creation of "imaginative geographies," defined as "the complex production of images of lands and peoples beyond Europe which were reproduced in accounts of the voyages of discovery and journeys of exploration, and in travel narratives" (McEwan 6). This concept shows the significant

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<sup>8</sup> Reina Lewis, Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation (New York: Routledge, 1996) 20.

relationship between colonial power and geographical and cultural knowledge. Outlying territories were "mapped" by Westerners who then used the accumulated information, usually said to be "scientific" and "objective," to impose dominion and control (Blunt and Wills 194-95). But travelers went beyond describing and controlling the natural landscape. The same system of classification and categorization was applied to the imperial subjects and used in asserting the same kind of hegemony (Blunt and Wills 195). Thus, the constructions of imaginative geographies was integral to the imperial discourse of Orientalism, and travel writers played an important part in the creation of these imaginative geographies. As Blunt argues, "Travel writing was particularly important in imperial literary traditions because individual Europeans travelled between colonized and colonizing worlds, perpetuating mythological otherness" (Blunt 30). The recent wave of studies on travel writing reflect this perspective which reaffirms the relationship between the transient Western traveller, his/her text, and the insinuation of imperial power.

In The Rhetoric of Empire; Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration, David Spurr focuses on nonfiction writing, such as travel

writing and journalism, which he describes as a form that "opens directly onto the fractures and contradictions of colonialist epistemology" (2). He delves into twelve rhetorical modes (including surveillance, appropriation, aestheticization and eroticization) that have structured colonial discourse, defined as a "space within language that exists both as a series of historical instances and as a series of rhetorical functions" (7). Spurr discusses the multiple colonial discourses structured to meet different goals. He points out that "colonial discourse [. . .] does not simply reproduce an ideology or a set of ideas that must be constantly repeated. It is rather a way of creating and responding to reality that is infinitely adaptable in its function of preserving the basic structures of power" (11). According to Spurr, colonizers produced "discontinuous segments" of knowledge under constant crisis and anxiety within specific eras as they strove to maintain dominance over the colonized. Travel writing thus emerges as an important instrument used to reinforce colonial power.

Steve Clark presents a similar perspective in Travel Writing and Empire: Postcolonial Theory in Transit. According to him, analyses of travel writing must resist settling into the domination-subordination dichotomy. The

genre "overlaps with numerous other discourses of colonialism [. . .] and the journey itself encodes inevitable ideological aspects. [. . .] Interpretation of any specific travelogue must acknowledge not only its complicity, but also its power of refiguration and aspiration towards a more benign ethics of alterity" (3-4). As Clark infers, travel accounts are not neutral narratives that simply divulge random information. Any serious interpretation of these narratives has to recognize how they reflect and impact dominant systems of power. They do not speak with a single voice or agenda, but nonetheless are implicated in the production of colonial knowledge.

Mary Louise Pratt's seminal work Imperial Eyes, also highlights the importance of studying travel discourse alongside a "critique of ideology." Focusing on how "travel-writing has produced the rest of the world for European readerships at particular points in Europe's expansionist trajectory" (in Latin America and Africa, specifically), she shows how the imperial frontier was encoded through the distinct imperatives of science (said to embodied in such aspects as Europeanness, maleness, middle classness) and sentiment (reflected in "innocence and passivity"). She also demonstrates that underlying the seemingly benign process of observation is the subjectivity

of the travel writer who can express ambivalent attitudes toward colonialism. Pratt also discusses the concept of "contact zones," defined as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (4). She demonstrates how the imperial encounter was far from one-directional, paving the way for the retrieval of colonized voices and agencies.

In addition to these works, Ivo Kamp's and Jyotsna G. Singh's Travel Knowledge: European "Discoveries" in the Early Modern Period points to the impossibility of coming out with a single generic description for the wide range of travel literature that has been produced within various historical and regional spaces. According to the authors:

Travel knowledge . . . is hardly unmediated insofar as it is shaped by political factors, subject to authorial intervention, and plagued by general epistemological problems that attend the movement of information from one culture to another. This does not, in our view, mean that there is no possibility of knowledge at all, but it does mean that we have to understand "knowledge" as a culturally specific and ideologically charged category that relies



heavily on "translating" "otherness" in terms that are accessible, in the case of travel literature, to an audience back home. Or, to adapt Hayden White's analysis of the historian's practice, the travel writer makes sense of - "encodes"-his experiences much as a "poet or novelist" does. The travel writer endows "what originally appears to be problematical and mysterious with the aspect of a recognizable, because it is a familiar, form. It does not matter whether the world is conceived to be real or only imagined; the manner of making sense of it is the same. Knowledge, we might say, is what they thought they knew (6-7).

Accordingly, through the "imaginative geographies" they provided in their narratives, Western travel writers constructed their perception of reality in a way that made the text more relevant to its readers.

### III

Women travellers' writings are a significant part of this "knowledge." Within Western colonial discourse, they fuelled the imaginations of people who did not have the opportunity to witness empire first hand. Through their travels and their production of texts, women transgressed

societal conventions and consequently contributed invaluable to the body of imperialist discourse. In her work on English women travelers in colonial India, Indira Ghose could not have articulated the value of this study any more succinctly:

With historians like Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Joan Scott, I believe that it is necessary both to reinstate women as agents of their own history and simultaneously to challenge a reductionist approach that privileges gender to the exclusion of all other factors that construct identity.

(Ghose 14).

Besides exposing the constructedness of traditional literature, the added scholarship magnifies the experiences and crucial roles women assumed within the Western colonial endeavor and thus, provides the opportunity for the development of the field of women's history.

Around the 1980s, there was a noticeable upsurge in the number of works delving into the intersection of gender and Western imperialism. As Claire Midgeley states, "studies have sought to rectify the exclusion of women from standard histories of imperialism and the exclusion of imperialism from histories of women" (7). Recognizing how imperialism had been seen as a masculine enterprise,

scholars attempted to incorporate gender into their studies of colonialism. Many works focused on white Western women in India and Africa between the late 1860s and 1940s, a period bound by "high imperialism" and the commencement of decolonisation.

Scholars tended to adopt similar approaches in their studies of gender and imperialism. The first involved locating exceptional, often neglected, women who influenced the shaping of foreign policy. In Women and American Foreign Policy, for instance, Edward Crapol shows how abolitionists and pacifists played crucial roles in helping shape historical movements in the United States. A second approach involved focusing on "working" women such as missionaries, nurses, advocates for peace, and wives of colonial administrators. Jane Hunter's Gospel of Gentility analyzes the women who constituted 60 percent of the American missionary movement in turn-of-the-century China. In The World Their Household, Patricia Hill discusses the pivotal role played by the women's foreign mission movement. Women also started emerging in many histories of twentieth-century pacifism in such studies by Barbara J. Steinson (American Women's Activism in World War I) and Harriet H. Alonso (Peace as a Woman's Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights) which

draw a clear connection between peace networks and women's history. Another approach involves studies which adopt a "recuperative" mode (Midgeley 7). In these works, white women were viewed either as "villains," "victims" or "heroines" within the imperial drama.<sup>9</sup> As "villains," they were blamed for disrupting and eventually causing the loss of empire what with their sexual jealousy and racism which forced male colonizers to distance themselves from the colonized peoples.<sup>10</sup> As "victims," women were seen as a group that succumbed to an oppressive male-dominated imperial system, which allowed them to identify with the plight of similarly-oppressed colonized peoples<sup>11</sup>. Finally, as heroines, women were assigned benevolent roles as philanthropists or reformers. All three stereotypes supported the notion that women did not fulfill more than a very indirect and mostly private role in empire-building. As Billie Melman asserts in Women's Orients, "I agree that to de-politicise that experience and relegate it to the private sphere, outside the context of modern imperialism, would be as myopic as the attempt to reduce Orientalism to

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<sup>9</sup> Malia B. Formes, "Beyond Complicity Versus Resistance: Recent Work on Gender and European Imperialism," Journal of Social History 28 (March 1995): 629-41.

<sup>10</sup> Anne Stoler, "Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in Twentieth-Century Colonial Cultures," American Ethnologist 16 (November 1989): 634-40.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Ann Lind, The Compassionate Mem Sahib (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988); Helen Callaway, Gender, Culture and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press in association with St. Antony's College, Oxford, 1987).

a tool of power politics" (12). Women were assumed to be located within specific spheres that automatically rendered them incapable of exercising agency nor effecting any significant transformation in the colonial process.

A number of recent works have attempted to address the rigid and limiting nature of these frameworks by making more critical and in-depth studies of the multifarious and even conflicting roles women performed within the imperial setting. Margaret Strobel's European Women and the Second British Empire examines women's relationships with imperial structures and colonized peoples, and attempts to complicate oversimplified narratives that merely revolve around patriarchal oppression. Pointing out "how little understanding there was and is of gender and power in the dynamics of colonialism," she demonstrates how women reinforced as well as resisted and challenged the imperial establishment.<sup>12</sup> In a similar way, Melman's Women's Orient breaks down the male-oriented view of "otherness" by showing how women's views were more diverse, non-coercive and empathetic. She also states that "travel and the encounter with systems of behavior, manners and morals, most notably with the system of polygamy, concubinage and the sequestration of females, resulted in analogy between

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<sup>12</sup> Margaret Strobel, European Women and the Second British Empire (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991).

the polygamous Orient and the travelling women's own monogamous society. And analogy in some cases, led to self-criticism rather than cultural smugness and sometimes resulted in an identification with the other that cut across the barriers of religion, culture and ethnicity" (Melman 7-8). Melman clearly establishes the relationship between women's travel writing and the redefinition of gender and personal identity.

Another work deserving attention is Western Women and Imperialism edited by Margaret Strobel and Nupur Chaudhuri. The compiled essays in this volume study Western women's support and subversion of "dominant cultural values" during the colonial era as it pushes readers to consider the multiple viewpoints women took in advancing their own agenda(6). Essays retrieve the history of how Western women in such places as North Africa and Egypt insinuated themselves into the power dynamics of the imperial establishment. In another work entitled Gender and Imperialism, Midgeley interrogates the "productive marriage" of gender history and imperial history, as she brings together various articles focusing on both colonizing and colonized men and women who were impacted by imperialism (10). While it focuses on various colonial contexts, it concentrates on how traditional imperial

history is challenged by recent studies on postcolonialism.

Finally, in Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History (1992,) Vron Ware writes with the aim of identifying the correlation between patriarchy and racism. Juxtaposing contemporary culture with historical movements, she examines the negotiation of feminist and antiracist politics by different white British and American women. In this work, she examines the social relations that existed between white women and white men as well as those between black women and black men in an effort to form conclusions about "power and domination" within the colonial setting (43). According to Ware, this process is predicated on the reality about Western women's positioning in colonial society. In this setting, Western women occupied an ambiguous position of dominance (over non-white people) and subordination (to the white patriarchy) which enabled them to both negotiate and resist racial and gender discrimination, even though their compliance was demanded by colonial rule.

In addition to these works are a host of books coming out with newer and more critical approaches, and a deepening interest in various forms of women's travel writing such as anthologies, anecdotal accounts, geographical and ethnological studies exploring gender,

colonialism and representation.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, considerable effort has also been made to provide more in-depth studies of the relationship between these informational discourses, gendered subjectivities, and imperial control.

#### IV

Over the past fifteen years, a considerable number of scholars have increasingly devoted their attention to the study of travel narratives produced by both American and European women beginning in the late nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup> Many of these authors show how such accounts revolve around specific historical developments such as territorial expansion, technological and industrial advancement, and epistemological shifts. They also attribute the proliferation of these narratives to factors such as the desire to escape, pursue certain types of (national or

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<sup>13</sup> Shirley Foster, Across New Worlds: Nineteenth Century Women Travelers and Their Writings (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990); Reina Lewis, Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation (New York and London: Routledge, 1996); Anne McClintock, Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest (New York: Routledge, 1995); Sara Mills, Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism (London and New York: Routledge, 1991); Trinh Min-ha, Women, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Chandra Mohanty, "Under Eastern Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," Feminist Review 30 (Autumn 1998); Aihwa Ong, "Colonialism and Modernity: Feminist Re-Presentations of Women in Non-Western Societies," Inscriptions 3 (1988).

<sup>14</sup> Mary Suzanne Schriber's Writing Home: American Women Abroad, 1830-1920 (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997) and Telling Travels: Selected Writings by Nineteenth-Century American Women Abroad (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995); Foster, Across New Worlds; Alison Blunt, Travel, Gender and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa (New York, London: The Guilford Press, 1994); Susan Morgan, Place Matters: Gendered Geography in Victorian Women's Travel Books About Southeast Asia (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1996); Jane Robinson, Unsuitable for Ladies: An Anthology of Women Travellers (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

religious) missions, or rejuvenate physical and mental states of being. Since the late eighties, many studies also started theorizing about the nature and objectives of the discourse, paving the way for a more incisive and critical study of the texts.

Much of theoretical work on travel writing is grounded on the assumption that men's and women's texts are fundamentally different. In her work on Victorian women's travel literature on Africa, Catherine Stevenson states that women travellers tended to adopt strategies of "accommodation" as they provided "richly eclectic loosely structured" accounts of the places and people they encountered. (160). On the other hand, Mary Louise Pratt advances the notion of an underlying dichotomy existing in both men's and women's travel discourses. According to her, female travel accounts are not as structured on the "goal-directed, linear emplotment of conquest narrative," and that they are instead, "emplotted in a centripetal fashion around places of residence from which the protagonist sallies forth and to which she returns" (157-159). In contrast to the pursuit for scientific knowledge and adventure, women were more invested in presenting narratives about their own identity and sense of personal independence. As she states:

They rejected sentimentality and romanticism almost as vehemently as the capitalist vanguard did. For them identity in the contact zone resided in their sense of personal independence, property, and social authority, rather than in scientific erudition, survival or adventurism. No less than the men, these women travelers occupied a world of servants and servitude where their class and race privilege is presupposed (159).

Using "novelistic practice" to express their discoveries, the "social exploratresses" combined the political and the personal as they pursued efforts at "self-realization and fantasies of social harmony" (168).

Other writers have been more wary of such essentializing "feminist epistemologies." Sara Mills, in Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism, attempts to show the importance of deconstructing the category "woman travel writer" in terms of classifications like race, class, sexual orientation, and discrimination within a patriarchal order. According to Mills, although it is possible to suggest that masculine and feminine narratives were not always distinct, it is important to bear in mind that knowledges did arise out of

various and different kinds of imperial contexts. As she indicates:

It is necessary to recognise that women's writing practices can **vary** because of the differences in discursive pressures, but that they will also share many factors with men's writing. The most striking difference often lies not so much in the writing itself (although differences may be found there) but rather in the way that women's writing is judged and processed (30).

The above statement clearly adds another dimension to the discussion at hand. Indeed, the publication of women's texts allowed these authors to reach a wider audience which probably would never have had access to such knowledge. But the publishing industry, governed by prevailing gender stereotypes, also imposed restrictions which affected, among others, the content and tone of these accounts, which in turn, limited their capacity to subvert the highly gendered master narrative (McEwan 46) and correspondingly, to gain empowerment from their own texts. Consequently, any effective reading and critique of such sources needs to extend its criteria to include these considerations.

Alison Blunt, in Writing Women and Space (1994), points out that previous studies questioned the seeming

binary set for male and female writers, while others examined the various conditions that shape production (39). As Cheryl McEwan shows, even though men and women occupied the same arena of literary production, they were positioned in different ways, which accordingly produced a host of variations in their texts (9). Hence, women's connection to knowledge production requires an awareness mostly of how these women were able to negotiate their positioning within the "discursive frameworks" established by the imperial structure (Blunt 42). As McEwan argues, it is only when one studies the relationships of power (within the colonial spaces and the domestic sphere) that molded women's authorial identity, defined the relationship between their experiences and narratives, and demonstrated how these transformed both the colonial spaces and the home country, that one can begin to undertake a more critical feminist reading of white women's travel texts (9-12).

Clearly, many of these women travel writers were personally invested in the realization and redefinition of colonial objectives. This study aims to examine if and how this process prevailed in early twentieth century Philippines. I will be basing the study on the published accounts of eight women who resided in the Philippines between 1899-1904, and whose works were published between

1901-1950. These writings were the first comprehensive works about the early stages of American rule in the Philippines.

V

A preliminary survey of these works shows that women tended to focus their accounts on their immediate surroundings, the different "native" people they came into contact with, and the various facets of the lifestyles these people led. Despite these commonalities, contradictions and even ironies among the accounts were quite marked. Clearly, significant differences in class, regional, cultural, and political positionings cast these women in a different light from their Western counterparts, as well as from each other and influenced the ways they affirmed, opposed and resisted the system. A major objective of this work is to show the multiple realities or as Alison Blunt would call them, "gendered subjectivities," reflected in these women's accounts and study how women's travel writings reflect the complexities, disruptions, and contradictions underlying the colonial process.

The work will be divided according identities women claimed for themselves in the foreground of their work. Readers should bear in mind that categories are not definitive nor exclusive and may even at times overlap with

one another. The mode of classification this work uses is meant to be an organizing mechanism by which discussion on positionings and subjectivities can commence.

**Chapter one** is devoted to the "incorporated wife,"<sup>15</sup> whose spouses were assigned official positions in the Philippines. As women in supporting roles, these wives strove to maintain the ideal of "home" wherever their husband's work took them, whether it was in the remotest province or in the cosmopolitan urban setting. As a result, they embodied ambivalent positions within the private-public divide. Consequently, as their texts revealed, while they were concerned with the management of the household, they also devoted considerable attention to issues associated with the local peoples, lifestyle, customs, and religion and the implications of all of these to the imposition of the American political, economic and social systems of domination.<sup>16</sup>

The first work, is Helen Herron Taft's Recollection of Full Years. First published in **1914** by Dodd, Mead and Company in New York, it was a work reviewers described as

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<sup>15</sup> I am using the terminology coined in Hillary Callan and Shirley Ardener, The Incorporated Wife (London, Sydney, New Hampshire: Croom Helm, 1984).

<sup>16</sup> Rosemary M. George, "Homes in the Empire, Empire in the Home," Cultural Critique 26 (Winter 1993-93): 95-127; Vicente L. Rafael, "Colonial Domesticity: White Women and United States Rule in the Philippines," American Literature 67 (December 1995): 639-66.

"delightful in its subject-matter and its treatment."<sup>17</sup>

According to the reviewer, "Her account of the Philippines, as they were when Mr. Taft headed the second Philippine Commission . . . is of much attraction for all who realize the gravity of the problem that faces the country now."<sup>18</sup> It is listed in 225 libraries throughout the world and went through more editions in 1915 and 1917.

The second account, entitled Unofficial Letters of an Official's Wife, was written by Edith Moses. She was the wife of University of California professor Bernard Moses, a prominent American official assigned to assist in establishing civil government, (from American military rule) in the Philippines in the early part of the twentieth century. Her book entitled provides a 355-page account of her experiences in the Philippines between June 1900 and December 1902. First published by D. Appleton and Company in 1908, it is presently available in 75 libraries in the United States. It became part of the History of Women series when it was reproduced onto microfilm by Research Publications in New Haven, Connecticut in 1977. Currently, there are 50 libraries worldwide that possess copies of this microfilm. Moses' book is one of the most widely cited

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<sup>17</sup> This comment came out in the December 12, 1914 issue of Literary Digest. Other reviews also came out in such periodicals as the ALA Booklist (January 1915) and Boston Transcript (November 7, 1914).

<sup>18</sup> Again, this is from the same Literary Digest issue mentioned previously.

and often quoted work by well-written scholars of Philippine-American history such as Owen Ng (1979), Warwick Anderson (1995, 1996, 1997), J.A. Margold (1995), B. P. Resurreccion (1999), and Vicente Rafael (1995, 2000).

Death Stalks the Philippine Wilds by Maud Huntley Jenks (1874-1950) is the third text presented in this chapter. The book was published in Minneapolis by the Lund Press in 1951. It is presently available in 53 libraries throughout the United States. Selected and edited by Carmen Nelson Richards, who had indirectly encouraged Maud Jenks to have letters from the Philippines published, the 206-page work is a compilation of letters and pictures the author sent to her parents in Wisconsin, between the years 1902 to 1904.

**Chapter two** delves into accounts of seasoned women travellers who transgressed the limits of time, space and societal norms of the Western mode to explore not only newly-colonized terrain and people, but also their own renewed sense of freedom and independence. This particular group of women deliberately pursued ambitions of going beyond borders, acquiring first-hand information and experiences of non-Western manners of living, and disseminating the discourse through the publication machinery, which in itself highlights another aspect of



their independence and empowerment. In contrast to the other women, this group is probably the most apolitical subjects of this study; the women in this chapter were mostly tourists who were travelling for pleasure.

Two books are discussed in the chapter. The first of these is Marian George's Little Journeys to Hawaii and the Philippine Islands which was first published in 1901 by the A. Flanagan Company in Chicago and can be found in 11 libraries nationwide. George, a well-travelled and well-published writer was one of the first women to come out with an informed study of the Philippine Islands at the turn of the century. Although Manila is a focal point, George makes use of a framework that could have possibly determined the geographic demarcation for future works. Manila is presented as the cosmopolitan satellite that shows the confluence of local and Spanish traditions; and whereas Northern Philippines is characterized as headhunter territory, the South is shown to be dominated by Muslims (or "Moros" as they are called in the local language).

The second traveller to be studied is Florence Kimball Russel, who through her publication A Woman's Journey Through the Philippines, is said to give "an entertaining description of the journey of the cable ship on which she was one of the "2 ½" women passengers, as it wound in and

out among the islands, affording an ever beautiful panorama of tropical seas and wooded or mountainous shores and frequent opportunity to go ashore and observe the native life. Many curious adventures befell her as she seems to have enjoyed them all immensely, while she writes about them with such vivacity that the reader enjoys them too.”<sup>19</sup>

The table of contents include chapters on “Dumaguete,” “Misamis,” “Iligan,” “Cagayan,” “Cebu,” “Zamboanga,” “Sulu,” “Bongao,” and “Tampakan and the Home Stretch.”

The 270-page work was published by the LC Page and Company in 1907. It includes an index and segments partly reprinted from various periodicals (The Criterion and Everybody's Magazine). This copy is now in 59 libraries throughout the United States. It was reproduced onto microfilm first in 1976, in New Haven, Connecticut, by Research Publications, then in 1980 in Sanford, North Carolina by the Microfilming Corporation of America, followed by yet another reproduction in 1984 by the University of Michigan University Library in Ann Arbor, and finally by the Library of Congress Photoduplication Service in 1985.

**Chapter three** interrogates the position occupied by women writers/travellers whom Indira Ghose called the

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<sup>19</sup> Rev. of A Woman's Journey through the Philippines on a Cable Ship that Linked Together the Strange Lands en route, by Florence Kimball Russel, New York Times 2 November 1907: 702.

"philanthropic" travellers. This chapter incorporates accounts of women who were directly involved with the program of social reform through teaching, medical, and missionary work. Inextricably connected to the ideology of domesticity, the philanthropic enterprise imbued the middle-class professional with a sense of personal empowerment and mission, while enforcing, at the same time, the ends of social surveillance (Ghose 12). Although subjects of their study are still rendered voiceless, this is most possibly the group that had the most contact with the local people. Inevitably, it was also these women who reinforced notions of difference, otherness and assimilation.

The first work I will discuss is Old Glory and the Gospel in the Philippines, by Alice Byram Condict, who in 1899, came to the Philippines to rest from her work among those struck by famine in India. Soon after her arrival, she was inspired to write what she witnessed in the Islands. The table of contents include chapters on "The First View of Manila," "Nipa Shacks," "Old Manila," "The Rule of Rome," "Religious Liberty," "The Religious Movement of the Federal Party of the Philippines Island," "Washington's Birthday - 1901 An Era in Filipino History,"

"More Visits to the Provinces," "Diversity of People," and "The First Fruit of American Sovereignty."

Containing 124 pages and 16 leaves of plates, the work received its copyright in 1901 and was published in 1901 by Fleming H. Revell in Chicago. Currently, it is housed in 44 libraries worldwide. It was reproduced onto microfilm, first by the American Theological Library Association's Monograph Preservation Program in 1985, and then by the New York Public Library in 1986.

The second book I will examine is An Ohio Woman in the Philippines by Emily Bronson Conger, a nurse who worked for the American army in Iloilo, located in the central part of the archipelago. In 1904, the 166-page work was put out by two publishers: R.H. Leighton publishers located in Akron, Ohio, and Arthur H. Clark in Cleveland. Presently, it can be found at 68 libraries worldwide.

Finally, I will be analyzing A Woman's Impression of the Philippines by Mary Fee. Her book is undoubtedly one of the most popular and widely cited works among published accounts written by American women on the Philippines, and was first published in 1910 by A.C. McClurg and Co. in Chicago and is available in 73 libraries throughout the United States. A second edition came out in 1912. In 1976, Research Publications in New Haven, Connecticut

reproduced the work onto microfilm (which is now available in 49 U.S. libraries). It was then reprinted by GCF Books in Quezon City, Philippines in 1988. Finally in 1984, another reproduction was made by the University of Michigan University Library Preservation Office Microfilming Unit.

No matter what "gendered subjectivities" they occupied, it is clear that women's travel writing functioned as a form of colonial discourse, which among other things, illuminated the way in which colonialism was a gendered and multidimensional process. Women were impacted by empire in different ways. Although often adopting privileged positions as female colonizers, they were still subservient to the patriarchal hierarchy that governed the colony and thus, sometimes assumed a gaze that enabled them to relate and identify with the colonized. At the same time, as they set out to see the world through the act of travelling, they embodied what Carroll Smith-Rosenberg describes as the "New Woman" (between the 1850s and 1890s) who challenged conventional roles ascribed to women as they moved into wider national and international boundaries.<sup>20</sup> Representing their experiences through both formal and informal, as well as public and private modes, these women travel writers presented information and

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<sup>20</sup> Mary Suzanne Schiber, *Telling Travels: Selected Writings by Nineteenth-Century American Women Abroad* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995) xvi.

adopted strategies that were significantly different from those produced and used by most of their obvious male counterparts. They were not offering their readers official accounts of colonial administration. Their accounts were largely based on personal and mainly self-indulgent experiences, rather than on official figures and statistics. Yet these narratives also provided ethnographic and geographical knowledges that embodied a high degree of credibility and authoritativeness within both mainstream and professional circles. And as I intend to argue, it was this factor that enabled them to impact public opinion in the United States about the enforcement, affirmation and resistance to imperialism. More importantly, they succeeded in integrating themselves within a discourse that was disseminated to a wide readership that consequently, developed more concrete notions about the multiple dimensions of early twentieth century American imperial hegemony.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE OCCUPATION OF MATRIMONY: WIVES OF THE EMPIRE

Undeniably, issues linked to the relationship between women, colonialism, travel writing, and representation have become the subject of numerous works that have come out within the past two decades. Despite this surge in the scholarship, there is still a noticeable lack of effort taken in complicating the gender rubric and recognizing the various subject positions that different women within empire occupied. The present study aims to address this issue by discussing the narratives produced by American women playing specific roles within the colonial society in the Philippines. The first of these focuses on the group that was most accessible to the public - - **the official administrator's wife.**

Mediating the public and private realms of a colonial society, the wives of empire played a crucial role in reconstituting the home country on the imperial frontier. Within the vast arena of scholarship devoted to Victorian women's relationship to colonialism, one prevalent stereotype is that of the "pampered Hill Station denizen," or the more popularly known *memsahib* (Buzzard 463). In fact, British colonial officials' wives were usually cast in either one of two roles in the colonialist drama. As "villains," they were depicted as envious and racist

subjects whose sexual jealousy, intolerance, and obsession contributed to the downfall of *empire*; on the other hand, as "victims," women were "seen as trapped within and subjugated by the hierarchy of imperial power". According to some critics, they were repressed by the two systems of patriarchy and imperialism, causing them to eventually develop empathy for the women of the "other" culture who were subject to the same kind of control and domination, and to thereby subvert the male-dominated structures of imperialism (Procida 27). But whether it was as the "villain" or the "victim," authors inevitably made the memsahib responsible for the destabilization and loss of empire (Procida 29). In recent years, scholars have attempted to move beyond and complicate this dichotomy that has plagued the historiography of Western wives and colonialism. But even as these try to use a feminist approach, they have fallen prey to an essentializing framework that ignores aspects such as locale, race, and ethnicity.<sup>1</sup> In the following discussion on American wives in colonial Philippines, the study tries to avoid similar pitfalls.

As partners, wives usually offered support in the form of what Helen Callaway, in her work on European women in

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<sup>1</sup> Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," *Boundary 2* (1984): 333-358; Rosemary Marangoly George, "Homes in the Empire, Empires in the Home," *Cultural Critique* 26 (Winter 1993-94): 95-127.



Colonial Nigeria, called both "feminine graces" and "women's work" (Callaway 165). Correspondingly, whether they acted as hostesses of official dinners or active observers in the forging of crucial diplomatic negotiations between American and Filipino political leaders, American wives in the Philippines performed their own roles in stabilizing the imperial establishment by making the public and private spheres complement and reinforce one another. In an article on the "colonial domesticity" of "white women" during the early stages of American rule, Vicente Rafael articulates this view pointedly:

Where the Philippines was concerned, Euro-American women who celebrated rather than opposed colonization did so as a logical extension of their support for domestic reform. The language of benevolent assimilation integrated many of them into the public sphere of empire as patriotic participants in a civilizing mission. Charged with the task of manufacturing a sense of the everyday amid the eruptive contingencies of colonial expansion, they sought to establish a domestic realm from which social relations would be cleansed, as it were, of political entanglements. (643)

Essentially, it was in the private and domestic sphere that

the Western female subject aimed to exercise significant change and transformation. From this point on, this chapter will discuss how this process worked in the accounts of three wives, starting with that written by Helen Herron Taft, wife of the head of the second Philippine commission appointed by William McKinley to implement civil administration and establish the foundations of the American colonial infrastructure.

### RECOLLECTIONS OF FULL YEARS

I should like to say here, by way of explanation, which may or may not be necessary, that I am not trying in this narrative to pose as a woman endowed with an especial comprehension of such problems of state as men alone have been trained to deal with. I confess only to a lively interest in my husband's work which I experienced from the beginning of our association. (182)

I began to love the tropical nights and to feel that I never before had known what nights can be like. The stars were so large and hung so low that they looked almost like raised silver figures on a dark blue field. And when the moon shone - - but why try to write about the tropical moonlight? The wonderful sunsets and the moonlit nights have tied more American hearts to Manila and the

Philippines than all the country's other charms combined. And they are both indescribable. (214)

### American Mission

From the time her husband William Howard Taft was delegated to establish civil government in the Philippines, Helen Herron Taft expressed an immediate willingness and readiness to embark on what she perceived was going to be a "big and novel experience." As she states: "I have never shrunk before any obstacles, when I had the opportunity to see a new country and I must say I have never regretted any adventure" (33). As seen in the following quote, she then goes about making "happy preparations for my adventure into a new sphere":

I had no premonition as to what it would lead to; I did not see beyond the present attraction of a new and wholly unexplored field of work which would involve travel in far away and very interesting countries. I read with engrossing interest everything I could find on the subject of the Philippines, but a delightful vagueness with regard to them, a vagueness which was general in the United States at that time, and has not, even yet, been entirely dispelled, continued in my mind. There were few books to be found, and those I did find were not specially illuminating. (35)

The prospect of engaging in "new and unexplored" work is an important aspect that motivated Taft to undertake this journey, and it is also this factor which may account for the nature of her preparation. Taft undertakes "research" that will provide more information and truths about the archipelago they are headed for. But previous studies have shown that such an activity was mostly associated with the male traveler whose "travel was seen to offer particular advantages for scientific observation to 'a man prepared to profit by them.'"<sup>2</sup> Women travellers, in fact were said to consult conduct books which served as guides for appropriate behavior.<sup>3</sup> Taft's case presents an exception to this norm and shows how her efforts to acquire knowledge were related to a desire of fulfilling imperial duty.

In the course of her stay in the Islands, Taft evolved from being the curious traveler to the crusader who strived to help American efforts of establishing peace and prosperity in the archipelago. This is clearly articulated in the following:

Our life, on the whole, was intensely interesting in its unusual atmosphere and curious complications, but throughout everything we were made to feel the deep significance of our presence in the Islands. [. . .] Even in our daily round of

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<sup>2</sup> See Alison Blunt, Travel, Gender and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa (New York,

social affairs we dealt with tremendous problems whose correct solution meant the restoration of peace and prosperity to what then should have been, and what we knew could be made, a great country. That for which the American flag had always stood began to assume [. . .] a broader and a finer meaning; and being so much a part of our flag's mission in a strange field a certain zest was added to our patriotism which we had never felt before. I believe, and I think all those who know the truth believe, that Americanism, in its highest conception, has never been more finely demonstrated than in the work done by the United States in the Philippine Islands. (129)

Even the mundane was invested with political implications. Taft infused everyday activities specifically with an idealism about America's rule.

Several factors became crucial in the fulfillment of this agenda. Education became one of the foremost priorities in the colonial agenda, and in her text, Taft celebrates the way efforts toward this objective were positively received:

That they were tremendously alive to the value of the educational privileges offered to them is proved by the phenomenal success attained by the

public school system which was introduced. [. . .]  
Whatever may be said about the American  
Constitution there can be no dispute about the  
fact that education follows the flag. (159)

Taft also articulates the significance she attached to the overall presence of American women in the establishment of civil government. During a particular visit to the Southern Philippines, she expressed how instrumental their presence was to the success of the Commission:

It was decided in the beginning that the ladies should accompany the Commissioners on their long organising (sic) trip through the southern islands and the success of our visit to Bataan proved to us that as members of the governmental party we could make ourselves distinctly useful. (156)

#### Holidays and Entertainment

One of the more important results of the institution of civil governance was increased engagement and interaction with Filipinos. Early on, Taft makes up her mind on how to approach such occasions: "We made it a rule from the beginning that neither politics nor race should influence our hospitality in any way, and we came thus to have a very wide and diverse acquaintance" (114). She hosted parties and dinners at least once a week and made it a point to have a

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<sup>3</sup> See Blunt, Travel, Gender and Imperialism 65-67.

diverse and "interestingly cosmopolitan" gathering of people. As far as decorum and protocol went, she was quick to acquiesce to local customs and manners: "And we did not fail to observe all the desirable forms. Both Filipinos and Europeans expect a certain amount of ceremony from the representatives of government and are not at all impressed by 'democratic simplicity'; so believing in the adage about Rome and the Romans, we did what we could" (125).

The "diversity" which Taft sought to achieve within such social functions was really limited to the upper crust of the social and political order. And within the succeeding months, parties, dances (*bailes*) and other social gatherings became more crucial in reinforcing relations between these members of the Filipino elite and the American administrators, as well as in affirming the colonial process:

They seemed greatly pleased with the spirit of the occasion which served to demonstrate in a particular manner the fact that America was in the Philippines as a friend rather than as an arbitrary ruler; that there was to be none of the familiar colour or race prejudice, so far as we were concerned, in the association of the two peoples; that the best thing to do was to acknowledge a mutual aspiration and strive for its

fulfillment in friendly co-operation, and there was a heart-lift for us all [. . .]. (148)

As far as Taft was concerned, social functions then, become sites where Americans become color-blind and where Filipino participants are enjoined into identifying with imperial aims and methods.

#### Civil Over Military Government

Throughout her work, Taft attempts to make a strong case for the enforcement of civil government over military rule. As she relates, it was not an easy takeover as both civil and military administrators possessed staunch and rigid views about how to best govern the Philippine Islands. As she states, the Commission was "pledged to the rapid adjustment of affairs on a civil and generally representative basis," which met with strong opposition from the military:

My husband is supposed to be the author of the phrase: "our little brown brothers" - - and perhaps he is. It did not meet the approval of the army, and the soldiers used to have a song which they sang with great gusto and frequency and which ended with the conciliating sentiment: "He may be a brother of William H. Taft, but he ain't no friend of mine!" (125)

Civil government, as she saw it, was clearly related to the

betterment of relations between Americans and Filipinos. According to Mrs. Taft, Mr. Taft, through his rhetoric, accorded Filipinos with equal status and thus, a certain degree of empowerment.

Taft empathizes with the plight of the military, but eventually posits that in the long run, civil governance would have a more significant impact the administration of the Islands. This is reflected in the following:

That the Army officers did not approve of our cordiality toward the Filipinos can hardly be wondered at. They had been subjected to the risks of a campaign of ambush and assassination for many months, [. . .] so it was natural for them to think that a policy of disdain and severity was the only one suited to the apparent unreliability and deceitfulness of the native. However, these same officers very shortly admitted to us, though rather unwillingly, that our mode of dealing with the people had had an extraordinary effect on the general tone in Bataan. (154)

Despite the contentious relationship, both camps do express a mutual understanding of the views of the opposing side, and rationalize these within the evolving rubric of American colonial rule in the Philippines. As they push on with establishing civil government in the various regions, she

arrives at this conclusion:

Personally to superintend the establishment of civil government throughout the Islands at a time when many of the people were still in sympathy with armed resistance to our authority was a tremendous task for the Commission to undertake, but it was thought that only through direct contact could anything like sympathetic understanding be obtained. Tranquility had, as speedily as possible, to be restored, and while the ungentle persuasion of armed force continued for some time to be a necessity, the methods adopted by the civil officials never failed to make a visible and lasting impression. (156)

Taft clearly indicates the change in the way imperialism was to be enforced. Echoing McKinley's policy of "benevolent assimilation," she recognizes that only through "sympathetic understanding" can the groundwork for long-term rule be instantiated.

#### Depicting the Filipino Character

Within many of the households of American officials in Manila, the Filipino domestic help were, in fact, the first and last members of the Filipino community whom officials' wives probably had the closest dealings with. Rosemary George argues that the home in the Islands, after all,

functioned as a locus of both private and public activity within the imperial setting, with housekeeping being the primary means whereby organization and order were instilled. In her article "Homes in the Empire, Empires in the Home," Rosemary George posits that "it is the daily construction of the home country as the location of the colonizer's racial and moral identity and as the legitimization of the colonizer's national subjecthood that made possible the carrying out of the work of Empire" (George 107). For George, it was clear that mundane matters of domesticity and the ensuing relationship between wives and their servants was in itself, an important determinant of imperial success. Vicente Rafael expresses a similar viewpoint in his study of "colonial domesticity" and the female colonizers in the Philippines. He states: "By making a home away from home, they assumed the role of active agents in the politics of nationalist reproduction, erecting the domestic outposts of 'beneficial republicanism,' on the imperial frontier" (Rafael, "Colonial Domesticity," 643). The colonial home thus stood as a representation of the republican ideology and American women were consequently its gatekeepers. During the earlier part of their stay in the Islands, Taft's gaze of the "other" reflected the actualization of this process:

I went immediately to work to order my household

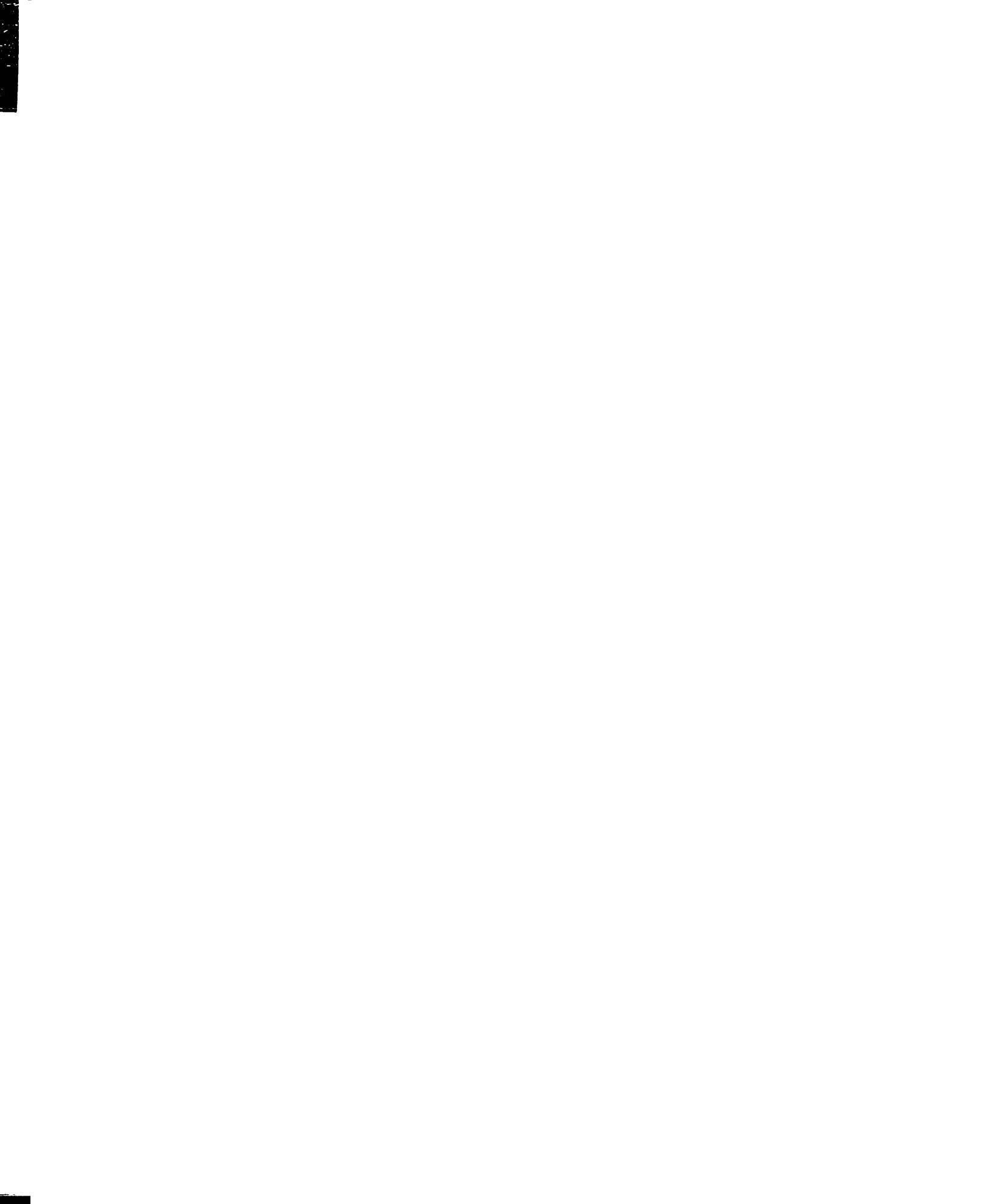
as I always had been used to doing, and that's where I began to get my experience of the Oriental character. My cook was a wrinkled old Chinaman who looked as if he had concealed behind his beady little eyes a full knowledge of all the mysteries of the East, to say nothing of its vague philosophies and opium visions. He called me "Missy" and was most polite, but in all the essentials he was a graven image. He was an unusually good cook, though he did exactly as he pleased, and seemed to look upon my feeble efforts at the direction of affairs with a tolerant sort of indifference. (104)

Taft readily invests this particular helper with preconceived notions she has learned about "the East;" and although she recognizes such aspects as his respect and his ability to work effectively, these notions pervade her gaze.

Over the course of their stay, her preconceived notions about Filipinos are challenged by what she actually witnesses first-hand in the archipelago. Taft was pleasantly surprised, for example, when she visited parks and gardens. Firstly, this seemed to go against the belief that Filipinos have no concept of time. Secondly, although it did not quite fit her idea of what a "tropical garden" should look like, she takes note of the amount of work it must have

taken to get this done: "The Filipino has learned, or is learning how to work. He always was willing to work, a certain amount, but he didn't know how" (99).

The chapter "Days of Empire" is replete with characterizations of Filipino society and "el costumbre del pais" or literally, the customs of the Islands. Some of the characteristics Taft describes include the "most annoying" habit of "putting everything off until tomorrow" - - manana habit - - and the habit of taking care of or "giving shelter" to relatives, even under the roof of an employer. Coined as "accumulating parientes," she surmises that this was probably a remnant of an old patriarchal arrangement "where everybody with the remotest or vaguest claim upon the master's household gathered upon that master's doorstep, so to speak, and camped there for life" (118). American employers eventually preempted this by providing just the right space for the people they needed in the household. Taft also mentions that, except for drivers of public vehicles, Filipinos are "a most temperate people; there is no such thing as drunkenness among them" (121). Another "costumbre" she mentions is that relating to a system of reciprocity "which decreed that some return be made by a Filipino for any and all favours bestowed upon him" which in fact, the Taft family grew accustomed to and came to expect, although it had been embarrassing at the start.



She does recognize differences within society emanating from class distinctions and at one point devotes special attention to the privileged mestizo class:

I am afraid it is going to be very difficult to convey adequate picture of Manila society during the first years of American occupation. There had been, in the old days, a really fine Spanish and rich *mestizo* society, but all, or nearly all, of the Spaniards had left the Islands, and the *mestizos* had not yet decided just which way to "lean," or just how to meet the American control of the situation. I must say here that most of the educated, high-class Filipinos are *mestizo*; that is, of mixed blood. [. . .] The *mestizos* control practically all the wealth of the Philippines, and their education, intelligence and social standing are unquestioned. It is the only country in the world that I know about - - certainly the only country in the Orient - - where the man or woman of mixed blood seems to be regarded as superior to the pure blooded native.

(123-24)

Taft shows how she constructs difference along class lines, as she recognizes the political and social leverage possessed by this elite class and the importance of

channeling their support for the American administration.

Up to this point, Taft bases her characterizations and impressions about Filipinos through observation, without establishing any real contact with the people, nor engaging in any significant interaction. But as she indicates below, considerations about political ideology initiate more encounters with Filipinos through informal meetings and social occasions:

We insisted upon complete racial equality for the Filipinos, and from the beginning there were a great many of them among our callers and guests. Their manners are models of real courtesy, and, while their customs are not always like ours, wherever they are able they manifest a great willingness to be *conforme*, --to adapt themselves,-- and their hospitality is unbounded.

(125-26)

As seen from the quote above, interactions between American officials and members of the Filipino society were indicative of the seeming success of American public pronouncements ensuring leveling of the social field. In fact, the first call made by a Filipino family to the Commissioner's house was something memorable for Taft. In the following, she gives explicit details of the occasion.

I shall never forget my first call from a Filipino

family. They arrived shortly after six in the evening: el señor, la señora and four señoritas. We went through a solemn and ceremonious handshaking all around. I received them first, then passed them on to my husband who, in turn, passed them on with a genial introduction to my sister Maria. We had been sitting on the verandah, and when a semi-circle of chairs had been arranged, the six of them sat down; el señor noisily cleared his throat a couple of times while the ladies calmly folded their little hands in their laps and assumed an air of great repose. It was as if they had no intention of taking any part whatever in the conversation. (126)

What is noticeable here is how the entire family partakes in what seems to be a highly-orchestrated semi-official ceremony. And because the occasion straddles between the lines of a diplomatic meeting and social gathering, the Filipino family even gets "passed on" eventually to the most non-official member of the Taft family. As the meeting progresses, the "señor" proceeds to explain the intent of their visit, as the women become more acquainted. Taft and her sister Maria express their admiration for the *camisas* the Filipino women were wearing and they in turn, "praised everything in sight [. . .]" (126).

They got up and wandered all around, feeling of my Japanese tapestries and embroideries, breathing long "ahs!" of admiration over my gold screens and pictures and curios, and acting generally like callers who were being very well entertained. Then the children came in and they broke out afresh in voluble praise of them. I assumed the proper deprecatory mien in response to their laudation of my children, and altogether I felt that we were acquitting ourselves rather well in this first inter-racial social experience." (126-27)

Taft evidently views their guests with "amused respect,"<sup>4</sup> as she shows their failed attempt at mimicry at "acting . . . like callers who were being . . . entertained." But even the Taft sisters were engaged in their own performance, as she expresses their eventual "acquittal" from the encounter.

When it came to talking about meeting representatives of the Filipino political elite, she presents the "Filipino" attitude toward the public process:

We understood that Aguinaldo was trying to concentrate for one spectacular move shortly before election, in order to add to the chances of a Democratic victory; and there was some cause of

alarm. The Filipinos are born politicians and many of them knew much more about the campaign between Bryan and McKinley than the Americans in the Islands knew. (140)

Taft elucidates on the existing political environment, and in contrast to other wives who stay "ironically detached,"<sup>5</sup> from politics, she provides some important insight about the pivotal role Filipino politicians could play in the intricate political play of power maintained by the Americans.

#### Insurrection Issues

Despite her advocacy of civil government, Taft also articulates the constant concerns she has about the tenuous peace and order situation their party faced when they first arrived:

There was a trying period of unrest and uncertainty in our early experience in the Philippines, during which we lived in a state of suspense which can hardly be described; a state of suspense which included among its various elements the excitement of an intermittent guerilla warfare and frequent threats of native uprisings in Manila. Established order and a fixed governmental policy [. . .] were non-existent, and

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<sup>4</sup> Indira Ghose, Memsahibs Abroad: Writings by Women Travellers in Nineteenth Century India (Delhi:

one experienced a sense of complete detachment which made plans for even the immediate future seem entirely futile. To unpack all one's things; to establish a satisfactory home and give one's attention to its ornamentation; to supply one's self with the necessities of a long residence in the tropics; in other words, to settle down to the pursuit of a usual mode of existence; all these things had to be done, but needless to say, they were not done with the enthusiasm incident to a feeling of permanence [. . .]. (142)

The initial phase of civil administration was especially trying for the official's wife who, as Rosemary George pointed out previously, established the domestic front as another fort of the political order.<sup>6</sup> The inability to establish the home was indicative of the inability to ensure political dominance.

Amidst all pervading uncertainty, Taft expresses enthusiasm in getting the work of empire under way. As she states, "We were there for a purpose which was at last defined, so we cheerfully confronted chaos and went to work" (142). And in the course of their stay, Taft would notice

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Oxford University Press, 1998) 114.

<sup>5</sup> Ghose, Memsahibs Abroad 114.

<sup>6</sup> Rosemary George, "Homes in the Empire. Empire in the Home." Cultural Critique 26 (Winter 1993-94): 95-127.

the inroads the Commission would be making, and the positive reception such successes were greeted with:

Perhaps the most extraordinary demonstration any of us ever saw in Manila took place on Washington's birthday in 1901. The Commission had already begun its long task of instituting provincial and municipal governments and its members had just returned from a trip into the country north of Manila where they had been received with great enthusiasm, and where the people had shown every indication of a glad determination to stop all hostilities and settle down to peaceful pursuits under the representative and democratic system which the Commission was inaugurating. (148)

Unfortunately, toward the last part of her husband's incumbency, the Balangiga massacre<sup>7</sup> struck and seriously challenged the successes already achieved by the civil administrators:

Then came the awful tragedy of Balangiga. It happened only a few days after the President died, while our nerves were still taut, and filled us all with unspeakable horror intensified by the

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<sup>7</sup> The southern region of Samar was still an area of armed resistance. In September 1901, the Ninth U.S. Infantry Regiment was nearly decimated by the bolo-wielding men of Filipino General Lucban, who were disguised as peaceful villagers and farmers. 48 American soldiers were killed, while 22 were wounded.

actual fear we had felt since we had been in the Philippine Islands. [. . .] Of course this made the Army officers more certain than ever that the Islands should have remained under military control indefinitely, and I cannot deny that, at the time, their arguments seemed to have some foundation. It was a frightful nervous strain and it took several months of tranquility to restore confidence. If it had been a regular engagement in which the Americans had sustained a reverse it could have been accepted with some philosophy, but it was a plain massacre of a company of defenceless (sic) men by many times their number who had gotten into the town with the consent of the American authorities, and in conspiracy with the local headman and the native parish priest, on the pretext of bringing in for surrender a band of insurrectos. (225-26)

Taft presents interesting considerations about the massacre. Despite the reality of warfare, she asserts why the massacre at Balangiga was more treacherous. According to her, it would have been better if the Filipino perpetrators did not engage in such subterfuge tactics against an unsuspecting and undermanned American contingent. Interestingly enough,

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The massacre briefly put the American campaign of peaceful pacification on hold, as officials feared that

Taft's account of the event is cited in Lewis Gleeck's comprehensive and detailed work on the history of Americans in the Philippines. As he states: "Mrs. Taft, in the Palace, noted that an atmosphere of dread descended on the Americans stationed there."<sup>8</sup> In fact, he invests her accounts of this period with "the flavor of authenticity."<sup>9</sup>

### Visiting the South

Part of the various tasks undertaken by American women like Taft included visiting far-flung provinces and regions as their husbands attempted to bring these within the fold of American civil governance. Among all the trips her party took, Taft highlighted their sojourns to the southern and northern parts of the archipelago most dramatically. Upon her arrival to the Southern Islands, she provides this account:

We woke up one brilliant morning to find ourselves in the prettiest harbours imaginable and in the midst of scenes which we could not believe belonged to the Philippine world. We were in Moroland. Straight before us, in the curve of the beautiful bay, lay a little white city, surrounded by bastioned walls which looked age-old, and backed by soft green hills and groves of tall

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Lucban's call would be heeded by the rest of the country.

<sup>8</sup> Lewis Gleeck, Jr., The American Century(1898-1946) (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 1998) 56.

<sup>9</sup> Gleeck, The American Century 57.

cocoanut palms. A high watch tower at the end of a long pier reminded one of piratical days and of Spain's never-ending troubles with her Mohammedan subjects. Off to the right, against the farthest shore, was the strangest collection of habitations I had ever seen. To be told that the Moros live on the water is to imagine them living in boats, but these were houses built far out in the water, perched up on frail wooden stilts and joined together by crooked and rickety bamboo bridges.

(168)

Although Taft had acquired some information about the Islands before they even departed, it was clear that her initial encounter with the southern part of the archipelago was far from her preconceptions. In this particular passage, Taft expresses awe and admiration for the surroundings and their history. As she also indicates here, she recognizes that no matter how accurate available information may be, these are never really complete and can even create false impressions. This corresponds to the kind of "first impressions" also held by British women travellers to India which resulted in responses ranging from awe to scorn.<sup>10</sup> In relation to wives of "civil servant husbands," they "typically" expressed what Ghose calls a "hint of

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<sup>10</sup> Ghose, Memsahibs Abroad 13.

colonial paranoia."<sup>11</sup>

In the course of her travels around the South, she takes note of important distinctions between the people of the South and those they had met in Manila:

We found them extremely entertaining. They were by far the most picturesque figures we had seen, and utterly unlike Filipinos. They were of a different build, lithe, active and graceful, with a free and defiant gaze which offered a strong contrast to the soft-eyed modesty of the Christian tribes. (169)

In this particular entry, Taft alludes to a definition of "Filipino" that she uses as a basis in her discussion of the people in the south. Readers could possibly assume that "Filipinos" could be characterized as urbane, ordinary-looking people who came across as timid and indolent. What does come across clearly is how these attributes were perceived rather negatively.

The rest of the Southern trip consisted of visits to such places as Sulu, Jolo, Zamboanga and Davao. In terms of the imposition of civil governance, the Southern Philippines or Mindanao posed a unique challenge for American officials. As explained by Taft herself:

The problem of the government of the territory

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<sup>11</sup> Ghose, Memsahibs Abroad 14.

inhabited by the Moros in a measure adjusted  
itself. These Mohammedans have always been unruly  
and independent and were never wholly conquered by  
the Spaniards, and they absolutely refused, as  
they have since continued to do, to be placed  
under Filipino control. So it was decided to  
detach them from the general organisation (sic)  
and to place them under a semi-military system  
with an American Army officer of high rank in  
charge in the dual capacity of Governor and  
Commanding General of Troops in the Moro Province.  
(170-71)

Although there was some opposition to American rule, the  
"wise ones," according to Taft, "are to-day everywhere  
upholding the American policy of establishing markets and  
schools and honest trade relations, and in preaching to  
their people that, for the first time in their history, they  
are being fairly and justly dealt with. They cling to  
American protection with determined faith, telling us in  
plain words that if we leave them they will fight their  
neighbors. So, whatever we may do with the Philippine  
Islands, we cannot abandon the Moros, and this adds a grave  
complication to our Philippine problem" (171).

The administration of "violence-prone" Mindanao had always

been a contentious issue.<sup>12</sup> Even before the massacre at Balangiga, which resulted in one of the "most brutal suppression campaigns" under General Jacob Smith who vowed to make the region a "howling wilderness,"<sup>13</sup> Mindanao, as described by Taft, had posed a special case because of the Islands' Islamic population. This is indirectly depicted in Taft's account as she casts Americans as arbiters and as a stabilizing force in the seeming segregation of the South from the rest of the Islands. In actuality, the Muslims in Mindanao, long before the American regime was put in place, had possessed a higher level of social and economic development, as they managed to keep themselves relatively independent of Spanish rule.<sup>14</sup>

#### The Northern Trip

Riding on horseback over "dangerous trails," Taft was "most anxious" to take the trip to the northern part of the Philippine Islands. These were her preliminary observations of the region:

First let me say that the northern part of the island of Luzon bears just about as much resemblance to the rest of the archipelago as the Alps bear to the plains of Nebraska. We began to

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<sup>12</sup> Frank H. Golay, Face of Empire: United States-Philippines Relations, 1898-1946 (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1997) 93.

<sup>13</sup> Rosario Mendoza Cortes, Celestina Boncan, and Ricardo T. Jose, The Filipino Saga: History as Social Change (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers) 258.

<sup>14</sup> Renato Constantino, The Philippines: A Past Revisited (Quezon City, Philippines: Tala Publishing Services, 1975.) 26.



notice the difference even at Vigan, though Vigan is at sea-level and is as hot as a sea-level town is supposed to be in that latitude. But it feels and looks like a little foreign city; foreign, that is, to the Philippines. (185)

Using temperature and climate as a main consideration, Taft expresses, once again, the foreignness characterizing outlying areas. And once again, readers acquire a stronger notion about how the "Philippines" is being defined in this work in terms of the distinct regions of the north, south and center. She then went on to make mention of the houses built of "ancient-looking stone," the narrow and crooked streets and the "magnificent" grove of fire-trees, which make "a veritable cloud of flame which, seen against a background of blue hills, or overhanging the mouldy, old-world grace of a Spanish church and convent, fairly 'takes one's breath'" (186). Again, she expresses a certain degree of marvel for the kind of Old World nostalgia the scene she describes seems to bring out.

Although the party found themselves in the middle of the rainy season, Taft had a "glorious time" traveling:

It was the "rainy season" and we were wet most of the time, but Mr. Taft was right when he promised that we would have a glorious time and that the trip would do us a "world of good." Down in the

heat and the political turmoil of Manila I was taking things much too seriously, while up in the far-away north there was nothing to do but dismiss all worry and accept things as they came along. [. . .] So I enjoyed myself thoroughly, as did every one else in the party, hardships and physical discomforts seeming only to add to our gaiety. (188)

Travel was clearly a regular activity Taft engaged in during her stay in the Islands, and one that, as it turns out, brought escape, relief, and even a feeling of renewal. As she indicates, they faced difficulties along the way, but the whole party managed to take these in stride. Throughout the journey, Taft learned to "obey" military officials' commands, as she identified with the plight of soldiers in a new way. As she writes, "General Bell was in command and he knew what he was doing. All he had to do was to issue orders; we obeyed. That is what it is to go camping with a soldier. One learns what discipline means" (189). She also learned how important it was to keep their bundles in waterproof slicks and wraps, and that it would have been advantageous to know the dialect so she could help "natives" do their tasks better (189).

As they proceeded with their journey and reached the Benguet region, home of the world-renowned Banawe rice

terraces, she provides this account:

I wish I could describe the magnificence of the scene which lay all about us when we reached that amazing summit. [. . .] And its grandeur is accentuated by vivid colouring. The Igorrotes have, for hundreds of years, been building extraordinary rice-terraces and these have gradually climbed the mountains until, in some places, only the rugged crests are left uncultivated. The terraces are as symmetrical as honeycomb and are built in solid walls of finely laid masonry out of which grow ferns and tangled vines. . . . And wherever one looks there are peaks, jagged sunlit peaks which rise from somber valleys upward into a strange light whose every ray seems to shine in its own individual hue.

(191)

Unlike male travellers who assumed control (related to Pratt's monarch-of-all-I-survey conceptualization) over the surroundings they encountered and who valued the acquisition of scientific knowledge, Taft expresses pride in being able to surmount the odds, reaching the pinnacle, and living to tell about it.<sup>15</sup> She gives due credit to the Igorots (also referred to as the "Igorrotes") who constructed the

terraces, as she writes about the perfection, order and harmony these achieve with the rest of the environment.

Taft also gave a rather extended discussion of the Igorots. Describing the men as having "long, murderous-looking spears," and the women as being "evidently the burden-bearers," she indicates:

There is hardly an American who has ever lived among them for any length of time who has not a real admiration and affection for them and yet, to all intents and purposes, they are naked savages. They are most amenable to civilising (sic) influences. They take to education eagerly. They are, in their physical development, beautiful to look upon—when they are cleaned up—perfectly formed, straight and muscular, with features strongly marked and with wide, clear eyes which inspire confidence. They are entirely fearless; and they are loyal to the "last ditch." Also, it is these same incomprehensible "naked savages" who have built the thousands of acres of rice terraces which are a marvel and a mystery to every irrigation expert or technical engineer who has ever seen them. (192-93)

In an indirect way, Taft states that administrators should

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<sup>15</sup> David Spurr, The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial

enforce the policy of benevolence with caution, lest they be misled into thinking that these people of the north have any real capability of governing themselves. Like other women travellers who have portrayed race and difference, Taft invests the colonized with attributes of simplicity, backwardness, and passivity, implying that they need regular guidance.<sup>16</sup> In addition, she shows how physical appearance can be used to gauge openness to assimilate. In the last part, what is interesting is how she mentions the tremendous feat the same "savages" accomplished by building the rice terraces. Aside from being contradictory, Taft also shows how the rich human resources such as the Igorots' technical know-how in this case, will be appropriated by the imperial establishment.

She also makes mention of their practice of head-hunting and the eventual U.S. government's response to it:

When I went into the Igorrote country head-hunting was still in full force and houses were still decorated with festoons of human skulls, while no man ever ventured forth, even to his rice-fields, without his spear and shield and head-axe. They all carry spears even yet, but head-hunting, having been made by the American government a capital offence, is not so popular. Mr. Dean C.

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Administration (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993) 149.

Worcester, as Secretary of the Interior, in direct charge of all wild tribes, actually succeeded in introducing substitutes for the sport in the form of baseball and other inter-tribal athletic contests and peaceful, though rough and strenuous pastimes. For fourteen years Mr. Worcester was to these children of the hills a most highly respected Apo-*apo*, --chief of chiefs. (193)

As Blunt contends, there is a very thin line between ethnography and travel knowledge. According to her, "writings by travelers (as well as by, for example, missionaries, naturalists, and colonial officials) were crucial in providing the empirical basis for the theoretical arguments or comparative ethnologists."<sup>17</sup> Taft is clearly involved in this very process here. By detailing her observations of the indigenous customs of the people she came into contact with in travelling in the different regions, she provides important anthropological information which served to reinforce and justify assimilation and Westernization. A similar task is fulfilled by another wife who accompanies her husband on the same mission and who shares the knowledge they gather and experiences they undergo in early twentieth century Philippines through

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<sup>16</sup> Cheryl McEwan, Gender, Geography and Empire: Victorian Women Travellers in West Africa (Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate, 2000) 101-02.

<sup>17</sup> Blunt, Travel, Gender and Imperialism 79.

letters to the rest of the family.

### UNOFFICIAL LETTERS OF AN OFFICIAL'S WIFE

Edith Moses accompanied her husband Bernard, historian and specialist on Spanish colonization, and member of the Taft Commission charged with setting up civil government in the Philippine Islands. Because of his background, Moses was assigned to take care of matters relating to education. The commissioner's duties required the collection of information through interviews with various sectors (labor, peasantry, educated, wealthy) and the organization of provincial governments which involved out-of-town trips and meetings with Filipino officials. As Moses accompanied her husband to various places, she gained access to venues such as the household, official functions, and traditional ceremonies. And it was her experiences within these public and private arenas which she used in assessing the performance of civil administration and in shaping her perceptions of the Filipino community and what she called, the "native character."

#### Locating Race

Like the other women described in this study, Moses acquired her initial impressions of the Filipino people through her interaction with the domestic servants in their home. In one of her first letters to family dated June 11, 1900, she writes about her observations about their "native

servants”:

Your first impression will be that we keep trained baboons to do housework, for the probability is that a half-naked, dark-skinned creature is rushing up and down the hall on all fours, with big burlap socks under his hands and feet. He is only a monkeylike coolie who polishes the narra floors. (14)

The metaphor Moses uses in this particular passage seems to conjure images associated with unsightliness, filth, lack of discipline, and abjection. David Spurr, who has written on various modes of rhetoric that shape the colonial text, explains such discourses in the following manner:

(The) insistence on European standards of civility becomes an act of self-preservation against the danger of emasculation, while the struggle against the lotuslike powers of an unknown land becomes a defining characteristic of the discourse. Stanley constitutes the African as the abject and in so doing so implies the precarious state of the European subject who is constantly menaced by the collapse into a chaos of indifferentiation. (80)

Correspondingly, according to Spurr, debasement, while aimed toward the protection of European standards of civility, could be construed as resistance against a desire for the

other and the reinforcement of traditional sexual and moral codes. In establishing such standards of European civilization, Moses sometimes responds to the natives with typical colonial paternalism.

According to Moses, initial contact with Filipino servants in fact, gave her "quite an insight into native character":

The Filipinos are like children and love to do everything but the thing they are set to do. They run to assist the house boys in their work; they advise me about arranging my furniture. [. . .] They are always playing tricks on each other, and are unfailingly good-natured . [. . .] From an ethnological standpoint this is all interesting, but I can imagine that here is displayed one of the race characteristics, which, after the novelty is gone, "weareth the Christian down." (16)

Moses infantilizes this group of lower class Filipinos as she depicts them to be energetic and overzealous in making others fulfill certain duties, and yet negligent of their own work. Her attitudes range from debasement to paternalism. At the same time, however, she also seeks to establish interest about the topics she discusses, as she adopts the gaze of an ethnographer and missionary in gaging possible responses to Filipino behavior.

When she wasn't at home, Moses was preoccupied with hosting or attending military and civil social functions such as dinners and banquets. It was within these venues that she acquired more information about the nature of local festivities and entertainment. She writes:

The breakfast was good, very good. The fish was a joy to look at and a delight to eat, all garnished with tiny rounds of silver onions and bits of ginger root, and gay with favorite *pimientos dulces*. The turkey, however bore off the honors; [. . .] The ice cream was a gorgeous architectural construction, and the sweets without number. [. . .] (A)n orchestra of girls with mandolins, guitars, and a harp played waltzes and well-known ragtime airs, picked up from the soldiers. [. . .] At four o'clock the rooms were cleared and dancing began, and at half past the hour we departed amidst the lamentations and remonstrances with which a polite host always overwhelms the parting guest. (150-151)

In contrast to the home which was overrun by servants who at this point could not be put under total control, the social gathering, were clearly similar to Western modes of feasting and entertaining.

Aside from the affirmation that such occasions offered,

Moses also took these gatherings as occasions that reflected the reconfigurations of social and political power. This was clearly seen in one of the first receptions she and the Commissioner hosted for school teachers in Manila. According to her, the "Filipinos seem very much astonished that we should invite the teachers socially to our house. One of our friends said it was the first time in the history of the Philippines that anyone connected with the government had treated the native teachers as if they were on the same social plane with himself" (42). The old structure was indeed reflective of a social and political order that privileged wealth and property over education. At another occasion, an Amnesty Proclamation banquet was held in recognition of Filipinos who had laid down their arms and took the oath of allegiance. Amidst the festivities, Moses makes mention of the precarious situation:

Many army officers seem to think that the fiesta is a mask for an uprising on a large scale, and all American women and children have been warned not to go on the streets. There was an officer here last night who assured me that the banquet was a trap, and that the Americans who went would probably all be murdered. [. . .] We don't believe an insurrection is being planned, but one cannot tell what an excitable people might do, and it

would be easy to murder us all. (45-46)

As she relates, it seems that a sense of suspicion and urgency emanates from military officials who were reluctant to have civil governance supersede military power. I would argue that they did not have faith in the sincerity of Filipino leaders to surrender and acquiesce. Like the first occasion, this affair went beyond its social objectives. Both occasions significantly demonstrated the tenuous balance of power maintained within the political arena.

In the chapter "Manila Society," Moses describes a series of official affairs, showing the dynamics underlying the relationship between civil administrators and the Filipino political elites. At a party given by a relative of one of the "greatest Filipino politicians," an insurrecto officer who was known to have ordered the execution of eight American soldiers in the Apalit district, was present and warmly received by the hosts. "The family of our host have been rather reticent regarding their relations to the insurrecto leaders, but I noticed the old grandmother, who came into the drawing room after dinner, called him 'Pepe,'" and patted him affectionately on the back. I imagine they know him better than they are willing to acknowledge" (153). Moses is keen on observing the kinds of interactions and transactions transpiring at such gatherings. In this particular instance, she confirms suspicions of the

political allegiance of the local elite. At another affair given by the Alcaldes, a Filipino family well known in exclusive anti-American circles, Moses tries to be *muy simpatica* in the face of suspicious and even hostile company. Finally at another function given for an outgoing military governor, Moses tells readers about the tense and yet amicable exchange between proponents of the military and civilian administration. According to her, the occasion was not "so bad, considering the general's well-known feeling toward the Commission" (157). Again, Moses reveals the precarious nature of the alliance formed with the local elites. Despite their seeming cooperation and civility, members of the elite could be a potential threat and had to be approached cautiously.

Besides social functions, Moses also based her characterizations of the Filipino people on various provincial trips she took with her husband to the Northern and Southern parts of the country. In the course of such sojourns, she uses an ethnographic approach in describing the places and peoples she encounters, especially in relation to the different groups' level of "civilization."<sup>16</sup> There is a fine line after all, between travel writing and ethnography. As Blunt argues, a host of travel writing, in fact, provided the empirical basis upon which many

ethnologists ground their conclusions.<sup>19</sup> Moses writes about the head hunters and Igorrotes of the North, the Visayans and Tagalogs of central Philippines, and the Muslim Moros of the South.

Like an ethnographer, she is diligent in juxtaposing groups with one another and charting their degrees of so-called advancement:

The Igorrotes of Benguet are among the semibarbarous non-Christian tribes. The Igorrotes are not as stupid as the Negritos, another barbarous tribe, and they live in houses, while many of the Negritos live in trees, and look almost like animals. Added to these and other barbarous tribes the Moro population, and one can see how complicated is the question of government here. To meet an educated Filipino and hear him talk one naturally thinks the Filipinos are ready for self-government, forgetting among the population of seven millions there is a mere handful who can be compared with him. (345)

Moses uses a system of classification that inevitably moves beyond visible characteristics and traits to one that is based on technological advancement. Hence, in these particular instances, the degree of modernization becomes

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<sup>19</sup> James Clifford, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley, Los Angeles,

Moses' yardstick in gauging the various groups' potential for advancement and more importantly, self-determination (Spurr 69).

But this binary of civilization versus barbarism underlying the colonial project is not followed in all cases. In assessing the Northern groups, for example, she indicates her preference for the Igorrotes over the Tagalogs, as she describes them in the following manner:

My four Igorrote bearers were short, stocky, well-built men with stiff hair standing straight out from their heads. They did not look stupid, and their eyes were bright and mild. I at once felt more confidence in them than in Tagalogs of the same class. (242)

Despite what she perceived to be the stark "primitivity" embodied by these Igorrotes, Moses is drawn to their alertness to this encounter with the colonizers. In fact, she goes on to discuss more of her impressions of the Igorrotes in the succeeding sections as she mentions the poor huts they resided in, their livelihood based on coffee and potatoes, the "filthy rags" women have for clothes, their hardships with the cold weather, their beliefs about devils, and even their interactions with Americans:

It is not impossible to train the little Igorrotes

to cleanliness and toleration of baths. [. . .]  
There are about fifteen hundred Igorrotes in this province, and they do not increase rapidly. They have many strange customs, but no one has investigated them. [. . .] It would be interesting to learn their language, and find out what they believe [. . .]. (247-48)

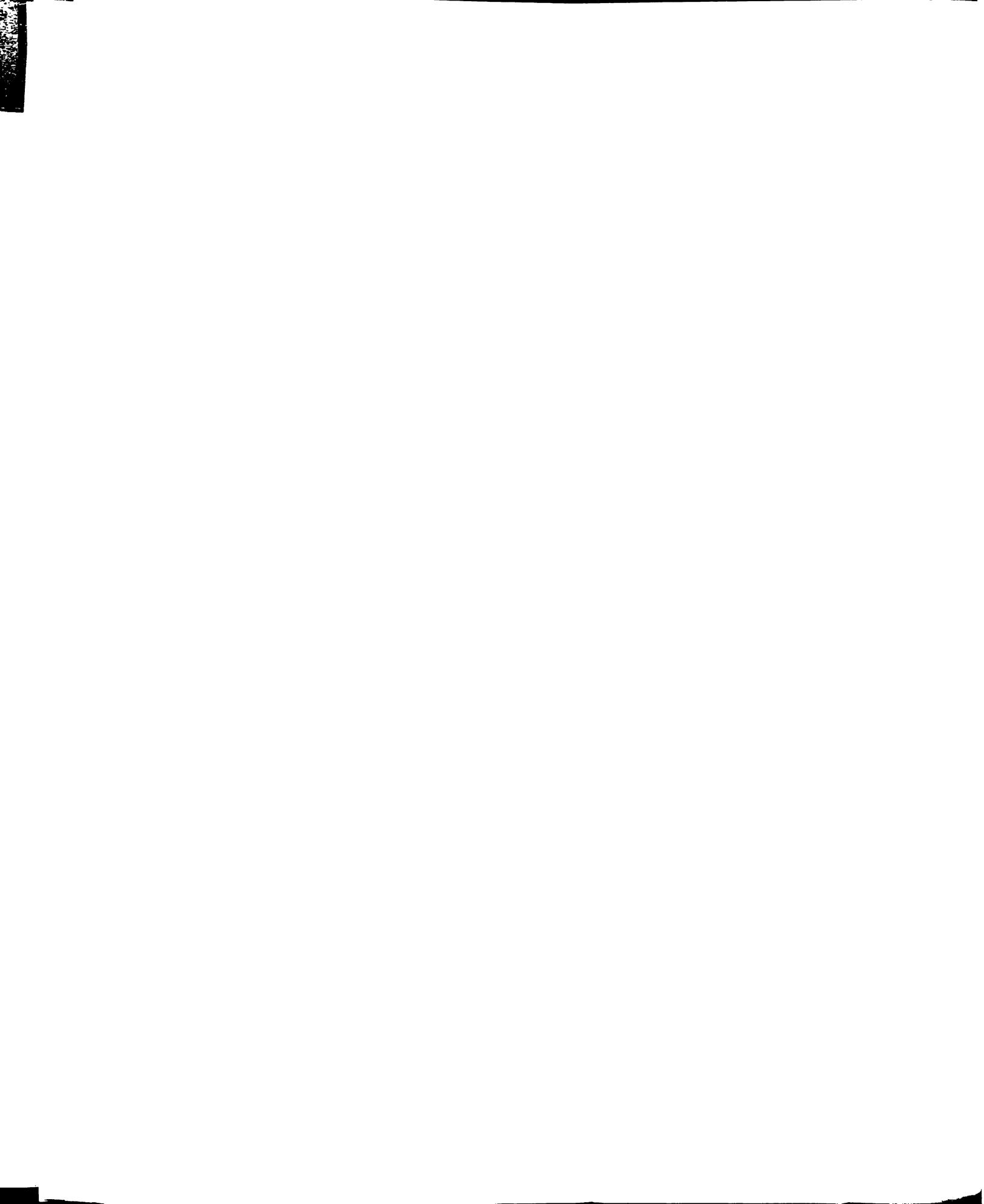
The Igorrotes are grateful to those who have befriended them, and if a "good American" is ill they will bring him eggs and chickens as gifts, and refuse to take money in return. When we meet them on the trail they always say "Good morning," and smile (248).

As shown in the above quote, Moses expresses the importance of acquiring more knowledge about the Igorrotes. I posit that aside from articulating a sense of mission, she also shows how the Igorrotes demonstrate signs of pliability and openness to change.

Although Moses differentiates between the different Filipino regional groups, she makes general assertions about overall traits and behavior in the last chapter entitled "Characteristics of the Filipinos." In this segment, she goes about disproving preconceived notions about Filipinos that even she tended to believe. One such impression was

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<sup>19</sup> Blunt, Travel, Gender and Imperialism 79.



that of Filipinos as "lazy and endowed with an ingrained dislike for work of any kind" (351). In fact, according to her, Filipino women have great business ability, and clearly possess a "trading instinct" which for her, is probably "racial" since "it has not been eradicated by Spanish dominion or by the tendency of a subject race to imitate its superior" (350). Aside from this, she contends that she has never come across any family nor head of the family who was not engaged in a profession or any type of business. Moses also dispels the accusations that Filipinos are warmongers and are "naturally untruthful." In actuality, she asserts that they are "naturally timid and peace loving" and if that the opposite were the case, it could only be caused by colonizers who "governed them with selfish aims" (354). While here Moses seems to absolve Filipinos of any negative traits, she also negates initiative and agency and depicts them as viable wards of the state, thereby strengthening the case for colonialism and the realization of McKinley's policy of "benevolent assimilation."

She also discusses the implications of this "character" for future "social relations" between the Filipino community and American officials. In a visit to Apalit, Pampanga, she writes:

One of the vital questions in the Philippines relates to the social relation between the two

racés. The army, except in a few cases, has tabooed the native socially. [. . .] This attitude is perhaps natural, for a conqueror seldom feels on an equality with a race with who he has recently been in conflict. So one seldom meets natives at any but purely official army functions. [. . .] The Filipinos are sensitive on this point and say: "If the Americans are going to look on us and treat us as the Spaniards have done for three hundred years, we do not want them here." (73)

The military is perceived to be the potential source of conflict between the two peoples. Although she says that it is only "natural" that superiority be asserted by American forces, and that the Filipinos are being "sensitive" or irrational, Moses does take steps toward bridging the social gap. She goes to the extent of organizing a dancing "club" that would result in "bringing Americans and natives together socially" (89):

I don't know how it will work. If the Filipinos hear of the views of the founders they may not like to be brought into an organization so frankly for their "elevation." No woman can join who will not promise to dance with a Filipino, and no man who is not willing to give up his own preferences and pay attention to Filipina girls instead of

Americans. So you see we may have trouble. The Filipinos may be like some of the persons approached by the social settlements in America, "hard to do good to." (89)

This is one of the instances where Moses takes a direct hand in fulfilling the aims of empire. She uses her status as an official's wife to initiate and encourage socialization not only between the two groups, but also between the two genders, and this is significant because of two aspects. Firstly, this belies the notion associated with the memsahibs in English colonies, that women, especially wives of administrators, caused the deterioration in race relations because of their petty jealousies. Secondly, Moses' methods may reveal a bigger strategy to combat racism. As Ronald Hyam, in Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience indicates, "sexual worries are the 'ultimate basis of racial antagonism'" (204).<sup>29</sup> Thus, whether she was aware of it or not, Moses attempted to set an important precedent in the betterment of race relations.

Amidst contacts established between the Filipinos and Americans, Moses is clearly aware of the continuing prejudice manifested in the latter's behavior, as she offers a moral corrective to colonial exile. Military officers, in particular, are the target of her critique. At one time, for

example, she mentions the kind of scorn a particular sailing captain has for the people: "He said not one of them took any interest in the laundry or kitchen, nor could they ask an intelligent question" (133). Moses then concludes:

It is [. . .] difficult to make the Filipino believe in our theory of political equality, when so many Americans are disposed to emphasize by their conduct the idea of social inequality. [. . .] There may, perhaps, never be a warm personal feeling for us as a people, for we are of a different race. But gradually the memory of the wars will fade away; the arrogance of victory and the sense of humiliation engendered by defeat will be forgotten. The moral and material advantages of the Union will, in the course of time, become clearer to both parties, and there is every reason to expect they will live in peace and profit by their friendly cooperation. (355)

The notion of "political equality" clearly contradicts what she had mentioned earlier in relation to the assertion of American political predominance. In addition, what she presents here is a significant interpretation of the notion of "benevolent empire" where rulers and ruled coexist in harmony. In the end, Moses shows that the "peace" she would

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<sup>20</sup> Ronald Hyam, Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience (Manchester and New York: Manchester

like to see exist between the two peoples is conditioned by the Filipinos' amnesia to violence inflicted by conquest and complete submission to American "moral" and capitalist institutions .

#### The Picturesque Characterization

When describing the physical environment of the archipelago, Moses tended to focus on four major aspects: the harsh climate, the nature of the landscape, and the environment's comparison to Western counterparts. The first paragraph provides a good representation of this:

Here we are. The long journey of forty-six days is ended and we are anchored in Manila Bay, two and a half miles from the shore. At this distance the city is only a shining white line between the blue water and the bluer sky. Hot? You never imagined the real meaning of that word, and yet the thermometer marks only ninety-nine; the moist atmosphere makes it seem many degrees higher. Thin clothing and excitement are helping us to bear the heat, for there is a sense of exhilaration in the thought that we are at last in Oriental America.

(1)

Moses' "adventure" commences with the realization that she and her party have been able to pull through an arduous

trip; and as they lie on the fringes of land and urbanization, she becomes aware of the different physical environment to which she automatically lays claim.

Moses' early observations about the climate center on the extreme weather conditions that marked their arrival. According to her, "The hot weather was damp and prostrating, and the change even if it came in the shape of a typhoon was welcome" (12). Sure enough, a storm does develop. In response, she describes the almost immediate emergence of a "lake" in the dining room, the feel of salt spray on her face, and the "startling" rattling and banging brought by the strong winds and rain. After all was said and done, she writes in retrospect: "Still, now that it is over and we were not blown away, house and all, I think the typhoon must be put in the same category with plague and the white ants. They are dangerous, but not as bad as they sound. We should call a typhoon a heavy storm" (13). Moses realizes that though typhoons have the capacity to wreak havoc in mammoth proportions, they are, after all, temporary occurrences. She comes to terms with this serious event by rationalizing and gauging its impact. Within several months, Moses adopts this tendency in the succeeding parts of the work:

The weather is fine. It rains for an hour or two early every afternoon. The mornings and evenings are delightful, and it is warm enough at noon to

enjoy a siesta. (40)

My last letter I mailed during a typhoon, so it was probably delayed several days. [. . .] We were obliged tended to sleep on the floor of our reception room during the height of the storm as the rooms facing the bay were uninhabitable. Every time a typhoon rages, the driveway along the beach is washed out and the waves dash over a half-finished pier in grand style. I was persuaded to walk down the Malacon drive the other day after the height of the typhoon, and although I was literally "soaked to the bones," as the Spaniards express it, the sight of the majestic breakers well repaid me for the discomfort I suffered. (71)

The ability to adapt to conditions beyond her control was probably useful in building up her resilience for the more arduous and physically-taxing journeys she would be taking throughout her husband's incumbency.

The Commission had planned to visit several provinces to determine the degree of insurgency still present and to assess the provinces' readiness to accept American civil rule. Moses accompanied these missions for the most part. During her first trip to Calumpit, hours south of Manila, and known to be rebel country, she is wary and yet seemingly

exhilarated by the "added spice of possible danger."

Although she has shown that she possessed a strong sense of adventure, she also feels secure in the safety provided by American soldiers who guard the railway they passed through.

During a trip to Surigao in Southern Philippines, she describes in detail a storm that raged while they were riding a launch at sea:

We were crowded in the launch and cutter, and floated down the river very slowly, hardly turning the propeller of the launch, but suddenly, bump! bump! and we struck the stone bridge, carrying away the guard of the propeller and bending one of the blades. This was somewhat terrifying, for we did not know how much damage had been done, and every time the propeller blade struck the guard it made a noise as if a hole were being knocked in the bottom of the boat. However, we all remained quiet until we struck something else. (114)

This was probably one of the few times Moses articulates her fears in the face of nature's tempest. Her account of this particular incident reflects her awareness of possible and impending tragedy. At the same time, until total disaster actually occurs, she strives to maintain a sense of composure and calmness.

A trip to the Northern part of the country becomes a

testimony to her renewed sense of courage, confidence and perseverance. As she indicates, "There is something Gilbert-and-Sullivanlike in taking a guard to the wildest and, to the average mind, the most dangerous part of the country, and then leaving it and trusting one's self to a hundred Igorrotes in the lonely fastnesses of the mountains. Our trip from Bauang to this place showed how hardened to danger we had become, for a rougher road one cannot imagine" (236). Assuming the air of the adventurous woman traveller, Moses embarks on a journey of what approximates self-discovery, wherein she feels herself above the "average mind," ready to take on the perils of a journey marked by hard terrain and inhospitable elements.<sup>21</sup>

When she had the time and leisure to explore specific places, Moses usually romanticized about the landscape and indulged in images of majesty and tranquility they would conjure. In contrast to the harshness and tempestuousness associated with the climate, these for her represented a natural order manifesting the harmony of the various elements. At times, she would be so overwhelmed, she expressed a readiness to "give up civilization." Following are examples of these images:

From the tower we looked over a flat, rich country covered with maize and sugar plantations. The

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<sup>21</sup> Ghose, Memsahibs Abroad 94.

course of the river was plainly indicated by the bamboo and banana plantations along its banks. The soft brown thatch of nipa houses made shadows in the greenery, and the red tile roofs of the more pretentious houses accentuated the vivid colors of the banana and bamboo. (54)

This morning we drove in the ambulance through a beautiful tropical country. The groves of mangoes, cocoanuts, and other trees, with a thick undergrowth of brilliant flowers and bushes, make the jungle of our imagination. (100)

This morning we anchored off Bohol, and the town of Tagbilaran lay in front of us on a hill. It was raining over there, and the town gleamed like an opal. The water was deliciously green, and one tall palm dominated the place, rising above the white roofs of the town. (134)

The morning was cool. [. . .] Oh! that fairy-like tropical world of ferns, bamboo, orchid, and flowering trees, all dripping with the raindrops of the night showers! (305)

Through these descriptions, Moses conjures images of an enchanted garden brimming with rich and verdant natural resources. It is a "fairy-like" scenario, after all, that

comes close to being the "jungle of our imagination." Nature predominates over the "pretentious" houses and the "white roofs of the town." The old order is going to be superseded by a new establishment that is best able to make full use of the resources within the Western commercial and industrial system.<sup>22</sup>

As she continues to represent the landscape, she also increasingly gains mastery over the various images it conjures at different times of the day. Mountains became central in her depiction. During a trip to the Bicol region, home of Mount Mayon, a volcano known for its perfect cone, Moses paints a picturesque and dreamy image:

Mount Mayon is majestic in the evening light, while her white wreath is touched with the pink of a reflected sunset. The views of the mountain have been among the chief pleasures of our visit to Albay. The clouds that float about the summit and halfway down the flank are constantly changing. Yesterday morning the mountain was dark purple, and it rose from the water's edge to the summit distinctly outlined against the sky, with one fleecy cloud lying halfway up the side in a little hollow. Last night we saw it in the light of a full moon. (143)

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<sup>22</sup> Spurr 31.

During another trip to the Northern part of the country, she writes about the grandness of the towering hills. She writes, "We were energetic, and kept on climbing until we reached the top of a high hill, from which we could see all over the surrounding country. I am sure there can be no more beautiful scenery anywhere than in these mountains" (278). In the same tone, she indicates, "We are going to the real mountains covered with great pine forests, where the cool breezes blow, and where spicy odors will refresh us" (237). In fact, just before they left, because of the great "interest and pleasure" the trip allowed her to experience, she began wondering about the possibility of spending her "declining years" within these mountains. Again, Moses, in an indirect way, depicts her own "conquest" of the natural environment as she appropriates the landscape to suit her own purposes.

But even in the face of such a paradise, death and destruction existed. During this time, cholera had become a stark reality the Commission had to deal with. But even in the face of disease and pandemonium, Moses conjures images of beauty and order within her surroundings. During one night the eradication of cholera was undertaken by burning infected houses, Moses romanticizes about the images the fires brought:

I went to the window for a breath of fresh air.

As I leaned out, the sky toward Ermita (in Manila) was brilliant with the blaze of a burning barrio. The sanitary board was destroying infected shacks. A fire at night is always a solemn spectacle, and the silence was intense. Just above the blaze were a waning moon, and a bright star shone below the crescent. The air was cool, and in a moment I felt quite refreshed. (228)

There was also clear evidence of nostalgia and sentimentalism in the way she juxtaposes images of Europe and the United States with the Philippine picturesque. In the southern part of the country, she writes: "The banks are fringed with a growth of willowlike trees, and look very much like the banks of the lower Sacramento River, with the difference that monkeys, parrots and a beautiful white heron were to be seen springing about or flying among the trees" (101). During another trip to the central part of the country, she makes mention of how "Albay itself looked not unlike Pompeii, for we saw street after street with only the lower story intact and the interior walls standing. . . . Mount Mayon . . . is higher than Mount Vesuvius, and a wreath of smoke floats continually about its summit (140). And then again, on a trip back to the northern part of the archipelago, she writes, "We looked down on one stretch of fertile land as we reached the last hill before Naguilian

came in sight. It lay below us like a bit of southern California, green and beautiful, with bare hills on either side" (237). Still reminiscing about the Western state, she indicates, "The view from the sanitarium windows reminds me of a deserted mining camp in California, for the soil is red, and it is all seamed and scarred where the roadways have been cut in the hillside" (245). By placing the non-Western world alongside a Western counterpart, Moses provides concrete frames of reference that the reader can relate back to. Landscapes are made more recognizable to readers as Moses challenges existing images of wilderness and disorder. As a result, these same landscapes become demystified.<sup>23</sup>

During these visits, she also established a more personal and emotional connection with the said environment. To a large extent, her exposure to such aspects provided a sense of escape, security and comfort in the middle of imminent danger posed by threats of insurrection and rebellion and in the face of a populace that was deemed as suspect, if not hostile. In fact, Moses adopts what Mary Louise Pratt calls the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" position as she "aestheticizes" the landscape, attempts to attach meaning to it, and essentially declares control over the

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<sup>23</sup> McEwan 80.

said picturesque, though she does it very subtly.<sup>24</sup>

### Race

There were three major types of ceremonies or rituals which Moses makes regular mention of in her correspondence. These included official social functions such as fiestas, banquets and dinners, religious celebrations, and an elaborate Igorrote ceremony. As an official's wife, Moses was expected to attend and host gatherings which brought together American and Filipino officialdom as they established ties toward peaceful political co-existence. At first, Moses approached these functions with a degree of wariness and suspicion. There was after all, a lingering threat posed by remnant rebels who could strike at any moment<sup>25</sup>:

This morning, in spite of the dangerous fiesta, I went downstairs to see the decorations. The streets were full of natives out for a holiday. They were laughing and having a good time, enjoying, I suspect, the sight of guards and squads of soldiers patrolling the town. Some persons think the rumors of uprisings are often

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<sup>24</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (New York: Routledge, 1992) 204-5; McEwan 66-67.

<sup>25</sup> Until 1902, American administrators faced perennial assault from guerrilla warfare throughout the country. Lewis Gleeck, in his *American Half-Century (1898-1946)* makes mention of atrocities committed by guerrillas such as the torture and killing of American captives, the burning of towns welcoming the Americans, and the kidnapping of those who collaborated with the American regime. Of course Americans committed atrocities as well, including "wanton acts of cruelty, rapine and sadism" (42).

started by natives for the fun of seeing the soldiers turn out. (47)

In the course of her stay in the Islands however, there was less and less of a concern for safety and security, and more attention given to the conduct and manner of "seemingly endless entertaining" she became part of. As Moses carefully notes the differences and contrast between "American" and Filipino ways of celebration, she expresses both a willingness and a resistance to adapt to protocol:

These dinners are much more entertaining than American dinner parties. The table etiquette is somewhat difficult at first, but I am learning in Filipino style to pick off an olive or pickle at the end of a fork presented me by my neighbor at the table, and to say the proper thing in response to a toast to my "beauty and intellect" (79).

At all native balls the supper is a great feature of the affair, fowls, meat and other substantial viands forming part of the menu, with dulces (sweets) and ices, which are insipid to our taste, and champagne. The fact that champagne and diamonds bore low duties during the period of Spanish rule may account for their abundance in the Philippines. (88)

"More entertaining" arises from more gastronomic variety and

social rituals, and Moses is not reluctant to know "the ways" and customs prescribed by such occasions. Although she does not really show an attempt to comprehend the rationale behind such practices, she seems to value the establishment of cordial relations with her counterparts.

Since the arrival of the Americans the mestizas of society have been taught the waltz as danced in America and have learned to reverse, but the Filipino men waltz as the Germans do. Experience in that style of exercise in Europe has taught me to avoid it in the tropics. It is only suited to the frozen north. The two-step, which anyone can learn, is the favorite with the mestizos and mestizas. As yet the American waltz is a little difficult. (88)

Even though the terms of socialization have been set by the local Filipino elite, they still attempt to imitate Western modes of entertainment. Moses responds to this mimicry of one race by another by reaffirming the boundaries separating European, American and Filipino cultural configurations. During a visit to outlying Cebu, which is in the central part of the country, she gives a detailed description of table settings and the seeming role mix-up in the course of the meal:

In every town we have surprises, and in this place

the table arrangements were different from any we had seen before. There was a small table placed at the upper end of the room. At one end was placed the wife of the presidente of Cebu, at the other end was Mrs. Taft, while Judge Taft sat on one side midway between the two ladies. They were so far away [. . .] that conversation was impossible, so they sat and ate their dinner in solitary grandeur. [. . .] The members of the club waited on the table, and in consequence we were badly served. A noted Filipino judge, solemn and sedate, supplied us with knives and forks. He carried them off and wiped them on a towel behind the door, and then returned them to the guests, but never to the original possessor. (132)

Once again, Moses shows how, despite the awkwardness, that humor happens as a result, the official party chooses to acquiesce to local etiquette and customs. At the same time, she also reveals how local counterparts attempt to accommodate their guests' preferences.

Aside from social functions, Moses also describes the ceremonies and rituals undertaken by the archipelago's Catholic institution. One of the first holidays she takes note of was St. John the Baptist's day which entailed a custom of "baptizing each other [. . .] by throwing water

over one another from little black bowls, or they carry squirt guns of bamboo that throw a stream of water many feet" (26). She also makes mention of more the more formal settings characterizing the celebration of the mass on Sundays:

Every time I enter a Catholic church in Manila I am impressed with its beauty. The proportions are fine. The decorations are not gaudy, and there is a certain religious atmosphere that is lacking in many of the European and almost all our own Catholic churches. (163)

Sunday we went to church for the first time. There were eleven persons present including the clergyman. [. . .] The minister was a weak brother, and I did not wonder that his flock was small, but I learn that he is a good man and struggles here alone without any support. He was sent out by a board of missions, and after he had been out here a few months his pay was stopped as the church did not flourish. (30)

Despite the "religious atmosphere," Moses mentions the dismal failure of the institution to attract enough parishioners. Despite the good intentions of its clergy, it was clear that Moses perceived them to be a major part of the problem.

On several occasions, Moses vividly describes the pomp, ceremony and mechanical nature of the rituals which seemed to place secondary importance on the religious rationale behind such holidays. Here is one example:

The bowing and kissing and continual reverences are tiresome to a heretic. Since I am not sufficiently accustomed to high mass to know always how to behave I find that the best way is to watch the Spanish officials who sit in great gilt chairs in front of the altar. (83)

During an elaborate wedding of an American civil employee to a Filipina mestiza, she mentions the grandeur of the Dominican church they were wed at, the procession of multitudes, and the "darkness, delay and confusion" that went with the affair:

At last the signal to begin the ceremony was given. A wheel of bells was violently whirled around by a small boy, a weak organ piped forth a monotonous march, and a wreath of electric lights around the altar was turned on. [. . .] The ceremony was performed at a tremendous rate of speed by a mumbling priest. A piece of money, which Hunt had forgotten, played a mysterious part in the ceremony. [. . .] I asked the meaning of the money, but no one could tell me its

significance. [. . .] That it might be a survival of the time when grooms bought their brides with gold was the suggestion of our learned secretary.

(165)

Again, she emphasizes the seemingly lame and cumbersome rituals attached to the ceremony which prevented any appreciation for its original meaning.

At one Christmas Eve mass, she is impressed by the "brilliant decorations" and the "refined and exquisite taste the Filipinos show in all their decorations":

The churches are never decked out in the tawdry adornments we see in other countries, but color and light are blended, and the effect is always beautiful. [. . .] Outside, the scene was scarcely less brilliant, for hundreds of booths lighted with candles filled the square [. . .]. (198)

But amidst all the celebratory atmosphere was an absence, she contends that many members of Filipino society failed to appreciate the meaning and significance of the ritual:

None of these seemed to take the least interest in the church ceremonies as religious celebrations. Two of the girls would not enter the doors of the Dominican or Franciscan churches; they were opposed to the friars. It is too bad that so many of the better-educated Filipinos distrust all the

clergy on account of their hatred of the friars.<sup>26</sup>

(199)

Aside from depicting the more formal rituals ascribed by urban institutions, Moses also devotes considerable attention to the ceremonies practiced in various provinces. During a trip to the Northern region inhabited by the Igorrotes, for example, she becomes especially fascinated with rituals that had never been mentioned in writings on the Philippines. According to her, "They have many strange customs, but no one has investigated them. [. . .] It would be interesting to learn their language, and find out what they believe (248). One such custom was the tiyow feast, a traditional rite which involved the disbursement of a dead man's "eatable property," with half going to the family and half allotted to the community. Moses would later conclude that the feast was held in order to bring good fortune and to ward away evil (258). Like Taft, Moses assumes the persona of an ethnographer as she goes about describing the ceremony in detail and explaining the underlying beliefs that motivated such practices. She observes with keen interest, the physical set-up, the participants, and finally the rite itself. During this particular instance, because of the presence of foreigners, the festivities are held in a less prominent area of the house (in this particular case,

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<sup>26</sup> The Spanish friars, over the course of 300 years of Spanish colonization, were known to commit

the kitchen). Sounds of drums and dancing provide the background for the ceremony, as the rite is mediated by a priestess who presides over the anointing of the deceased's family and the sacrificial slaughter of animals. The blood from said animals is then used to "mark" all the family members. At the end of it all, Moses indicates how the ceremonies were "curious, but unintelligible." Despite this lapse, it is clear that Moses exhibits an earnest desire to comprehend such rituals and to let readers have a deeper understanding of the beliefs used to justify actions that may initially be conceived as "barbaric" and "savage."

#### The "Other" Woman

The Filipino women Moses cites in her work included women whom she saw in the course of her travels, mestiza women at formal functions, and women in the remote provinces. A considerable part of her accounts emanated from her observations of "street life." She paid special attention to the women's attire and actuations:

The women wore red skirts and a chemise, over which was a wide-sleeved loose waist of a gauzy material like mosquito netting. Their heads were either bare or tied up in blue cotton handkerchiefs. [. . .] The gait of all the women is peculiar. With their shoulders thrown back,

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numerous abuses including rampant and arbitrary excommunication, racial prejudice, graft and

the chest and abdomen thrust forward, they marched along, ungainly but independent. The majority was barefooted, but several clattered in wooden clogs very like those worn by the Japanese. (8)

Women become interesting objects of Moses' gaze. Despite the multitudes of women she most probably observed, she does not differentiate one from the other, and instead chooses to invest all Filipino women with one form of attire and appearance. This may be reflective of her views about their subordination to the patriarchal institutions in power. At the same time, she does allude to an "independence" they seem to also exhibit, possibly hinting at the potential of these women to subvert male hegemony.

With regard to the more prominent women who attended dinners and banquets, Moses compliments the evident polish, grace, and refinement most of them possess:

There was quite a bit of style in the dressing of ladies, and many made a brave display of jewelry. Some of it was pretty, and the settings were antique. [. . .] The majority had black embroidered aprons trimmed with lace. Almost without exception the women were graceful and self-possessed. (43)

There was a New Year's ball at the

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corruption, and sexual liaisons with the local women.

International Club, where all the mestiza society was present in their jewels and gorgeous costumes. I wish a first-class artist [. . .] could paint some of these girls. Dona Maria was a picture in gold-colored brocade, with camisa and panuela of the same shade exquisitely painted and embroidered. Little Mrs. Heredia sparkled like a small electric tower. She wore a white-spangled tulle dress from Paris, and her celebrated pearl and diamond necklace. (205)

Clearly, physical appearance was used as the main criteria in Moses' depiction of this privileged group of women who, for her, manage to make themselves quite a spectacle. Moses responds by expressing admiration for some, and poking ridicule at those taking it to an extreme. She also expresses a degree of aversion to the way they tried to lighten their complexions to mimic that of their Western counterpart. She comments, "They looked intelligent but were not pretty. In Filipino fashion they were thickly powdered, and this gave a peculiar lilac tinge to their brown skins" (63). At another occasion, she writes:

The variety in powder boxes at the disposal of the ladies always strikes me at Filipino entertainments. [. . .] The powder market of Paris must certainly count on the demand in the

Philippines. Thickly laid over the dark olive skin of the native belle, it gives her complexion a heliotrope tint that is weird indeed until one becomes accustomed to it. (150)

Evidently, there is an outright association made between color and race, as Moses attempts to reaffirm Western standards of beauty.

She also gives considerable attention to the women she encountered in the provinces. This is how she represents the Igorot women:

The Igorrote women are not handsome, and only the children and a few young girls have attractive faces. The majority of them are ugly, and the old women are hideous. They have coarse, straight, and unkempt hair; their eyes are small and their noses flat; they have thick lips and black teeth. Their figures are thickset, and their legs well developed. The woman's dress consists of three horizontally striped cotton skirts worn one above the other. [. . .] All the women wear chains of beads, berries, or coins. [. . .] This is, of course, a gala dress; rags form the everyday garments of the women, as the "gee string" is the common garb of the men. (254)

These women clearly become objects of Moses' scrutiny. Once

again, she makes no effort to provide a historical context nor does she depict the differences within this community of women. Like their male counterparts, Igorrote women are essentialized and treated as subjects that incite spite and abhorrence. There are no attempts made either to achieve any communication and reciprocity, or to invest them with of agency. In fact, depictions such as these further justify and entrench imperial power. In contrast to these characterizations, the next woman traveller not only establishes a more solid connection with the Filipino women she meets, but she plays a direct role in providing the "official" visual representations of Filipinos to the American public.

#### **DEATH STALKS THE PHILIPPINE WILDS**

Maud Huntley Jenks was born in 1874 in Elroy, Juneau County, Wisconsin, of parents who were of American Pilgrim and Puritan ancestry in New England. Three years after receiving her Bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1898, she married Albert Ernest Jenks, an assistant ethnologist with the Bureau of American Ethnology at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. In 1902, the couple went to the "Orient," in order that Albert Jenks, who had been appointed assistant chief and ethnologist of the new Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes established by the Insular Civil Government of the Philippine Islands, could

take up research studies of the "little-known wild tribes" in the Philippines. Considered to be the first white woman to see an Igorot head-dance (in celebration of a beheading ritual), and the first white woman to cross the island of Mindanao, which is the second largest island of the Philippine archipelago whose inhabitants then included "five warlike bastard-Mohammedan Moro tribes," Jenks collected the Philippine artifacts which were eventually displayed at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 (Rafael, "Colonial Domesticity" 147).

The Louisiana Purchase Exposition held at St. Louis, Missouri in 1904 consisted of 1,272 acres of fairgrounds and welcomed 19,644,855 visitors. Its Official Guide indicated that it was:

the greatest and best Exposition in the history of the world, [. . .] a gathering . . . of all the nations . . . each bringing comprehensive representations of the productions of its arts and industries, its newest and noblest achievements, its latest discoveries, its triumphs of skill and science, its most approved solutions of social problems. (111)

The Philippine Reservation exhibit cost more than a million dollars, housing as Benito M. Vergara, Jr. indicates in Displaying Filipinos: Photography and Colonialism in Early

20<sup>th</sup> Century Philippines, "75,000 catalogued exhibits and 1,100 representatives of the different peoples of the archipelago" including "18 Tinguians, 30 Bagobos, 70 Bontoc Igorots, 20 Suyoc Igorots, 38 Negritos and Mangyans, 79 Visayans, and 80 Moros" (112).

Never intending to have the letters published, Jenks wrote on such themes as "The Gateway to the Unknown," "Entering a Mysterious Land," "Symbols," "Dr. Jenks' Expedition Among the Wild Men," "Head-hunting and Canaous," "Braving the Mountains and the Seas," and "Moros and Daggers." In the earlier part of her correspondence, she draws a direct link between physical appearance and intellect.

#### Racial Encounters

Like Moses, the Filipinos Jenks came into contact with the most were the domestic help. Early on, she does not hesitate to articulate her initial sentiments about them:

It would take me a long time to get used to these muchachos. I don't think the Filipinos have at all attractive faces. They look stupid; to me they are repulsive. And to have three or four of these barefooted, two-garmented (often dirty at that) boys working in one's rooms all the time seems to me would not be pleasant. (15)

Evidently, Jenks equated intellect with physical appearance,

so much so that in less than a week, she posed a grand prediction about the future of Philippine self-determination:

I think that Uncle Sam has a much greater problem on his hands here than most of the people at home realize. It looks to me as though it will take fifty generations of "line upon line" and "precept upon precept" before these natives will know enough to govern themselves; many of them seem to be very stupid. (25)

Whether she was aware of it or not, Jenks played an important role in the realizing this imperial project of self-governance. As she took note of her house boys' industry and efficiency in doing their assigned tasks, she also took it upon herself to teach them some English, geography, and a little arithmetic. According to her:

I am trying to teach the Igorot boys a little English and arithmetic, and they are anxious to teach me Igorot. They have heard of the words, "Baguio" and "Benguet," but never of "Luzon" or "Philippine Islands." Just think, poor things, how much they don't know. [. . .] Tonight I showed them the island with the water all around, and they were very much impressed. [. . .] I showed them maps in the atlas and told them how I came

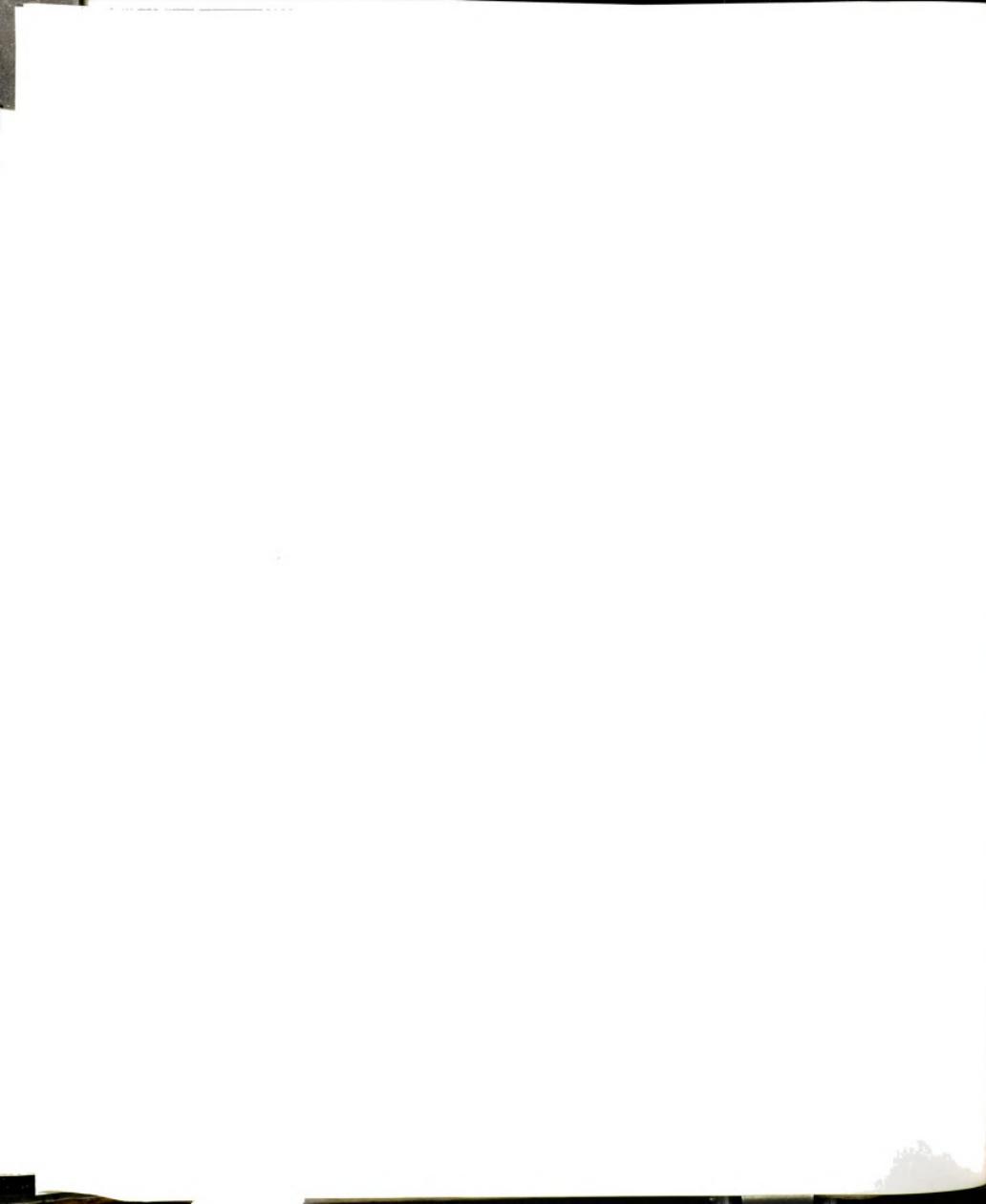
from America across the water to Japan, and then to Luzon. (53)

This particular occasion shows how Jenks becomes an interpreter and mediator to her house boys as she translates and shapes their knowledge about their physical world. At the same time, they also teach her the local language, and she gains more access into their own world.

#### Preliminary Observations

A considerable part of the work is devoted to a discussion of the life and ways of the Igorotte who eventually became subjects of the Philippine display at St. Louis. Discussing the "repulsive" way they eat, (filling "their mouths as full as they can stuff them") and the way they dress, (including paraphernalia as gee strings, bolos, waist girdles and brass ear-cleaners) she describes them as a "sight to behold" who "would create a sensation anywhere in the United States."

Unlike Taft and Moses, Jenks makes it a point to establish stronger familiarity with the Igorots in their household as she mentions and describes them by name in various parts of the work. "Antero," for instance, is the Igorot boy who "is apt to talk a little Igorot, apparently to himself," does almost anything around the house, and "is full of life and almost dances around when waiting on the table" (102). "Manulut," on the other hand, is the Igorot



who had ten children and who gives Jenks a good idea of the value of property in their province. She writes:

It is almost impossible to find out much about a person's property from these natives, because they are afraid the Americans will take their property from them or tax them unjustly. But Manulut told us he has thirteen rice sementeras. He has ten children but they are all dead, and he says his property now is of no value to him. He told us there are ten men here in Bontoc, the richest ones who have one hundred sementeras apiece, and they have eight granary houses full of palay. (122)

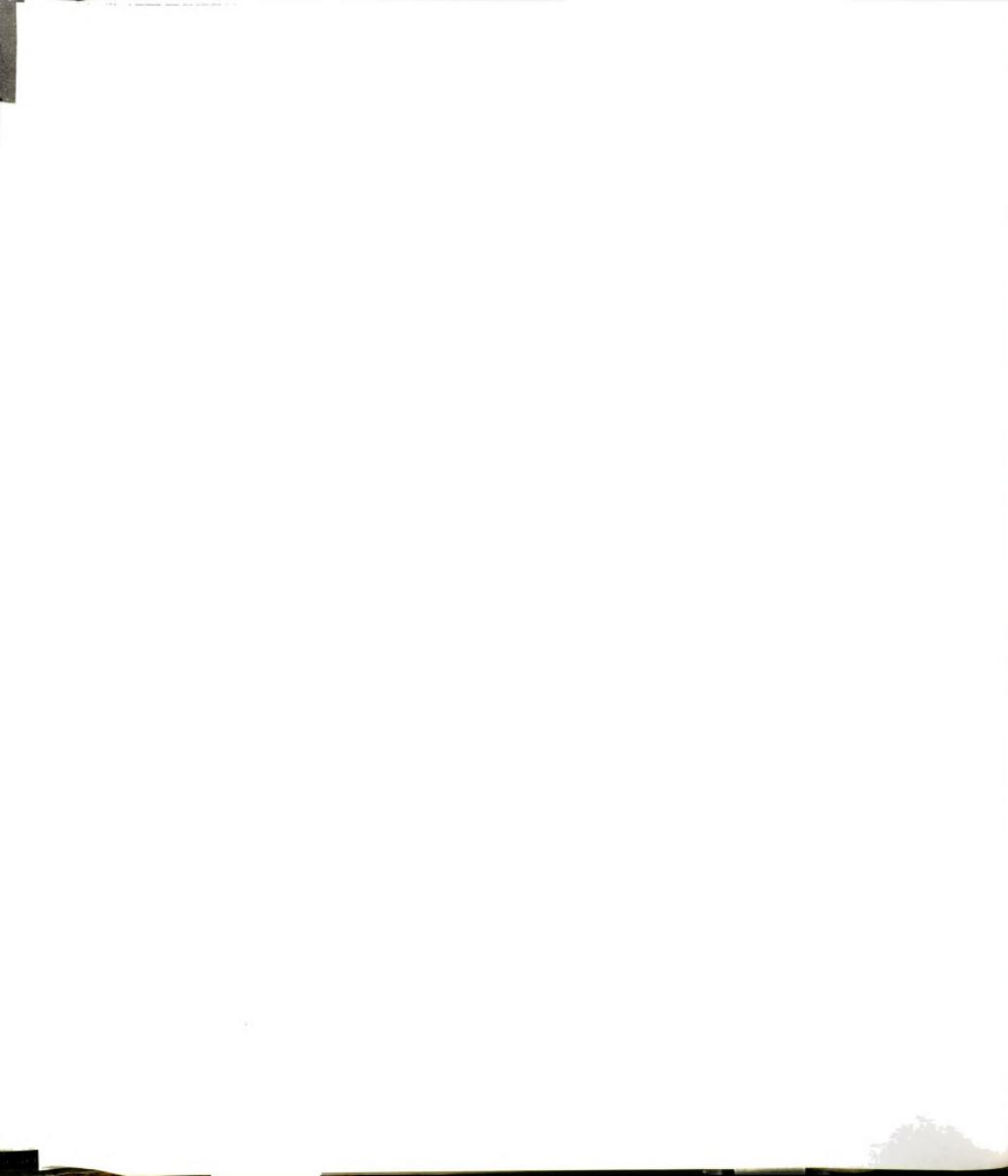
Jenks provides important insight into how Filipinos shape the knowledge acquired about them as she shows how information is controlled to suit specific purposes. More importantly, she demonstrates how she is able to gain access to crucial information about the nature of the existing social order. In the course of this particular encounter, she says that though he looks like a "dirty old savage [. . .] he is wise and thoroughly knows his own culture" (122). While the writings of all these American women travellers provide their readers with ethnographic detail, Jenks functions more explicitly as an ethnographer. It is important to note how she makes a determined effort to get first-hand information from people with whom she came into

direct contact. Of course there is something to be said about the way she makes one man the sole authority in representing a whole "culture," but this should not lessen the value of the different perspective she provides in her account.

There were also the other Igorot boys like "Sitlanin," "Tommie" and "Falikao" whose determination to get educated impressed Jenks greatly:

Sitlanin has gone to school, and I venture to say he knows Baldwin's *Primer* and *First Reader* as well as any American child. There is one picture in my mind I shall never forget. That is of Tommie, my cook and a grown man, and Falikao, also fully grown, stretched out on the kitchen floor [. . .] and little Sitlanin [. . .] sitting up beside them and Baldwin's *Primer* spread out on the floor in front of them. [. . .] I'd hear them out there an hour, sometimes two hours, spelling away; such persons have intelligence and ambition. (124)

Jenks automatically dispels any notion about Filipino children being any lesser than their American counterparts, as she demonstrates their capacity for learning the same kind of material in the same way. She also shows how the project of assimilation commences through the non-formal type of education instilled in the American home.



Another group upon which she focuses on are the Moros who live in the Southern part of the country. According to her:

The Moros are different from the Igorot, for they are Mohammedans, and are much more advanced in culture. They are, and probably long will be, serious problems for American administrators over here. They all have slaves, and have had them for generations. All five of the different Moro tribes used to raid the Islands [. . .] (taking) hundreds of Christian Filipinos back to their southern islands as slaves. (164)

Unlike Taft and Moses, Jenks adds more depth to her discussion about the Filipino Muslims as she makes clear how "advanced" and aristocratic (following the statement made about slaves) their society is. Describing their "striking" attire and the political hierarchy of sultans and "dattos" that govern them, she also makes mention of how it was of the "utmost importance" that there be a "good Moro exhibit" at St. Louis:

This afternoon Bert signs a contract with Mr. Frederick Lewis to take some Samal Moros over to St. Louis from here. [. . .] He is to take thirty or forty natives, all in family groups, with their houses, implements, boats and other equipment.



Bert says it is the most scientific way he can conceive to make it possible for Americans to visualize how the various kinds of Filipinos live.

(169)

In a chapter entitled "Moros and Daggers," Muslims are portrayed as one of the more hostile and treacherous groups of the country who posed a serious threat to the stability of American civil administration. Following are examples of her accounts in this section:

Every Moro carries a small dagger and knife and also a big knife. [. . .] They are masters in the use of the knife, as many poor soldiers have learned to their sorrow. Whenever a Moro comes into camp, the soldiers search him for knives. Sometimes a Moro has a knife concealed in his hair, or he will have a cloth over his shoulder with a knife concealed under it. [. . .] If he wants to kill a person, he will go after him, even if he seems to know that he himself will be killed. Americans do not speak of being killed here, but of being "cut up." (183)

A Moro held out his small dagger to a soldier for him to look at [. . .] and when the soldier came up to him, the Moro plunged the dagger into his throat. At Camp Pantar [. . .] two soldiers



were on the outskirts of the camp, and four Moros attacked them. They cut one man so he was disabled for life. [. . .] I would tell several other instances, but perhaps this is all poor Mamma can stand, especially if I add that a Filipino carpenter was killed on the road over which we traveled yesterday. We saw his grave, and his blood was still visible on the spot where he was killed. (185)

Filipino Muslims are depicted as treacherous, fanatical, brutal, and merciless killers who victimize all (whether they be American soldiers or poor Filipinos) those who are not of the same persuasion. Jenks is conscious of the impact such narratives could have on the reader, and yet she is diligent in writing about the horrors attributed to this particular group.

In the course of all depictions, she repeatedly states the significance of American governance in the Islands. She writes: "I think that the Americans, on the whole, will be of great value to the Islands. [. . .] If the Americans hadn't come in, I don't know what would have happened to some of these poor pagan people" (98). As she uses the "pagan-ness" of the people to justify her case for American presence, she also inadvertently demonstrates how Christianization and Westernization underpin and justify in

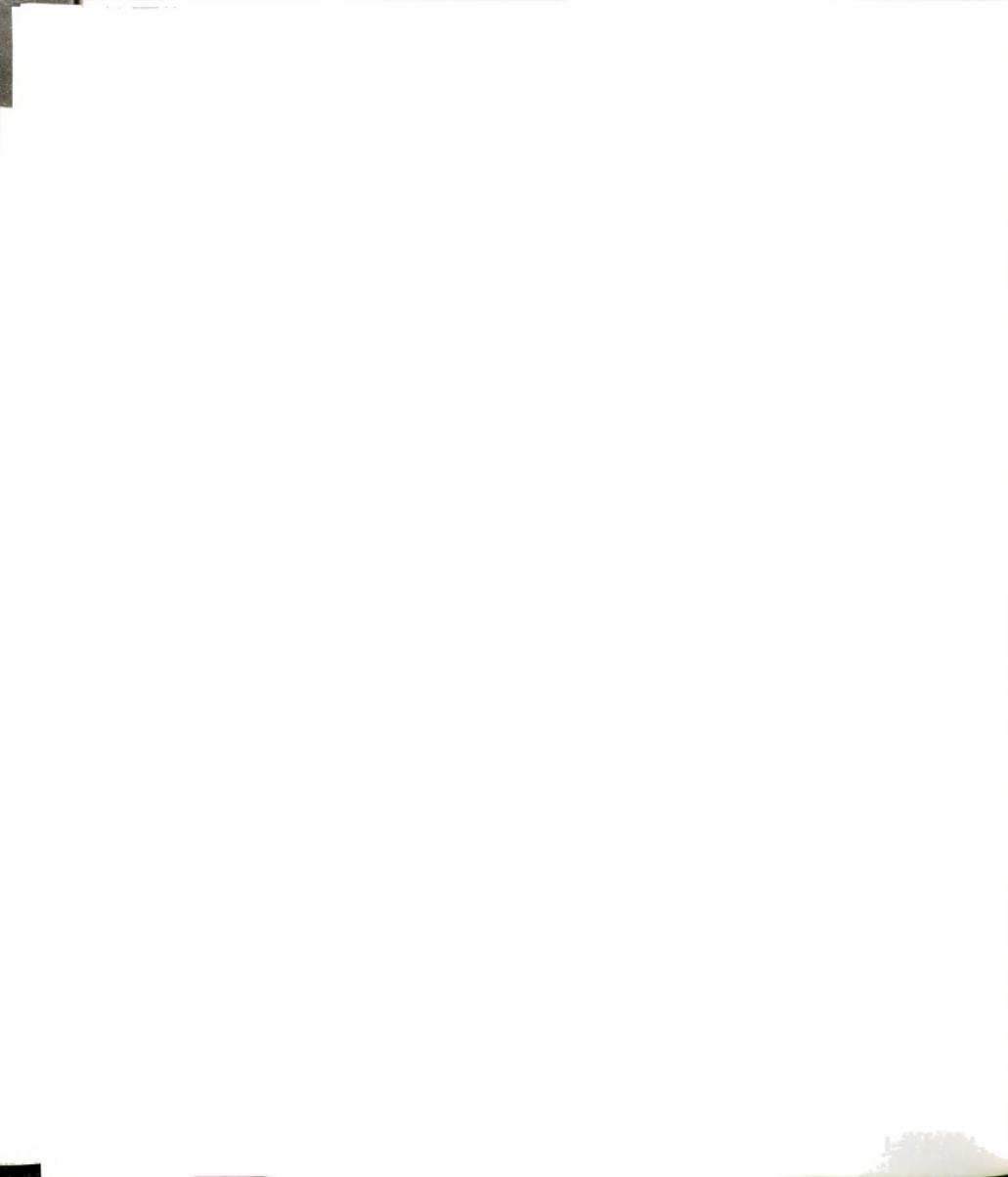
the colonial agenda. Jenks also recognizes, however, that there are certain conditions that need to be met before this objective can be realized. First, "race mixture" must be curtailed as much as possible. Considering this as "one of the sad phases of the American occupation," she indicates that "there is enough mixture of races here now, but it is evident that the next generation will have a new one to deal with" (40). Second, all Americans must resist the predisposition to "degenerate" as a result of their continued stay in the country, and persist in being role models, especially for the Filipino youth. Using a particular scenario involving "native" boys uttering invectives they had heard their own teacher use: "When I hear these little naked boys, who probably can't speak ten words of English, shout out in their play round American oaths, I am ashamed of my countrymen. What good does it do for me to tell them that those are bad American words when they can go up on the plaza and hear the school teacher swearing right and left "(98)? Third, the process can only come about if Filipinos are treated justly, and not abused nor oppressed by American military and political administrators. Finally, Americans need to actualize the broad colonial policy advocated since the beginning of colonization. As Jenks states: "This is a broad policy, and will take much patience and wisdom to carry out. Serious

problems are presented from time to time among these wild people, but we Americans must be 'doers' (198). As reflected in these prescriptions, agency and control reside in the colonizers who are enjoined to employ a benevolent manner in maintaining the racial and social hierarchy. But like a typical colonizer, Jenks does not question the validity of the American presence.

### North Meets South

Among all the places she visited in the Philippines, Jenks displays a strong affinity for the landscape and picturesque scenes of the northern part of the Philippines. In her accounts, she tends to make associations between these places' climate and flora to their seeming counterparts in the United States and Europe. During a trek to Naguilian for example, the group had to cross very steep and rough trail which was barely passable. Despite the difficulty it they experienced, Jenks finds redeeming value in the arduous trek:

There is nothing I can think of at home to compare with this trail, unless you can imagine riding a horse up our Wisconsin's Devil Lake cliffs, those glacial terminal moraines. And truly that wouldn't be worse than some of the places we went, and not half so far to fall, if one stepped over the edge. The scenery was magnificent. We went



through the Naguilian river three times [. . .] a great river four times as wide as the Baraboo, and so deep, the first time we crossed it, that the water came almost into my saddle seat. (40)

Days later, she writes about a road which was reminiscent of the Swiss Alps:

There is a beautiful road, which they have started to make from here down toward Dagupan. People who have been in Europe say that in places on this road they are reminded of the Alps. Along it are the most attractive building sites framed in pines, with views out over the mountains. If they can complete a road from Manila up here, there is no doubt that Baguio will have a boom. (45)

Like Moses, Jenks draws the reader more closely into her account by conjuring images of familiar places with those in the archipelago.

The rice terraces, a prominent part of the Northwestern Philippine landscape, and later recognized as the one of the "Wonders of the World," is also highlighted in her account. In her depiction, Jenks lodges their "Oriental-ness" on Filipino innovation, as she shows how beauty combines with functionality:

The terraces paddies are most beautiful along the

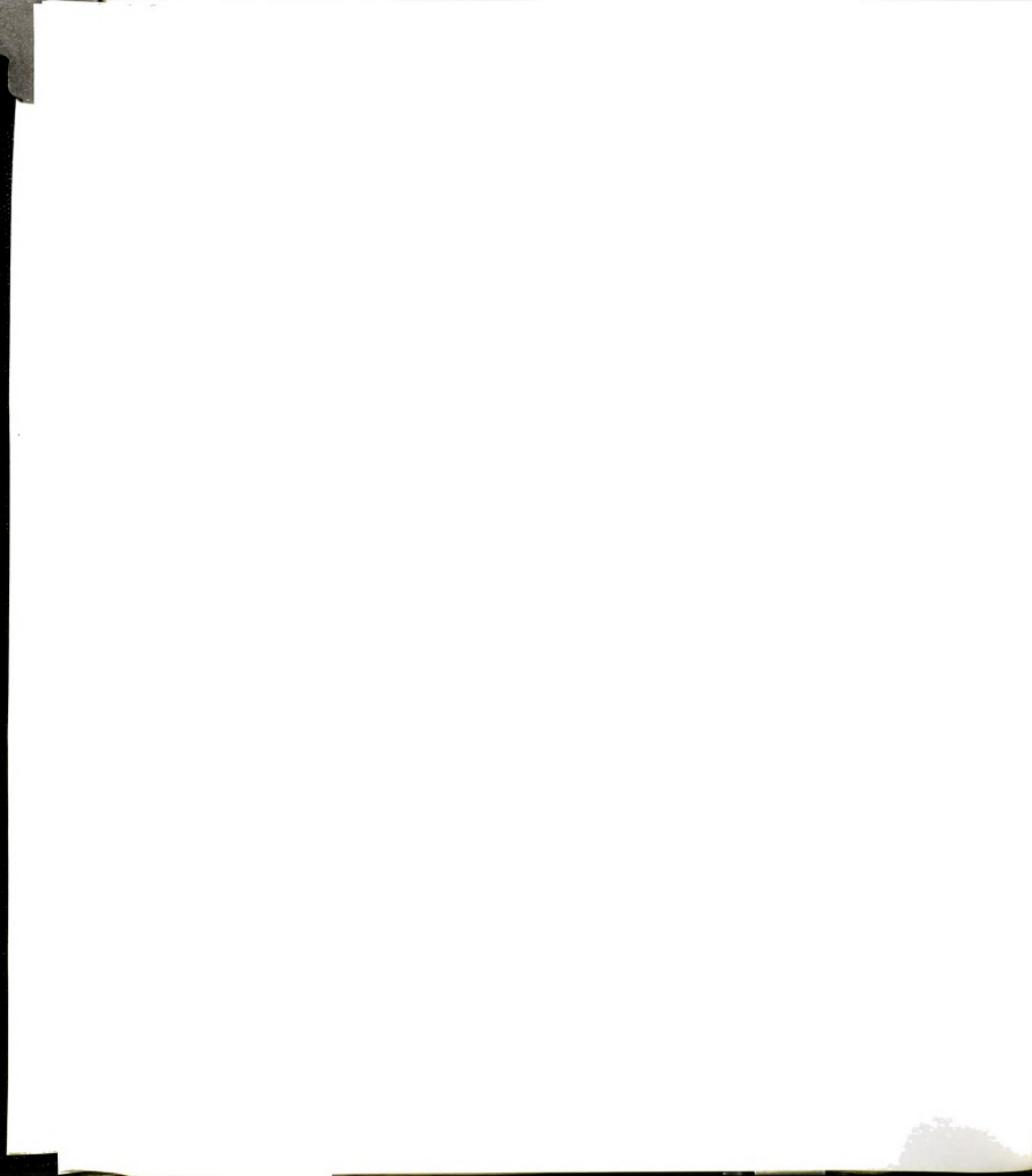
river. We climbed up the side of a mountain; and looking down into the river valley, we could see the terraces running up the mountainsides like giant stairways, with little grass-covered houses dotted in here and there. It was an oriental-looking picture, and I shall always remember it.

(80)

The rice is up now and about a foot and a half, and the sementeras in the river flat are green and beautiful. The rice terraces up the side of a mountain at a distance make me think of immense steps that might be used by a giant. They are very beautiful, but the people who made them had no thought of beauty - - it was just a stern matter of getting something to eat. (118)

Jenks accomplishes two things in the previous passages. First, she gives a detailed description of what she perceives, constitutes "Orientalness." The lofty mountains and the grass-covered huts seem to form a major part of her definition. Second, although she marvels at skilled construction of said structures, she denies the creators any sense of the aesthetic. Readers are made to understand that it was all an issue of survival.

She expresses a similar sense of fascination and romanticism for the environment of the southern part of the



archipelago. The objects of admiration included are the sea, hills, and forest, which she describes as both out-of-the-ordinary and familiar:

The sea is beautiful and we are in plain sight of the western coast of the island of Panay. We have been looking through the field glasses at a church right down the shore, with no houses near it that we can see. It is surprising how the Spaniards built churches everywhere in these Islands. (161)

We went out to the foothills along a beautiful road lined with cocoanut trees about seventy-five feet high. [. . .] In spite of a few cocoanut trees, its rolling hills covered with shrubbery and many wild flowers were so homelike we almost felt we were back in Wisconsin. It was the most homelike landscape we had seen in the Philippines. (165)

I hadn't seen such a forest before. [. . .] Here the trees seemed purposely decorated with swinging vines, parasitic plants, and countless orchids. [. . .] I must say that I cannot begin to picture to you the bewildering beauty, the richness of the forest as we drove up through it. Surely when God worked here He was at His best with palette and brush. One can't exaggerate the

massed loveliness of it all. (180-81)

Within an alien environment, Jenks positions herself as an individual traveller who, instead of expressing alienation and dislocation, immerses herself in the grandeur and spectacle of surroundings that conjured familiar images of home.<sup>27</sup>

#### Portraying the Other Woman

Jenks pays scant attention to her colonized counterparts. During her trip to the north of the Islands, she takes notice of how women were more reluctant subjects who acted very erratically and emotionally, "yelling as if (they) were being led away for slaughter." Eventually, as they were dragged in, they became "good-natured and pleased" about the whole experience which one Filipino defined as *costumbre* or "customary." Later she portrays other Filipino women in other scenarios, one involving a mother seeming to be "indifferent" to her seriously-ill child, and others who were seemingly docile and subservient wives (186). Jenks' correspondence never really goes into any thoughtful discussion of the Filipino women with whom she came into contact. Overall, she portrays them as a passive segment of the community that possessed no voice nor any significant autonomy.

#### The Customs and Traditions of Essentializing

Being the wife of an ethnographer, Jenks was also involved with the collection of artifacts and the observance of major rites and rituals. As she and her husband tried to amass a good collection to display in museums and at the St. Louis exposition of 1904, it is interesting to note what they considered were most representative of "Filipino culture." Among these were copper and gold objects, kitchenware such as a chow bowl, wooden spoons, and salt tubes, weapons used for warfare including spears, a head-ax, and a wooden shield, and attire made of hand-woven cloth and a hand-loom. In the midst of this activity, Jenks wrote about how each would take on a significant meaning for her. One time when collecting Igorot things, she writes:

I want to get a good collection as I can of Igorot things; for, besides being interesting, the nature of Bert's work is such that he ought to have them. Of course, he will get many things himself, but when I get artifacts from a native, they mean much more to me. (55)

In this passage, Jenks claims and appropriates the objects and artifacts that eventually become the property of the colonial establishment. But this passage may also very well reveal a difference in how American men and women represented the knowledge they were able to acquire.

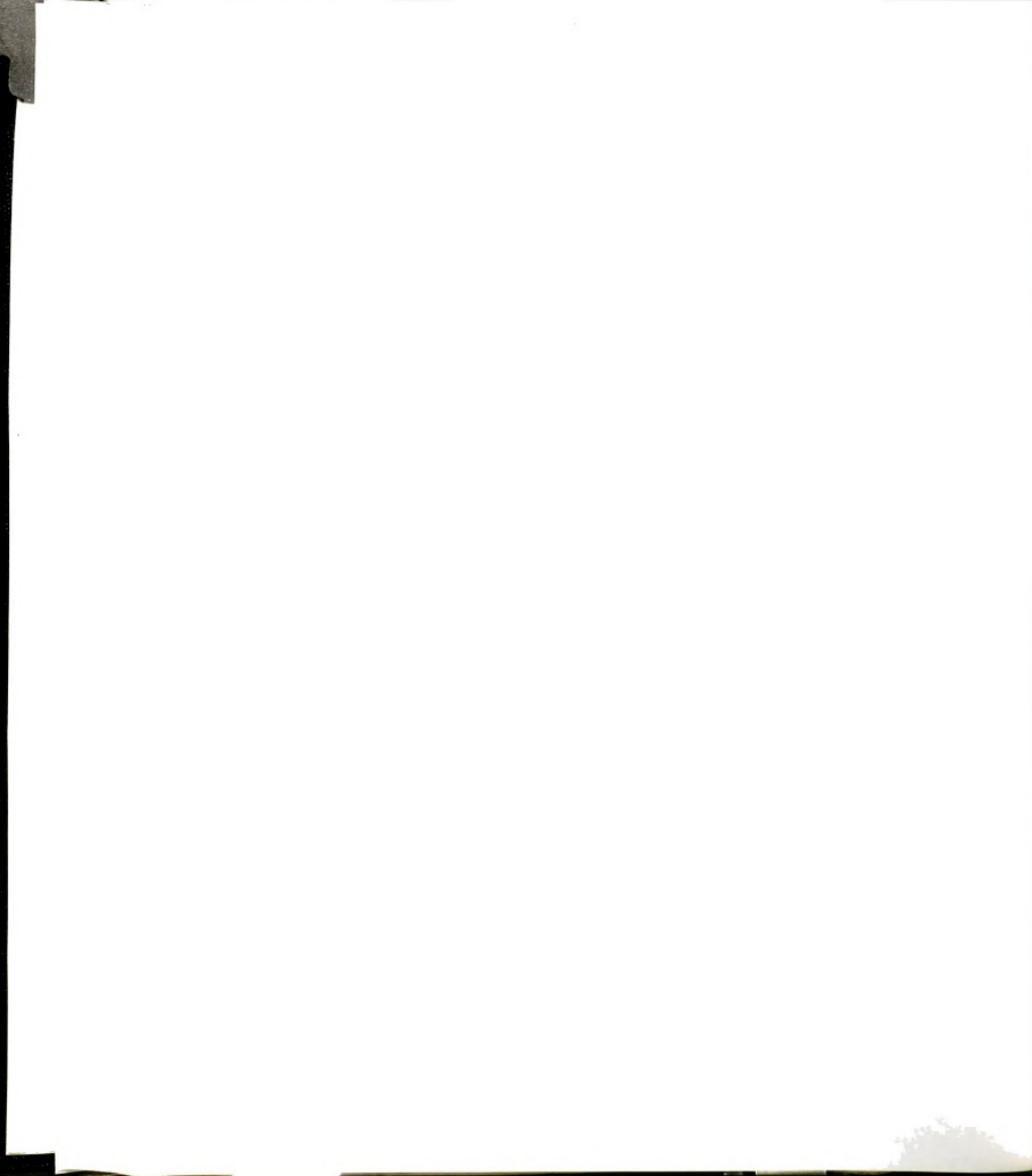
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<sup>27</sup>Vicente L. Rafael, "Colonial Domesticity: White Women and United States Rule in the Philippines,"

Some of the important rites and ceremonies the couple attended included a rice-planting ceremony and the Igorot head dance called the *canaou*. Jenks provides detailed explanations of the beliefs upon which the rituals were grounded. At the same time, she does not hesitate to articulate how some of the rites represented what she thinks was a fundamental "backwardness" and "primitivity" in the people's "culture." As she witnesses a head dance, she narrates:

I have recently seen something I never expected to see—a head *canaou*, or dance, in celebration of a human head taken from a man who had been killed. They didn't have the head, where I saw the dance, but they did have the human hand, a jaw, and an ear put up on poles just as they put up the head; and their dance was in every way the same. [. . .] The affair was a most unfortunate occurrence, for they haven't had such a dance in over two years. This is a culture step backward. [. . .] This head-hunting dance was much more emotional than the many imitation ones we have seen, studied, and photographed. I believe it was the most startling, yes awful, sight I have seen. (124)

Through letters written to families and friends, these



wives provided the "unofficial" story behind the official narrative of colonialism, and were able to express and articulate thoughts and feelings borne out of their direct personal connection the American empire and its subjects. They focused on the race difference, the picturesque, "other" women, and major customs and traditions, using the information they gathered firsthand to assess the viability of granting autonomy and self-determination to the Philippines. These authors were actively engaged in qualifying the debate between proponents and opponents of empire. In their varying and sometimes conflicting responses to the Filipinos, they were aware that they exercised a great deal of influence and leverage through their written accounts. In the end, it was these accounts that were most instrumental in reinforcing and affirming the racialization and ethnocentrism of American imperialism.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### SOLITARY SOJOURNS: THE FEMALE TOURIST

Now the fever of "globe-trotting" is in our veins, and we have made up our minds to follow across the Pacific the man who first sailed around the world.

We are anxious to see for ourselves the proofs which the geographies give us that the earth is a sphere. We intend to watch the sky every night, as more and more of the globe comes between us and the Great Northern Bear. By and by we shall turn our faces and hunt for the Southern Cross.

We have taken a good rest. For we have determined upon the longest journey of all - - to the wonderful Philippine (fīl'īp-īn) Archipelago - - and we shall travel over sixteen thousand miles before we reach home again.<sup>1</sup>

Single white female Western travellers are no strangers to studies on travel literature.<sup>2</sup> Since the last half of the

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<sup>1</sup> Marian M. George, Little Journeys to Hawaii and the Philippine Islands (Chicago: A. Flanagan Company, 1901) 3.

<sup>2</sup> Leo Hamalian, ed., Ladies on the Loose: Women Travellers of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1981); Catherine Barnes Stevenson, Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982); Dea Birkett, Spinsters Abroad: Victorian Lady Explorers (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Shirely Foster, Across New Worlds: Nineteenth-Century Women Travellers and their Writings (New York, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990); Jane Robinson, Wayward Women: A Guide to Women Travellers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Maria H. Frawley, A Wider Range: Travel Writing by Women in Victorian England (Rutherford, Madison, Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1994); Jane Robinson, Unsuitable for Ladies: An Anthology of Women Travellers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Karen R. Lawrence, Penelope Voyages: Women and Travel in the British Literary Tradition (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994); Mary Suzanne Schriber, ed., Telling Travels: Selected Writings by Nineteenth-Century American Women Abroad (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995); Susan Morgan,

nineteenth century, when technological progress translated into significant developments in communications, transportation, and printing, many women started embarking on journeys that allowed them to rebel, escape, acquire more knowledge, enrich themselves spiritually and mentally, attain more freedom and independence, and even to "civilize" non-Europeans as they began to explore territory that had formerly been claimed in the name of the scientific and imperial exploits of their male counterparts.<sup>3</sup> Forced to endure long, uncomfortable, and frequently dangerous journeys and consequently encounter unfamiliar and possibly hostile lands and peoples, many of these women produced narratives characterized by increased clarity, accuracy, vividness of description, "psychological complexity," and what Shirley Foster calls "literary femininity."<sup>4</sup>

#### LITTLE JOURNEYS TO HAWAII AND THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

From the age of 34, Chicago resident Marian George became a well-seasoned travel writer. Between 1900 and 1930, her accounts of countries such as the Philippines, Hawaii, Cuba, Mexico, China, Japan, Alaska, Germany, Norway, and Russia were published and republished almost on a yearly

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Place Matters: Gendered Geography in Victorian Women's Travel Books About Southeast Asia (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996); Mary Suzanne Schriber, Writing Home: American Women Abroad 1830-1920 (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997); Mónica Szurmuk, Women in Argentina: Early Travel Narratives (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000); Indira Ghose and Sara Mills, eds., Wanderings of a Pilgrim in Search of the Picturesque by Fanny Parkes (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> Foster 6; Schriber, Telling Travels xvi.

<sup>4</sup> Stevenson preface; Foster 19.

basis by the Chicago-based A. Flanagan company. Known as the "Little Journeys" series, many of the said works were marketed as supplementary materials for primary and secondary levels.

Little Journeys to Hawaii and the Philippine Islands, which was first published in 1901, was, in fact, one of the earliest works written by a woman about the Asian-Pacific country during the initial stages of American rule. Aiming to retrace the paths taken by renowned travelers and to explore the "wonderful" Philippine archipelago, she relates her encounters with different groups of Filipinos within the major regions of the country. Although she attempts to provide a wide-ranging study of the whole archipelago, it is clear that the work concentrates mostly on the biggest island, Luzon, and the capital city of Manila. What follows are the major sections making up her narrative.

#### Outward Bound

As this study has shown, although they were "incorporated" into the imperial agenda, wives of administrators considered their journeys as occasions for exploration and adventure. They were willing and determined to brave the extreme, explore the unknown, and, in their own way, conquer new worlds. Women who travelled on their own articulated a similar purpose, and Marian George clearly presents a case for this. From the time she begins her

travels, she already transgresses long-established boundaries. In the passage cited at the beginning of this chapter, it is clear that she positions herself as a discoverer and explorer who will separate fact from fiction and master the "distance" between familiar and unfamiliar terrain.

Even before she reaches her destination, George takes the initiative of familiarizing herself with various geographic and demographic facts about the Philippine archipelago:

We take up the books that we have brought with us, to inform ourselves more fully on the subject of the Philippine Islands and their people.

[. . .] We do not read far before we are both interested and surprised. These islands are such dots on our maps, and our geographies tell us so little about them, we had no idea that they cover over a hundred thousand square miles of land, and are inhabited by over eight millions of people.

So we take abundant notes. (11)

In fact, the books that George and her party use as references focus on the history of its colonization since the sixteenth century. She makes reference to such events as the "discovery" of the Islands by Ferdinand Magellan, the domination of Spanish "conquerors, masters and robbers," the

two-year occupation of England, the Spanish-American War and the cession of the Islands to the United States (11-16).

Clearly, the history of the archipelago is seen through the lens of colonialism and subjection. And in the succeeding parts of her account, George describes how Manila becomes the major venue of these processes.

#### Manila and City Living

Manila, the "Pearl of the Orient," lies before us, stretching far back on the lowlands. We can see only a few buildings fronting the bay and some tall church steeples. A range of mountains, over which hangs a dim blue haze, lies at a distance in the background and gives a picturesque setting to the scene. (22)

Although Manila is said to be comprised of both urban and natural landscapes, it is readily apparent that its cosmopolitan domain supersedes its "rural" area. The first sights that create an impression on George and her party are the infrastructure and picturesque mountains in the background (22). She mentions the existence of a multitude of languages and "half-languages" (Spanish, English, Chinese, "Pidgin-Spanish," "Pidgin-English," Tagalog, among others) which greet them at their arrival. She also writes about the presence of industrial activity as demonstrated by the busy traffic and the presence of Chinese coolies and

their warehouses containing goods such as hemp, tobacco, rice, sugar, flour, machinery, clothing, and army products (23). The various modes of transportation, from the two-wheeled cart pulled by a water buffalo to the four-wheeled carriage, complete her picture of the bustling urban scene. In fact, George portrays Manila as the city that will serve as crossroads to the world economy (23).

As her discussion revolves around issues of development and modernization, she describes the two Manilas, the "Old City" and "New Manila," which symbolize the connection between past and present and the growth of the American capitalist system in the archipelago. George defines "Old Manila" against the various forms of infrastructure that shape its surroundings. "Old Manila, on the south side of the river, is a walled city. As we drive around it, we find weedy moats, heavy drawbridges, strong gates and ponderous walls. All these tell us that the Spanish garrisons had troublous times in keeping the people in subjection" (24). She proceeds to describe old churches and schools. The "magnificent structure" of the cathedrals asserts the omniscience of the Church's power. Schools, on the other hand, serve as observatories wherein natural calamities such as earthquakes and storms were studied. Both institutions served to reinforce Spain's hegemony over the archipelago.

"New Manila" was a burgeoning metropolis at the turn of the century which relied on the growth of foreign trade and fostered a sense of cosmopolitanism among its residents. Although members of the Chinese community occupied a prominent place in many of the commercial enterprises then in place, George was pleasantly surprised by the presence of American entrepreneurs who offered a wide variety of products and services geared toward leisure and recreation. As George states:

What surprises us is to find so many Americans in business here. There are American drug and stationery stores; American jewelry stores, displaying American watches and jewelry; American confectionery stores whose candy, soda-water, ice-cream, and bread are eagerly bought; American hotels and restaurants, with the aristocratic titles of "The Astor House," "The Hoffman House," "The Washington Restaurant," "The Golden Eagle"; and an American Bazaar, a sort of store where clothing and almost everything else is kept. (29)

George provides information in an area that is not well-written about. Although some primary documents showed American economic presence in the archipelago even before

the Spanish-American War, these were hardly incorporated into the Island's history of colonization.<sup>5</sup>

Besides providing an account of the city's economic machinery, George also depicts the noticeable diversity characterizing Manila's populace:

The streets are full of black-eyed, brown-skinned men, women, and children. Mingling with them are richly-dressed Chinese merchants, as well as Chinese coolies, who do most of the menial work. The Filipino "boy" or servant, will as a rule, consent to perform only the higher kind of domestic service. We meet, also, dark-skinned Spaniards, fairer-skinned but well-tanned Americans and other foreigners, black Sulus and Moros, and here and there a United States officer or soldier (29).

George assumes the role of both "external observer" and colonizer as she uses strategies of "depersonalization" and "objectification" in her discussion of the "other" (McEwan 157). The body sets the preliminary criteria for their location in the colonial social order.

Amidst the strangeness and foreignness of the place, George finds reassurance in "two things" that make her "feel at home." The first of these is the sight of "John

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas R. McHale and Mary C. McHale, Early Philippine-American Trade: The Journal of Nathaniel Bowditch in Manila, 1796 (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1987).

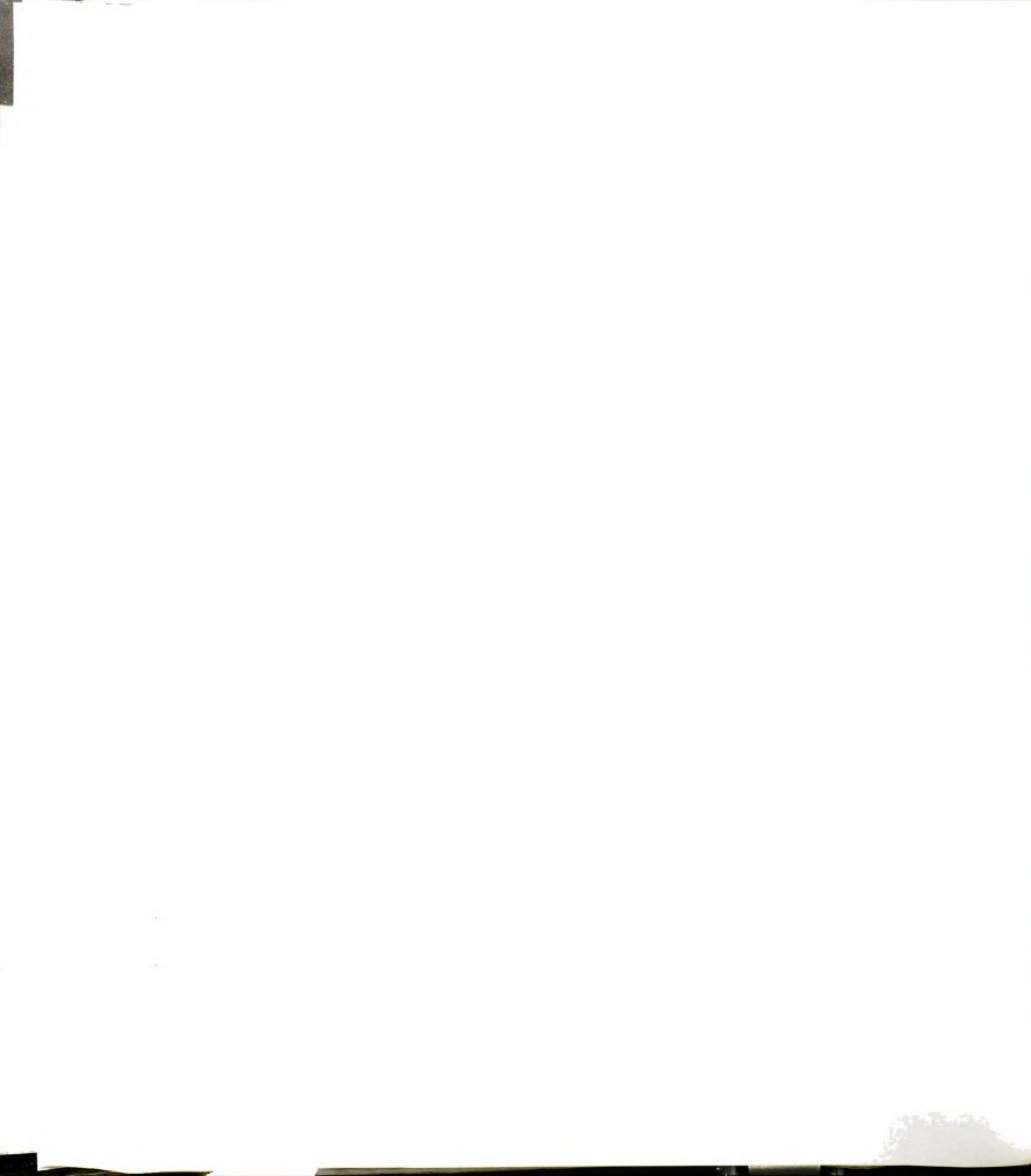
Chinaman," who is dressed in a white suit, his head and feet bare, sporting a pigtail, "and the customary complacent smile on his face, notwithstanding the great load of white or many-colored garments that he is carrying home from the laundry" (30). She also feels a sense of security when she meets an American soldier. She describes the conditions leading up to their meeting in the following:

We hear a hearty voice exclaim: "How d'ye-do, United States!" and, turning around, find a soldier in Uncle Sam's tropical uniform standing beside us. He apologizes for his manner of greeting, and says that he was "just so hungry to speak to some one lately from home," that he had to say something. We promise to give him some newspapers we have at the hotel, and then we fall to chatting with him about the scenes in Manila.

(30)

The incidents she writes about in the previous passages reaffirm, first, the colonial and social hierarchy and second, the might of the American military establishment to enforce this very order (Blunt and Rose 39).

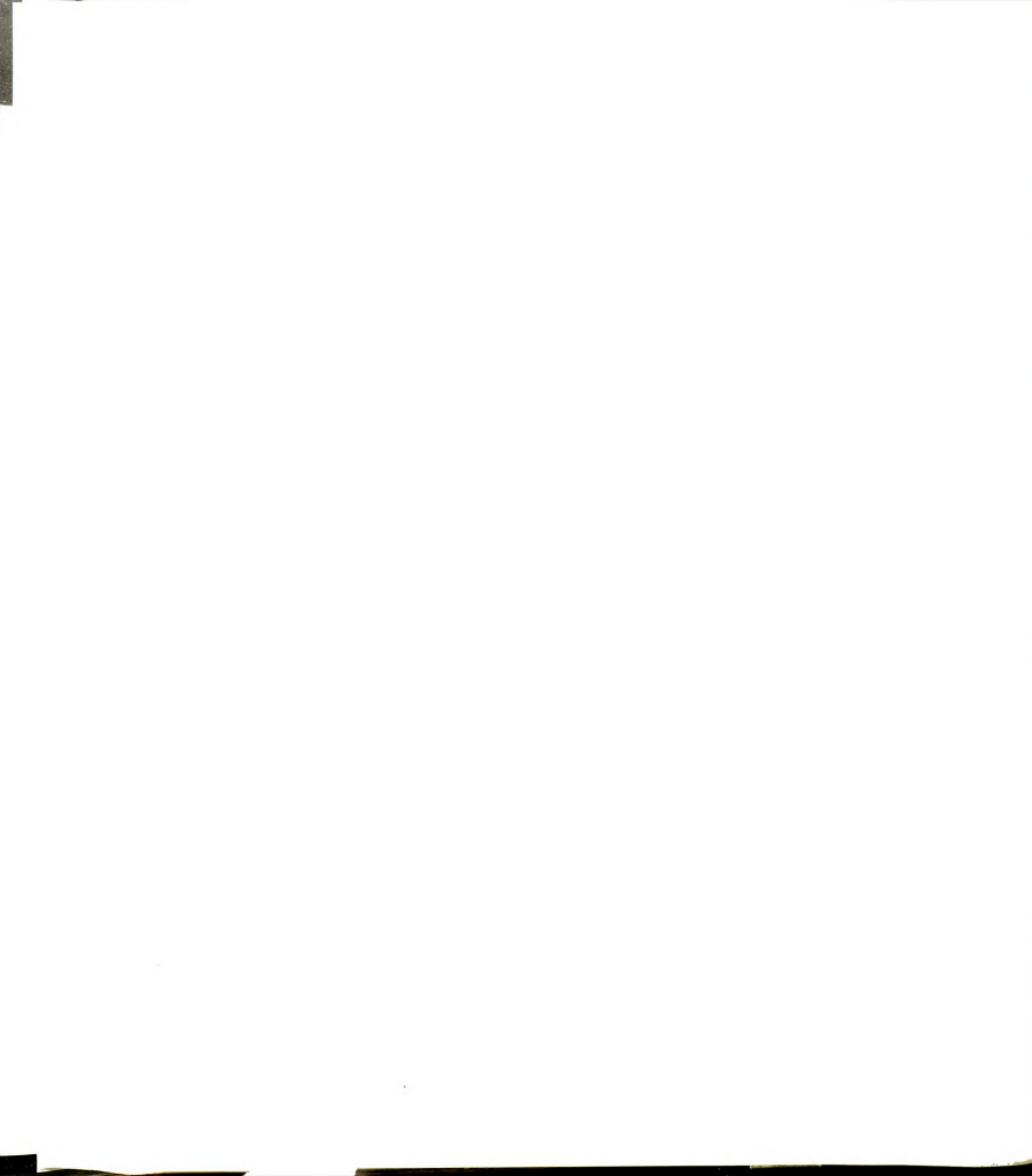
Proceeding with her journey, George encounters a number of Filipino women whom she describes in the following manner:



Starting for the hotel, we meet several women whose jaws are working vigorously, whose lips are very red, and whose mouths seem to be bleeding. We notice, also, that they have very black teeth. All this is due to their chewing the betel nut, a product of the areca [. . .] palm. This habit, as well as that of smoking cigars, is very common among the native women in the Philippines. The more aristocratic women smoke only in their homes, as a rule. (32)

She also discusses the young "mestiza" girls whom she sees as possessing "pleasant, rather refined faces," sporting long black hair, donning jewelry and other costly accessories, and who respond to George's gaze with "smiling curiosity." George continues to be a detached observer who makes no move to engage nor establish any connection with the women she describes. And once again, physical appearance and behavior serve to this distancing.

In the succeeding parts of her account, George relates about how her party take a streetcar in the hope of exploring more of the city. Aside from taking note of how "good-natured and happy" the people are, she devotes considerable attention to four venues, namely, schools, dwellings, marketplaces, and places of amusement.



As shown in many historical works, the American occupation was largely responsible for the establishment of a host of schools in towns and cities. Housed within one-story, well-lighted, and well-ventilated buildings, these institutions were home to children who, with "keen faces and bright eyes" were "eager to go to school," with most of them insisting on being taught to talk in English "like the Americans do," and to play "American" games such as baseball and tag (38-39). Overall, she describes the pupils as fast learners. With regard to higher learning, education was still very much under the control of specific religious orders which maintained separate schools for male and female students. There was a Jesuit-run college, and the Dominican-run colleges of St. Thomas and San Juan de Letran for boys from fourteen to eighteen, in addition to the colleges of La Concordia, Santa Isabel and Santa Rosa which were administered by nuns (39-40).

George was also able to visit a particular dwelling located in New Manila. The hosts (who were not named) welcomed George and her party as they made their house open to the group's disposal. According to George, there was nothing radically different nor extraordinary about the layout and design of the house. It had, among other things, a wood-and-brick dining room, the little kitchen in the



rear, the upper floor, the balcony, and the bedroom containing bamboo beds.

The public commercial arena became crucial venues for George's narrative. As she states, "We find that there are many marketplaces in Manila, and in other cities and towns of the Philippines. As these are places where we can see and learn much, not only of the productions of the country but also of the people, we spend a good deal of time in those of Manila" (43). Describing the largest marketplace in the city as "a little town in itself," George observes the gendered dynamics that take place within the marketplace scenario:

Most of the market men we find to be women! They sit or squat upon low mats or platforms made of platted bamboo, with their wares near at hand. They are bareheaded and barefooted. They yell and shout at one another and at us until we buy or pass on. Then they laugh and chat together in perfect good nature. (43)

I argue that in this particular instance, George indirectly subverts the existing patriarchal order. In fact, George makes it a point to identify the gender of the sellers and their products. Except for one "Chino" who sold mostly vegetables, men were found to sell chickens, turkeys, ducks,

fish, and beef. Women, on the other hand, usually sold wardrobe, accessories, and household items.

We pass women selling bright calicoes and other light goods; women offering mantles, shawls, and plain or embroidered goods for blouses; women trying to persuade customers to purchase handsome silks and satins, plain and embroidered; women with great baskets of articles which they are peddling about; women cooking over little charcoal fires in earthen stoves that are shaped like old shoes; women making cigars and offering them for sale even to small children; and women making the delicate piña handkerchiefs of pineapple fiber, as soft as silk; or embroidering birds and flowers in lifelike colors on satins and silks. (46)

George pays significant attention to the overt presence of women within the market economy. As she demonstrates in her narrative, although women engaged in activities that related back to certain notions of femininity, women clearly went beyond the boundaries of the home and the domestic sphere and took on pursuits that held the promise of independence and self-sufficiency.

In the section on "Amusements," George forms general assumptions about the prevalent kinds of recreation and leisure in the archipelago. She identifies cockfighting as

the most popular of these. The gamecock is the "most cherished possession of every Filipino family, and the first to be rescued in case of fire" (46). In fact, participants wager everything else just to be able to engage in this sport. George also makes mention of the interest in musical performance. While every member of the upper class supposedly owns a piano, many other Filipinos are also "fine musicians" who love both singing and dancing. With regard to special holidays, Christmas is regarded as the "great religious celebration" marked by plays or dramas about the life of Christ, the celebration of the mass, and cockfighting. Religious processions are participated in widely by a "strange-looking crowd of people, white, red, yellow and brown" (47). She writes about how people gathered at public parks, the most prominent being Luneta, "to enjoy the music and sea breeze, to see the carriages and other conveyances with their occupants, and to gossip with friends and acquaintances" (38). Other pastimes she mentions are pony racing, bicycle-racing, theater-watching, riding across rivers, lakes, and coasts. It is interesting to note that many of the forms of recreation she discusses entail public displays and spectacles that, in turn, supposedly foster strong ties within the community.

## Explorations into the Interior

Up to this point, George has delved into the major city's urban landscape and lifestyle, which, in fact, constitute nearly half the book. In the latter part of the work, she proceeds to write about their party's exploration of outlying areas in Luzon, the Visayan archipelago, and the southern islands of Palawan, Mindanao and Sulu. Taking a small launch and going up the Pasig River, George casts her gaze on industrial development promoted by factories processing such products as sugar, tobacco and hemp, which in fact, constitute the archipelago's primary exports.

She describes what she perceives to be the pristine and rugged environment which proves memorable for her in a lot of ways. In Los Baños, a province south of Manila, she describes the "dreamy" aura created by the surrounding's flora and fauna:

In the distance are slopes rich with growing crops of hemp and with cocoa palms. In the thick foliage near by birds of brilliant plumage flit about, and we hear the chattering of a few monkeys.

Soon we are at the crater's edge, and below us lies the beautiful Enchanted Lake. The scene does indeed seem one of enchantment, for in the still bosom of the lake is mirrored, the lovely tropical

foliage that is growing upon its borders, as well as the blue sky and floating clouds above. (50-51)

George employs a rhetoric that David Spurr has labeled "insubstantialization" wherein "the object of representation is seen as an immaterial counterpart to the dissolving consciousness of the subject, a dissolution which can be joyful [. . .] or profoundly disorienting" (Spurr 142). In her account of the non-Western world, George embarks on a journey of the self, wherein the physical world is invested with otherworldly attributes.

But there are other aspects of the "natural" environment that were not as ideal and mystical. In one entry, she shares events that transpired amid "surroundings that will long make us remember the Philippines." In the course of passing the night at a one-room shelter owned by a kindly family, she recounts her most "thrilling experiences" in the following manner:

A cockroach four inches long appears on the floor, and when we attempt to step on him, he flies out of the window. A rattling noise in the walls and ceiling, we learn the next morning, is caused by the python, or house-snake, chasing rats and mice. We only wish he had caught the rats that frightened our party by trying to run off with our shoes! (51)

The theme of pestilence is one that resonates clearly in both official wives' and travellers' accounts. Many of the women in the study express fear, discomfort, and abhorrence in the face of surroundings that are unsanitary and possibly maybe even infectious. Again, this may be related to what Spurr calls the "debasement" rhetoric as seen in the following:

The idea of abjection [. . .] offers an analogy between the symbolic structure of individual consciousness and the systems of representation at work in culture at large. Both structures appear to depend for their internal coherence on a symbolic exclusionary tactic: the horror of the Other, the repudiation of the scapegoat. (79)

As discussed in the previous section, such rejection and denunciation is related to protecting the established order from "losing itself" in the norms and mores of the other's social system.

In addition to her descriptions of the natural landscape, George also writes about the people she encounters along the way. There are, for instance, the various "tribes of Luzon," which include the Igorrotes, the Tagalogs and the Negritos. Inhabiting the northeast part of the archipelago, Igorrotes are described as "a tribe little above savages" what with the way they would go naked, tatoo



their extremities, and "live in the most primitive way." In contrast, the Tagalogs, according to George, embody the "real" Filipinos who, aside from being "skillful musicians," "good artists and draughtsmen," are "more highly civilized than any others, and showed a strong love for their native land and for independence" (57). Finally, there are the Negritos who reside in parts of Central Luzon and who are frequently touted as the "aborigines of the Philippine Islands" (58). Although she describes these "black dwarfs" as nomadic, naked and with "minds [. . .] evidently as weak as their bodies," she also asserts that:

They are not so savage as represented by some writers. When the United States troops entered one of their villages, they ran and hid behind the trees or in their huts, peeping out at the soldiers, but not shooting their poisoned arrows at them. (58)

George's brand of ethnography demonstrates what Spurr has identified as the rhetoric of classification which uses a criteria based on social organization and modernization (Spurr 71).

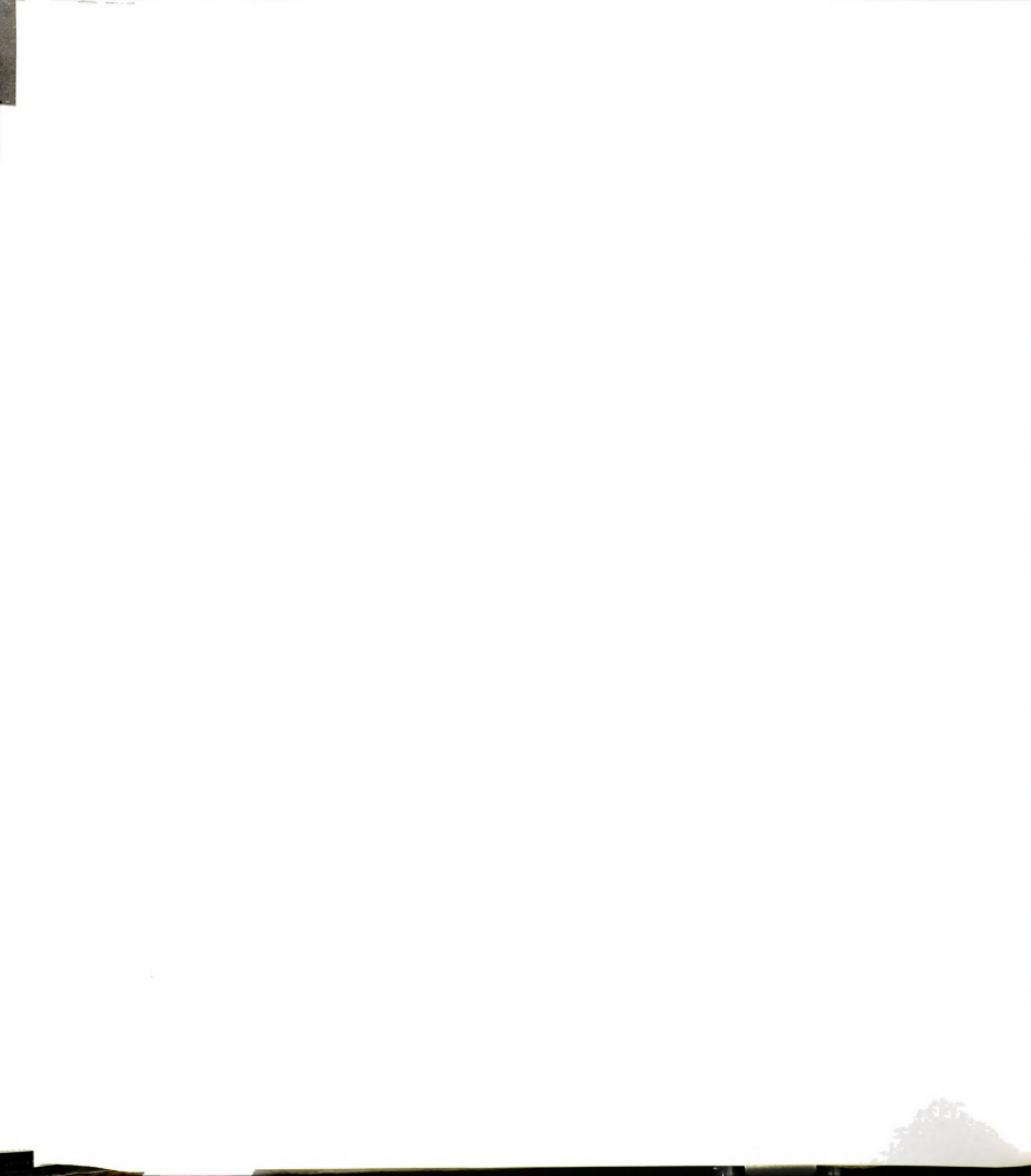
The remainder of the work focuses briefly on Visayas and Mindanao, the other major islands of the archipelago. George discusses such aspects as peace and order issues, issues of "commercial importance," religion, major crops,

and lifestyle. Although still afflicted with "native banditry," the Visayas is a virtual gold mine of such crops as sugar, copra, hemp, and tobacco. People are depicted as "more or less civilized, and profess the Christian religion" (62). On the other hand, Mindanao presents a different case. Principal products of the region are cocoanut, banana, hemp, rice, sugar and tobacco. She depicts the people as turban-donning, warlike religious fanatics who exist amidst the most rudimentary of living conditions. The area is adjudged as one of the more belligerent and "unassimilable" parts of the country, and George expresses wariness and suspicion about this tenuous situation. At the same time, the people are said to have shown a "friendly spirit to the United States, and to express a desire for cooperation with its officers for good government" (67). In the end, diplomacy was established and, like the Visayas, Mindanao's commercial and human capital becomes part of the larger American colonial system.

#### Final Destination

In concluding her work, George declares her triumph over the various challenges brought upon by her sojourn and passes the onus to social reformers who are charged to maintain and strengthen the existing colonial order.

Our trip to the Philippines has hurried us about a good deal, because there is so much we wish to



see. We have had many difficulties to overcome, but we have escaped capture by the insurgents and by savages, and altogether have had a very pleasant time.

Some day, when the pioneer business man and the pioneer school-teacher, the missionary and the government officials have carried peace, prosperity, and learning to the scattered tribes, we may come back and have a different story to tell. (78)

In contrast to her positioning as "explorer-conqueror" at the beginning of her journey, George eventually takes on the persona of a tourist who has had a "pleasant time" despite the hardships brought about by the hazards of travelling. Although she starts off possessing a good knowledge about the place and its history, these do not predetermine nor impact her journey as much as the various encounters and first-hand experiences she undergoes. The travel text essentially becomes an autobiography (also called by Schriber as "writing-travel-as-autobiography").<sup>6</sup> In this genre, George perceives herself to be a protagonist who revels in the freedom and independence afforded by travel. But this does not stop her from attempting to support the dominant patriarchal colonial order and its civilizing impulses. George provides information about the inroads made

in industrialization and urbanization and uses a system of classification in describing the archipelago's inhabitants. She reaffirms the work of empire and modernization as she calls for the realization of "peace, prosperity and learning" within the colonial machinery (78). Three years later, another traveller passes through the archipelago and like George, leaves a significant account that depicts, in a similar way, the important dynamics underlying travel, gender, and empire in the early twentieth century.

**A WOMAN'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES ON A CABLE SHIP  
THAT LINKED TOGETHER THE STRANGE LANDS SEEN EN ROUTE**

In 1906, Florence Kimball Russel started publishing a series of books about the army and West Point tailored for young male readers. Among these are Born of the Blue: A Story of the Army (1906), In West Point Gray as Plebe and Yearling (1908) and From Chevrons to Shoulder-Straps: A Story of West Point (1914) which were all published by LC Page company based in Boston. In the midst of all this, she had written about her journey to the Philippines at the turn of the century in A Woman's Journey through the Philippines on a Cable Ship that Linked Together the Strange Lands Seen En Route, parts of which would be republished later in periodicals such as The Criterion and Everybody's Magazine.

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<sup>6</sup> Schriber, Writing Home 131.

Among all the women writers included in this study, Russel is the only traveller who explores the provinces and cities of the Southern Philippines widely. As she expresses an ambivalent attitude in her depiction of the climate, natural resources, fashion and appearance, insurgency issues, pastimes and celebrations, social life, and various groups in the region, she also shows what a "treasure-trove" it could serve to historians, geographers, antiquarians, naturalists, geologists and ethnologists.

#### The Dreamy Picturesque

From the outset, Russel depicts the landscape as a scene of enchantment, a seeming tropical paradise. According to her, the picturesque conjured images of lush, bountiful, and spacious surroundings that in turn created feelings of serenity and peacefulness:

Now we would pass close to some luxuriantly overgrown shore where tall cocoanut palms marched in endless process along the white beach; now past hills where groups of bamboos swung back and forth in the warm breeze, and feathery palms and plantains, the sunlight flickering through their leaves, showed myriad tints of green and gold and misty gray; these in turn giving place to some volcanic mountain, bare and desolate. Then for hours there would be no land at all, only the

wonderful horizonless blue of water and sky, the sunlight on the waves so dazzlingly bright as to hurt the eyes. (17-18)

Captivated by the seeming vibrancy and animation of her immediate surroundings, Russel aestheticizes the landscape as she also focuses on its richness and abundance.<sup>7</sup>

She also provides a detailed account of the various surroundings within the Southern Philippines. The province of Dumaguete is depicted as a "tropically picturesque little town, surrounded by forest-grown hills, and mostly of nipa" (27). Iligan, on the other hand, while besieged by "climactic hardships and privations," is described as "lovely beyond description" as it is made to represent all Philippine coastal towns:

Picturesque it could not help being. All Philippine coast towns accomplish that, built as they are of *caña* and nipa in the midst of luxuriant foliage, and surrounded by palms and bamboos, beyond which spread verdant plains or lofty hills on one side, and on the other stretches of sunlit sea and an unobstructed view of the blue and cloudless sky. (95)

In contrast, Cebu was one place which elicited mixed emotions from Russel. According to her, there was nothing

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<sup>7</sup> McEwan 68.

picturesque about the town; instead it was a filthy place cluttered with large warehouses and "rows of squat, ugly buildings" (115). In the end, she surmised, "We found nothing to like about it, for the natives were sullen and unfriendly, while the town itself was not wild nor barbaric enough to be interesting, nor yet civilized enough for comfort" (117).

In contrast, Zamboanga, approximated a "water-colour sketch" as it showcased different hues and shades:

soft, deep blue sky and sea, the tropical freshness of green foliage, amidst which nestled picturesque white houses with overhanging balconies, the red and blue sails on the sunlit water, and [. . .] an old Spanish fort, gray and stern and forbidding. (145)

The same kind of "enchantment" is said to exude from the Sulu landscape which seemed to radiate green, gold, amethyst, red and blue tints across the horizon. According to Russel, the only thing that marred this was the prevalence of fever, "the scourge to white men" (200).

Bongao garnered the most favor, as Russel described it as the "most attractive" despite or because of its "remoteness from civilization" (208). She depicts it in the following manner:

Situated on the dot of an island belonging to the Tawi Tawi group, it is the southernmost part of our new possessions to be garrisoned. [. . .] The garrison is situated on a mountainous spur of land running down steeply to the water. It is laid out like a park [. . .] over which the men have trained vines and creeping plants, while before each door blooms beds of bright flowers. (208)

While Russel invests her descriptions of the landscape with dreamy and mystical overtones, she also identifies the various areas which need further "improvement," including those involving the indifferent and even hostile reception of the locals, the prevalence of epidemics, and the need to preserve a certain conception of "primitivity." Although she is accepting of the newness, strangeness, and even beauty of her surroundings, it is clear that she also desires to declare a certain degree of mastery and control over it. And it is at this point that she assumes her male counterparts' stance of conquest and domination.<sup>8</sup>

I also argue that Russel locates the picturesque within the agenda of modernization. This can be directly related to the rhetoric of appropriation within colonial discourse that stipulates that Western colonizers "saw the natural resources of colonized lands as belonging rightfully to 'civilization' and 'mankind' rather than to the indigenous

peoples who inhabited those lands" (Spurr 28). In fact, early on, Russel predicts the future for the country:

In a few years it will be these southern seas that the millionaire brings his yacht for a winter cruise; it will be in these forests that he hunts for wild boar and deer [. . .] in these waters that he fishes for the iridescent silver beauties that here abound. It will be on these sunlit shores invalids seeking health will find it, and here that huge sanitariums should be built, for despite the tales of pessimistic travellers, no lovelier climate exists than can be found in Philippine coast towns from the middle of November until the last of March. (23-24)

The territory, with all the rich resources it can offer, is already appropriated as a space for recreation, exile, and scholarly investigation. Later in the work, Russel also relates how the archipelago's natural resources spawn profitable commercial activities:

The country passed on our drive was unusually fine, with its groves of palms and plantains; its tall cottonwood-trees by the roadside, the ripe pods on the bare branches bursting and showing the soft, white fluff within; its giant mango-trees with bonfires built [. . .] as a quick method of

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<sup>8</sup> McEwan 70.

ripening the fruit for the market. Then there were acres of corn and fields of rice ready of harvesting. (133)

On the other hand, she expresses concern about the insidious effects of technology on this very landscape:

I [. . .] rejoice that I have been privileged to see these islands in a state of nature, before the engineer has honeycombed the virgin forest with iron rails; before the great heart of the hills is torn open for the gold, or coal, or iron to be found there; before the primitive plough, buffalo, and half-dressed native give way to the latest type of steam or electric apparatus for farming; before the picturesque girls pounding rice in wooden mortars step aside for noisy mills; before the electric light frightens away the tropic stars, and dims the lantern hanging from the gable of every nipa shack; before banking houses do away with the cocoanut into which thrifty natives drop their money [. . .] before the sunlit stillness of these coast towns is marred by the jar and grind of factory machinery; before the child country is grown too old and too worldly-wise. (25)

While she recognizes the crucial role these initiatives perform in the realization of the state's economic and

modernization program, she expresses a desire to see the preservation of what she perceives to be the "pristine" and even "primitive" essence embodied by the landscape. Correspondingly, she admonishes any steps taken toward their misuse and "corruption." In this particular instance, Russel embodies the policy of McKinley's "benevolent assimilation" as she draws the boundaries between colonial "upliftment" and outright exploitation. In fact, colonial policy provoked a variety of responses from all the sectors of the colonized and these are discussed more incisively in the next section.

#### The Filipino Response to Colonial Policy

In the latter part of the work, Russel discusses the various responses of inhabitants of the Southern Philippines to various aspects of American colonial policy. This is probably one of the few narratives in this study which delves into this particular topic. One of the responses involved acceptance and assimilation. In one particular case, an American officer was surprised by the willingness of the Bogobos (described by Russel to be a "savage mountain people") to do away with certain practices and adopt prescribed innovations. Thus, aside from removing skulls from the executive mansion for example, they also agreed to incorporate sweeping, modern sanitation, and the practice of displaying the American flag in public spaces.

Relationships between American officers and the "ungovernable" Filipino leaders manifested this tendency toward conciliation. On the occasion, for instance, of the departure of the first American governor in Jolo, residents sent a letter to General Arthur MacArthur expressing intense thanks and appreciation for all this governor's efforts. They articulated how the official "had been very good to us, and he is very well known to everybody. He is like a parent to us Moro people" (201). In addition, the same official "opened our eyes" and showed "the right way to come up to the white man's ideas" (202). He was recognized as the individual who quelled insurgency and addressed the problem of poverty significantly. Russel also makes mention of how other American officials became successful in instituting a system of justice which overrode the existing order marked by blood feuds, town raids, and massacres (215).

Interestingly enough, despite the government's seeming success in establishing relations with the political elite and quelling the threat of insurgency, Russel also expresses fear and suspicion that lasts throughout her trip:

The entire male population of the place gathered about us, and we found them in very truth a murderous looking lot, armed to the teeth with barongs and krises and campilans, while none of us

had any visible means of self-protection. [. . .]  
The Governor [. . .] warned us to take no arms  
[. . .] for while money would have been no  
temptation to these people, they would not have  
hesitated long to kill one for a Krag or a Colt  
revolver. (236)

Despite the inroads made in forming alliances and enforcing American governance, Russel falls back on initial feelings of mistrust and possibly even contempt. I argue that the demarcation between the two groups was maintained in order to reaffirm the political and social hierarchy and preclude any challenges to this. According to Russel, the "truth" was that Moros were bandits who would kill indiscriminately for their prize (216).

#### Race, Class and Gender

During her first provincial trip to Dumaguete, part of Southern Philippines, Russel articulates her early impressions in the following passage:

Everyone was friendly and peaceably disposed, everyone seemed glad to see us, if smiles and hearty greetings carry weight, and there was apparently no race prejudice, no half-concealed doubt or mistrust of us. Yet in a few days thereafter that very road became unsafe for an unarmed American, while the people who had greeted

us, with such childlike confidence and delight were preparing a warmer reception for the Americans under the able leadership of a Cebu villain, who had incited them to insurrection by playing upon their so-called religious belief, this in many instances being merely fetishism of the worst kind. (42)

The duplicitous nature of the locals is a topic which she mentions regularly in her narrative. Once again, in spite of the warm reception manifested during such occasions as balls, suppers, dinners, cockfights and fiestas, caution was constantly exercised by the party, lest they be victimized by *insurrectos* and "anarchists." To a certain extent, then, despite the welcoming attitude and pleasantries, locals were perceived to be a deceitful and treacherous bunch that had to be kept at arm's length.

In her discussion about the residents of Mindanao, Russel makes mention of the social and political elite also known as *dattos* and *hadjis* (titles ascribed to the local chiefs). She devotes considerable attention to the etiquette demonstrated by said officials:

Each of the chiefs [. . .] were frankly curious over the American women. They discussed us freely to our very faces, and kept changing their positions to get a better view of us, staring with

amazement when the datto was brought up and introduced. How curious of the Americans not to know that a woman should be taken to a datto, not a datto to a woman. (156)

Russel articulates the reactions of the *dattos* to American officials' seeming impropriety. Adopting a humorous and even sarcastic tone, she succeeds at indirectly critiquing the power structure that is subverted and disrupted by those who do not subscribe to it.

In the course of the meeting, Russel complements leaders on their intelligence, influence over the community, "hospitable manner," and "courteous speech." She makes special mention of a certain Datto Mandi of Zamboanga, heir to the sultanate of Mindanao. Describing him as "a most delightful man, with an earnest, sensitive face and a manner indicative of such innate refinement," Russel commends him for his fight against insurgency and his compassion for the families soldiers leave behind (167-68). As she states, "Citizens of the world these men are, and statesmen, too, although their sphere is comparatively circumscribed" (169). This is probably one of the few instances in which Russel seemingly expresses respect for a local leader who is perceived as the closest embodiment of the educated and shrewd "statesman" and, more importantly, one who has proven himself to be a solid and trusted ally.

### Women in the South

In the course of her work, Russel writes about how American women became objects of curiosity and amusement for many of the Filipinos they came in contact with. Aside from herself, there was the quartermaster's wife and nine year-old daughter (whom she called "Half-a-Woman") in their (gender) group. According to her, during the sojourn to the Philippines, they were the least busiest group:

It was a very busy trip, [. . .] with the exception of the women who spent most of their time under the cool blue awning of the quarterdeck, where many a letter was written, and many a book read and discussed, though more often we accomplished little, preferring to lie back in our long steamer chairs and watch the wooded islands [. . .] drift slowly by and fade into the purple distance. (17)

When they eventually reach their destination, she tells of the mixture of awe and amazement inhabitants exhibited toward them:

We women were asked innumerable questions as to our respective ages, the extent of our incomes, our religious beliefs, and other inquiries of so personal a character as to be quite embarrassing. They seemed, though to be very genuine in their

admiration of us, and evinced great interest in our clothes. (39)

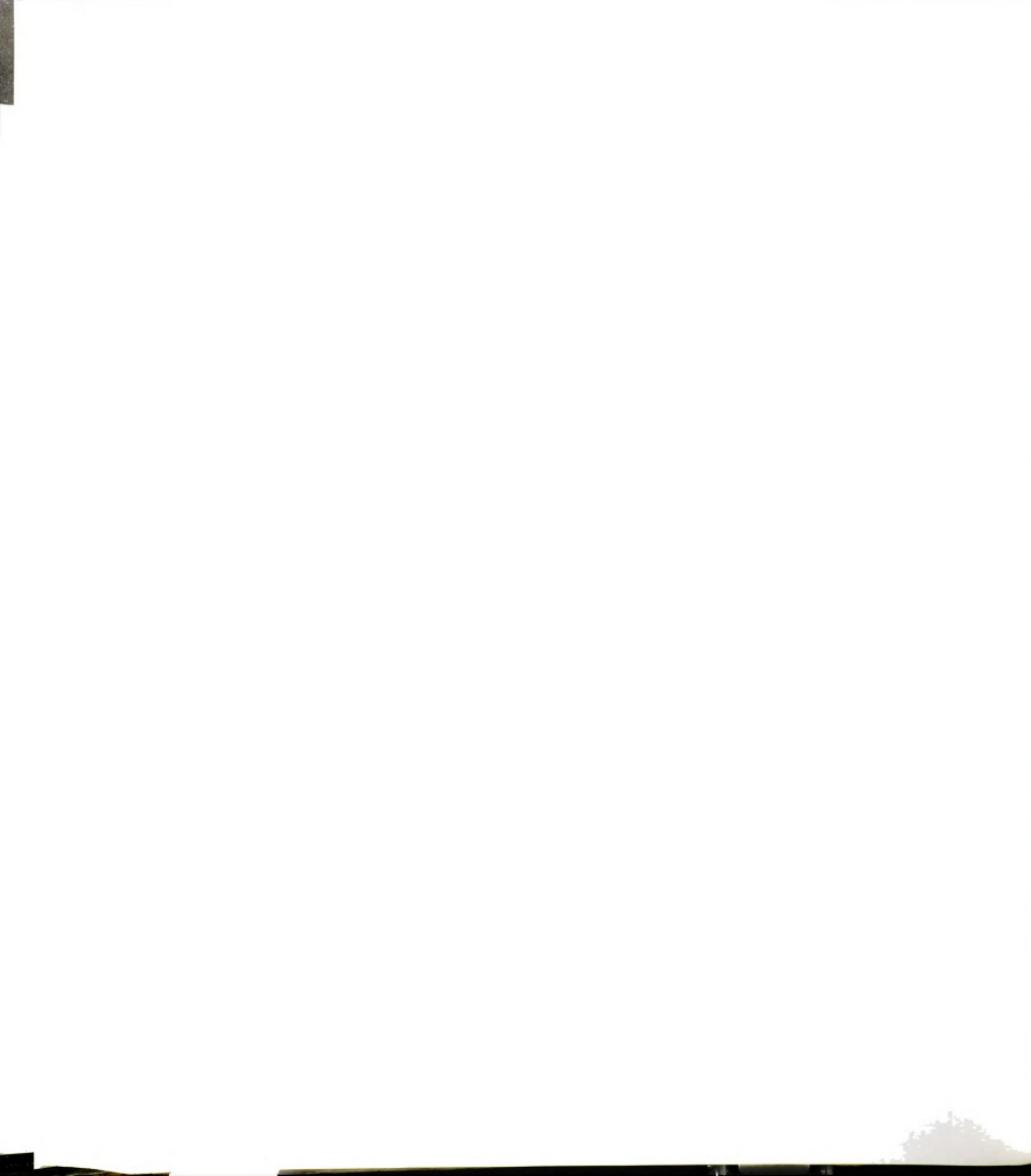
On one particular occasion, a maharajah was jokingly asked to place a price on the American ladies, and when it was her turn to be "appraised," Russel relates the following:

Without a moment's hesitation, the old sinner, to my chagrin and the uproarious delight of the whole party, appraised me at only eighty dollars, Mexican, and this despite the fact I had smiled my pleasantest, in the hope that he would rate me at least as high as the quartermaster's wife. (219)

Filipino women expressed the same kind of curiosity and interest in their "white sisters." During one particular instance, Russel describes the dynamics of the whole transaction:

They stared at us [. . .] with a deep and absorbing interest, the quartermaster's wife as usual, being the cynosure of all eyes, because of her exceptional height and slenderness, not to mention that astounding walking-skirt, which had apparently grown upon her, there being no visible means by which it could be put on and off. (185)

It is interesting to note how Russel perceives and reacts to the gaze of the colonized. There is a self-reflexivity and navel-gazing that transpires throughout the trip. In the



course of her various interactions, she finds herself affirming traditional Western standards of femininity.

She discusses the variety of women she comes across during the sojourn, privileging class among other factors in her observations. Correspondingly, American *mestizas* are depicted as "pretty girls" with "regular features" who wear European garb, are quite proud of their aristocratic lineage, and who express affinity toward America which they call their "home" (71-72). With regard to the women behind Mindanao officialdom, accounts varied, as she pictures them as aloof, proud, and pretentious. She portrays the sultan's mother, for instance, as a "veritable witch" who is "unwashed and unlovely," a characterization which goes in stark contrast to a depiction of the same woman by another American who had been living in Sulu in a Philadelphia paper. This particular article described the mother in fact, as "an agreeable, refined, and charming Oriental diplomat" with a personality that combines "a rare combination of Oriental elegance and modern grace" (190). Russel also makes mention of the *datu's* wife whom she portrays as generally "dispassionate" and reserved; a "shy little woman, with an unusually sweet voice and big, startled brown eyes, which gave her an indescribably pathetic look" (170). She describes another member of the same family in a similar fashion:

This princess of the blood always controlled herself just in time, and managed to look as indifferent as possible. Her dispassionate attitude launched me into wild tales of Farthest America, wherein thirty-storied buildings, elevated and underground railways, beautiful theatres and parks, cars which ran without horses or steam, and millions of inhabitants produced no impression whatsoever, my most improbable tale being received with a diffident condescension.

(172)

Russel seems to demonstrate here, the direct correlation between class standing and certain attitudes and behavior. In contrast to other people who had expressed wonder and fascination over their American party, women of the royal family were not as easily attentive nor impressed.

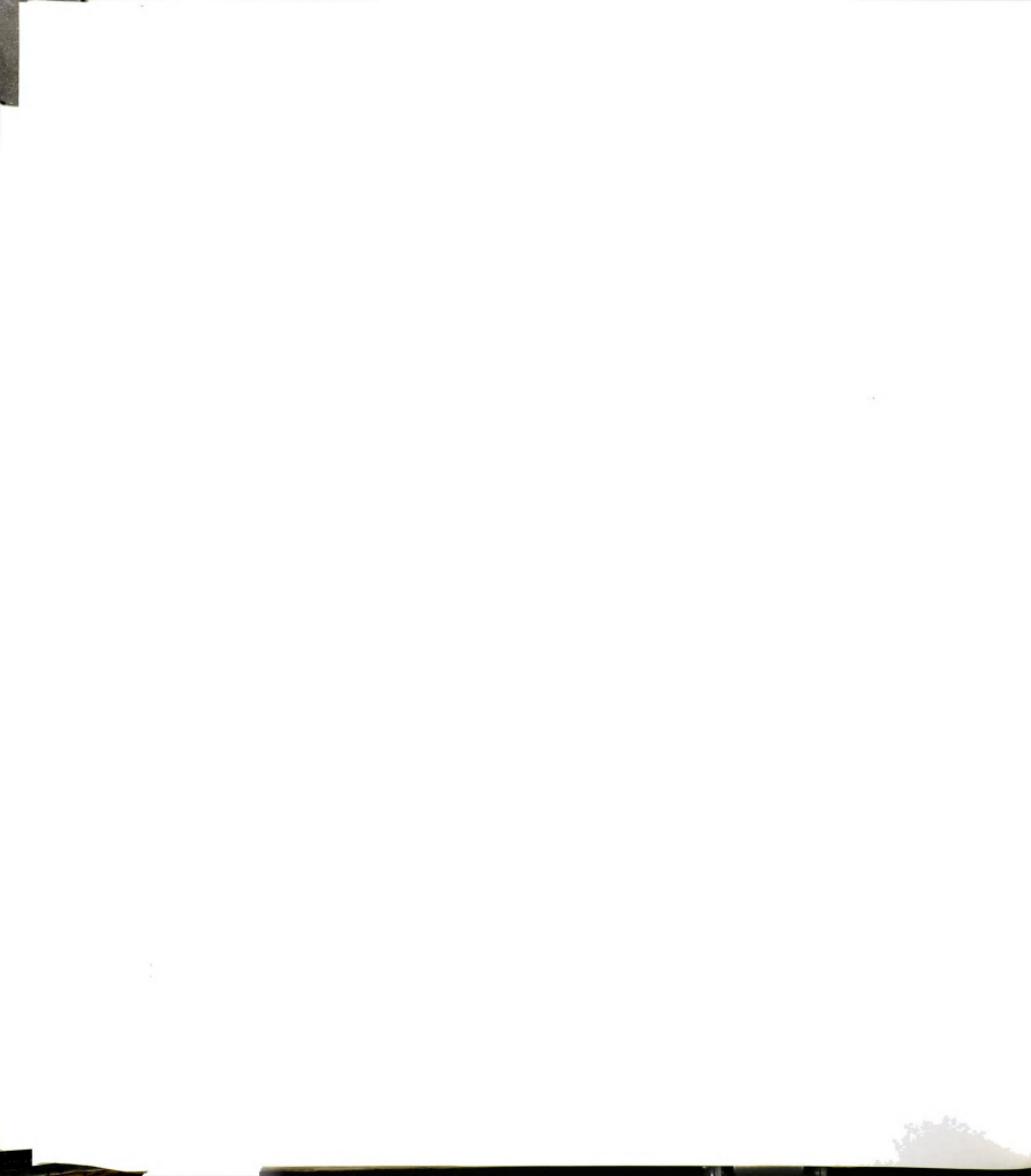
Russel's later depictions of other women from different regions of the country vary. The women of Misamis for one are represented as "children" who "laughed and giggled nervously, [. . .] gesticulated as they talked, [. . .] and patted imaginary stray hairs into place in their sleek black coiffures" (56). She mentions that those who could speak Spanish "talked clothes and babies and servants, or smiled politely at our mistakes in the language, laughing outright at their own futile efforts to speak English" (56). In terms

of appearance, Russel claims that Moro women were not as attractive as their male counterparts and in fact, failed to possess the "redeeming strength and symmetry which gave beauty to the masculine figure" (98).

She discusses women from Cagayan in a different light. While portraying them as "Amazons" with "martial proclivities," she also describes them as "more progressive," what with the way they wore their hats and rode their bicycles. The women of Bongao, who always wore their hair fringed and had their ears pierced, did not impress Russel much. "Altogether they are as unlike European women as one could well imagine, and I do not blame the Sultan for looking forward to white wives in the hereafter, though I hope the celestial harem won't have to blacken its teeth" (222)! Russel upholds Western standards of beauty in this particular instance as she predicts the eventual acceptance of these by Filipino men in the future.

At one point, she describes a slave girl whom she labels as the "Belle of Bongao":

We [. . .] said all manner of nice things about her, which she repaid with a bold stare from under those wonderful lashes, and a contemptuous manner which said as plainly as words that American women were not much to look at, what with their ugly clothes and still uglier faces. She was glad she



wasn't so large and clumsy, and that her teeth weren't white, nor her throat all screwed up in high bandages, and she smiled a little as she thought of her own attractions, for the Belle of Bongao had not learned she was a beauty for nought [. . .]. (223) .

Russel describes the very interesting and significant process of gazing and counter-gazing among these different women. Contrary to her expectations, certain women were not as easily awed by the presence and status of their Western counterparts. Despite the subordinate positions they both occupied within the patriarchal order, it was clear that this was not enough to generate any significant engagement nor feelings of affinity for the other. During their initial meeting, both parties of women seemed to judge each other on the basis of physical appearance, class status, and behavior.

During the last part of her journey, in Tampakan, Russel finally takes the initiative to approach the women who, while nervous at first, eventually become receptive and even loquacious. This is how she describes the interaction that takes place:

As women have a language of their own the world over, we understood each other quickly; and now friendly they were, and how delighted with my

clothes and all the little accessories. [. . .]  
Next they were amazed at my teeth, and pointed to  
their own blackened ones, and then to mine,  
pushing forward little girls under ten to show  
that only children should have white teeth, while  
I, despite my extreme age, still sported such  
evidences of youth. Was it possible I considered  
myself a child? Or was I younger than I looked?  
(238)

For the first time, Russel articulates her affinity with the local women. Although it took quite some time, her actions show how she went from being external observer to direct participant as she insinuated herself into the social circle of the other and attempted to establish the bases of communication and reciprocity between her and her colonized counterparts.

#### Leisure and Recreation

One area which Russel mentions every so often is that of leisure and amusement, which included dinners, parties, recreational activities, singing, dancing, and courtship. Aside from gathering a host of people together, each occasion paved the way for stronger familiarity and, possibly, a deeper understanding of people who did not ascribe to the same lifestyle.

Religion was a crucial determinant of identity, group interaction, and even diplomatic success. At one point in her narrative, Russel discusses how this was especially true in the case of Islam and its Muslim adherents:

Most of our success with [. . .] southern Moros may be traced to religious tolerance, and the fact that we interfere with them only in their disturbance of non-Mohammedan neighbors. Slave rings are a thing of the past, and leading dattos have been notified that any piratical or fanatical incursions into American territory will be punished swiftly and surely.

It [. . .] behooved us to respect their race prejudice, to be considerate of their religious idiosyncracies, and to dispense justice untempered with mercy, the latter virtue being considered a weakness in the eyes of our Mohammedan brothers, and as such to be taken advantage of. (147)

Russel shows that despite all the significant differences and prejudices that existed between them and their Muslim political counterparts, American administrators were willing to go far in upholding the rule of these leaders and maintaining a strong alliance.

She also makes mention of various beliefs and customs:

Human life is cheap among the Moros (in relation to their supposed execution of Americans for rifles—mine), and the inconvenience of that life standing between them and what they want is soon remedied by a barong, unless fear of punishment, prompt and pitiless, stares them in the face (216).

Being Mohammedans, they were very careful not to eat anything while on board ship for fear of unconsciously transgressing the Holy Law, even refusing chocolate candy because it might contain pork. They were shown ice, but took little interest in it, nor did they seem surprised at the cold storage rooms or the electric lighting. It is possible they thought Americans had attained the one really great thing in having white skins, after which all else followed as a matter of course. (75)

In addition to discussing pastimes such as cockfighting (along with its "feathered fury") and shopping for many kinds of curios (including embroidered turbans, sarongs, jabuls, and crises), she also focuses on social functions and ceremonies. Besides the cuisine and the crowd, Russel writes a great deal about performances featured at said functions:

We [. . .] could hardly be sure that what we had seen that evening was not, after all, a dream or a strange hypnotic memory - - the dancing Maharajah, the Pandita performing the marriage ceremony, the terrible sword dance, and the little snake-charmer fascinating her own plump hands! Was it possible such things had occurred in the twentieth century and on American soil? (233)

The seeming unreality ingrained in such performativity caused Russel to feel a stronger sense of dislocation and disorientation. Again, this corresponds with Spurr's concept of "insubstantialization":

It is precisely this minor self-dramatization, however, that has consequences for the portrayal of "Moslem countries," whose people are seen as mysterious, unpredictable, "out of focus."

[. . .] I have noted how the phenomenon of insubstantiality moves from the outer scene inward when the unreality of a given situation produces disorientation in the reader's mind. (155)

At one particular mock marriage ceremony, Russel also describes all the posturing and "attitudinizing" incorporated within dances performed by women, men, and children of different classes. In the midst of this,



American guests joined in, rendered their own brand of dancing, and elicited an unexpected response:

They were all astonished at the apparent lack of motion in American dancing and the fact that we got over the ground without hopping. Many of them asked officers stationed in the town if the women wore a special kind of shoe to balls, as they appeared to be standing still and yet moving at the same time, while one old man was heard explaining to his cronies that we wore little wheels attached to the soles of slippers [. . .] so that we did not have to move at all, the men doing all the dancing and merely pushing us back and forth on the floor. (70)

During this performance, it was the American contingent that was placed under scrutiny and criticized for a failure to live up to certain standards.

In a review of Russel's narrative published in the New York Times issue of November 2, 1907, the critic writes:

Mrs. Russel gives an entertaining description of the journey of the cable ship on which she was one of the 2 ½ women passengers, as it wound in and out among the islands, affording an ever beautiful panorama of tropic seas and wooded or mountainous shores and frequent opportunity to go ashore and

observe the native life. Many curious adventures befell and Mrs. Russel seems to have enjoyed them all immensely, while she writes about them with such vivacity that the reader enjoys them too. [. . .] And she sprinkles her sprightly narrative with much information, some of it intentional and some of it unconscious, about the native character and the nature and resources of the Islands.<sup>9</sup>

This excerpt essentially reflects how the narratives of this group of women travellers were received and consequently of their impact on the literature. Certainly there are noticeable differences between the two travellers' narratives. While George paints a homogeneous picture about the archipelago and the imposition of colonial rule, Russel provides more commentary and critique about colonialism and the people it affected. And, in fact, she also had access to American and Filipino officialdom and was an active participant in affecting relations between the two groups. But as sojourners who travelled for pleasure, they also produced narratives that are similar in a great number of ways. Both speak to an audience that read for leisure and possibly plan to travel in the future. Authors are not considered to be scholars nor experts; nor are the works given the same kind of authoritativeness given to texts

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<sup>9</sup> Review of A Woman's Journey through the Philippines on a Cable Ship that Linked Together the Strange Lands Seen En Route, Florence Kimball Russel, New York Times 2 November 1907: 702.

produced by male authors who supposedly use a more scientific and "objective" approach in writing about similar exploits. They also did not possess the status and regard accorded to wives who accompanied their administrator husbands around the same time period; neither did they play official roles. But despite this, I argue that they were in a position to acquire and provide as much, if not more, information about the subjects of their narratives. Both women seemed to have been more willing and able to face the unexpected and to immerse themselves in strange, unfamiliar, and even treacherous lands and people. Both focus on the richness of the land and its natural resources, and on its potential to be the site of a flourishing capitalist economy and even a tourist's "paradise." They also present a populace that is seemingly happy, contented, and eager to accept the new establishment. Although they do not explicitly support the imperial agenda, they justify its existence and continuity.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE MISSIONARY, NURSE AND TEACHER: WOMEN IN THE PROFESSIONS

In this chapter, I discuss the travel texts written by women writers Indira Ghose calls the "philanthropic traveller" (Ghose, Women Travellers 107). I intend to analyze accounts of women who were directly involved in the work of empire through social reform, particularly in the fields of missionary work, health and education. In contrast to the wives and tourists discussed in the previous chapters, women in the professions had a clear sense of the roles they were going to play in the promotion and perpetuation of imperial goals related to Westernization and modernization. As they came into direct contact and engagement with the local people, they also produced narratives that strongly justified these very objectives.

### OLD GLORY AND THE GOSPEL IN THE PHILIPPINES

This book will enable the American public to see the Philippine Islands through the eyes of a cultured, Christian American lady, who has been in the very heart of the beginnings of Protestantism in the Philippine Islands, and who because of her profession, has seen the inner home life of the Filipino people.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alice Byram Condict, Old Glory and the Gospel in the Philippines (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1902) 6.

In her account tracing the establishment of the Methodist church in the Philippine archipelago during the early twentieth century, Dr. Alice Byram Condict provides the perspective of one who sees the project of imperialism framed within the overall goals of a Christian crusade and a medical mission. Even before she arrived in the Philippines, Condict, who was said to have been born of "Puritan blood," had had extensive experiences in both missionary and medical work in America and India (5). Her practice in the poorer regions of Hyderabad were said to have provided a good perspective of her mission in the Philippines, which she had originally come to for rest and "recuperation" (5). Shortly after her arrival in Manila, she felt "impelled" to write about the "intricate problems" of the Filipinos (5-6). In his prefatory note, Methodist Episcopal Bishop Frank W. Warne commends Condict especially for the information included in the last chapter which "marks a movement in the comity of missions in advance of anything ever before known on any mission field" (6).

Consequently, Old Glory and the Philippines includes such chapters as "The Rule of Rome," "Religious Liberty," and "The Religious Movement of the Federal Party of the Philippine Islands," which discuss how Protestantism was superimposed over what she claims were the archaic and abusive friar-led Spanish Catholic institution. As the



English had done in the Americas, American Protestants denounced Catholics. In tracing the development of this process, Condict takes the reader through a sequence of events showing significant weakening of the political influence of the Catholic church and the growth and development of a branch of the Protestant faith.

### The March of Faith

How wondrous the march of events that quickly follow the coming of Old Glory to the East. [. . .] The divinely ordained forces are bound to be victorious. [. . .] The Pacific Ocean is now well under way towards fulfilling its destiny to bring to these ancient lands the Christianity, civilization and commerce that will put warm blood into their veins. The United States has acquired more than a coaling station, for which practical use someone at first suggested the Philippine Islands were destined. How grand to be living in such a time, and have ever so small a part in the great train of providences now being carried out.

(Condict 17)

Condict (re)locates "Old Glory" within an "East" that has been designated as the next major site of religious conversion. According to her, the Catholic church, represented mainly by the Spanish friars, played a role in

the economic and moral breakdown of Philippine society. It was this constituency that abused their power through such pernicious acts as the imposition and collection of atrocious fees for various kinds of religious favors, the conditional administration of the sacraments, and as she implies, even sexual abuse. And because they possessed a great deal of influence in the state as well, they reinforced colonialism as they fostered "docility and resignation" to the Spanish rulers (Agoncillo 104).

According to Conduct, the coming of the United States heralded a new era which put a virtual end to this "slavery":

The hour for the deliverance of these people has come. Even this old walled city of Manila can no longer resist the edict of the Almighty. It is no longer necessary to shut the gates and pull up the draw-bridges at dark. This is the first hour of the dawn of a day when we hope to have a Bible institute and training school for Filipinos, that they may read their Bibles, know their God, and rejoice in religious liberty. (47)

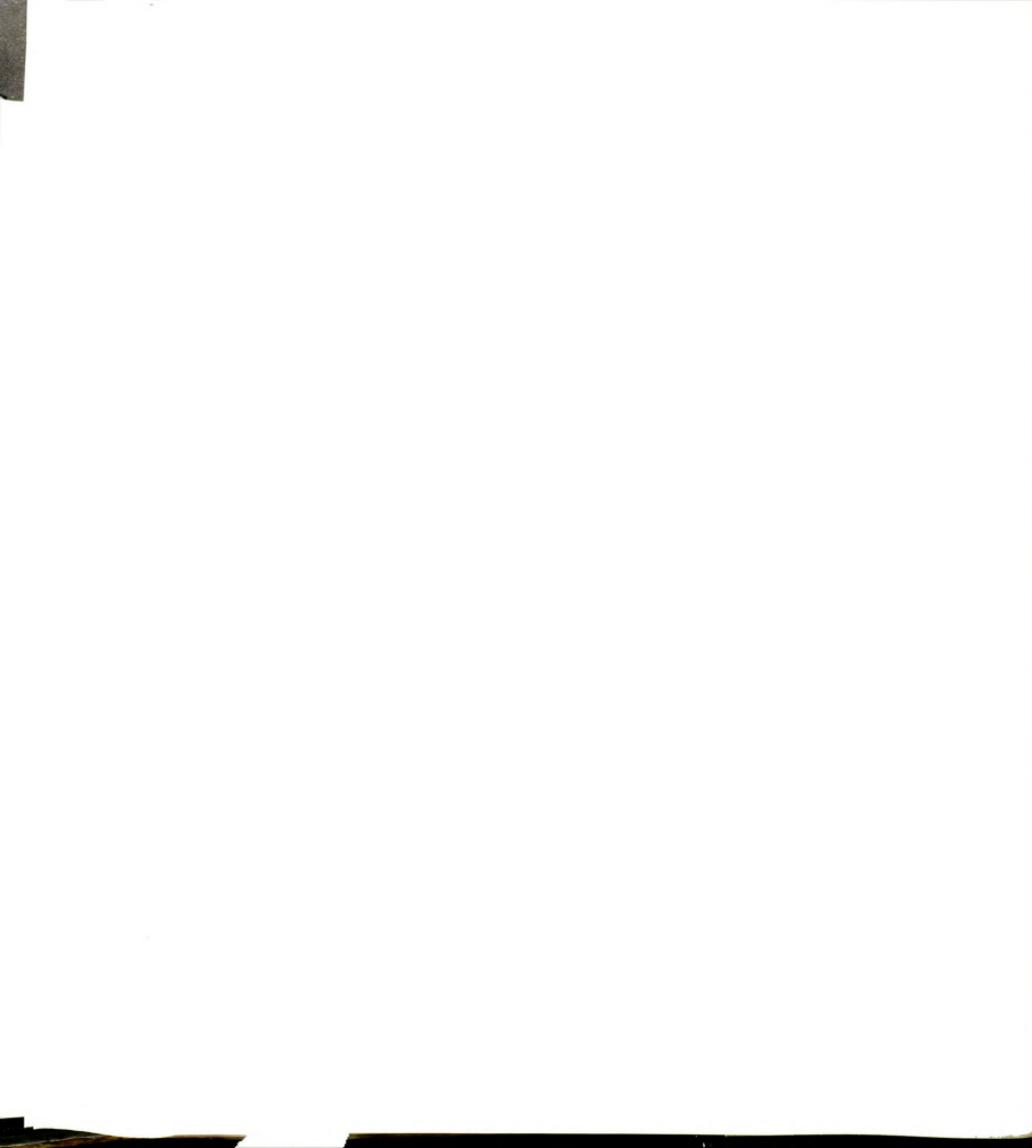
Conduct essentially makes a declaration of the "religious crusade" in the archipelago as she also outlines the agenda that will be used in seeing this realized.

According to Condict, an integral part of the campaign for "religious liberty" included the development of commerce through the American capitalist machinery. She also recognized that religious objectives could only be fully realized alongside an economic order that worked toward the divestment of property from the Catholic church, the establishment of schools, and the erection of high-quality hospitals.

But as Condict later relates, the first objective was not realized so easily. American administrators failed to effectively sequester the friar lands, which dealt a serious blow, in turn, to the foundations of the colonial system:

Because our Government refused to drive out the Friars they believed us to be, like Spain, hand and glove with the Romish Church. They concluded that, in accepting American sovereignty, they were simply taking again the yoke of Rome. So they stood firm in resisting such authority, which, they believed, would but repeat the weary story of the past hundreds of years. (65)

It is because she positions herself both as a professional medical practitioner and a missionary that Condict articulates interests that combine the religious, political and social objectives of imperialism. According to her, in order for all three goals to be fully realized, both church



and state have to ensure that the colonized is made to accept both the Christian doctrine and the principles of American republicanism. Chapter ten, in fact, mentions how major policy-makers such as William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt were instrumental in shaping a Philippine policy grounded on the "development" (as opposed to subjugation) of a law-abiding, industrious, educated and (eventually) self-governing people (124).

Condict also affirms the importance of the development of a public school system in realizing imperial objectives. She argues that teachers within such institutions "are a more convincing proposition to the Filipino than any proclamation or assurance that American sovereignty is the best thing that ever came to their islands. They were never so cared for in the past" (118). In the following entry, she shows just how crucial the institution is to realizing full assimilation:

The children are most enthusiastic over "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "The Red, White and Blue." They are bound to outdo us old Americans in their enthusiasm on having become American citizens. That is only a matter of a few years. *If our Government lives up to the Constitution our flag represents, these people, so long abused, will*

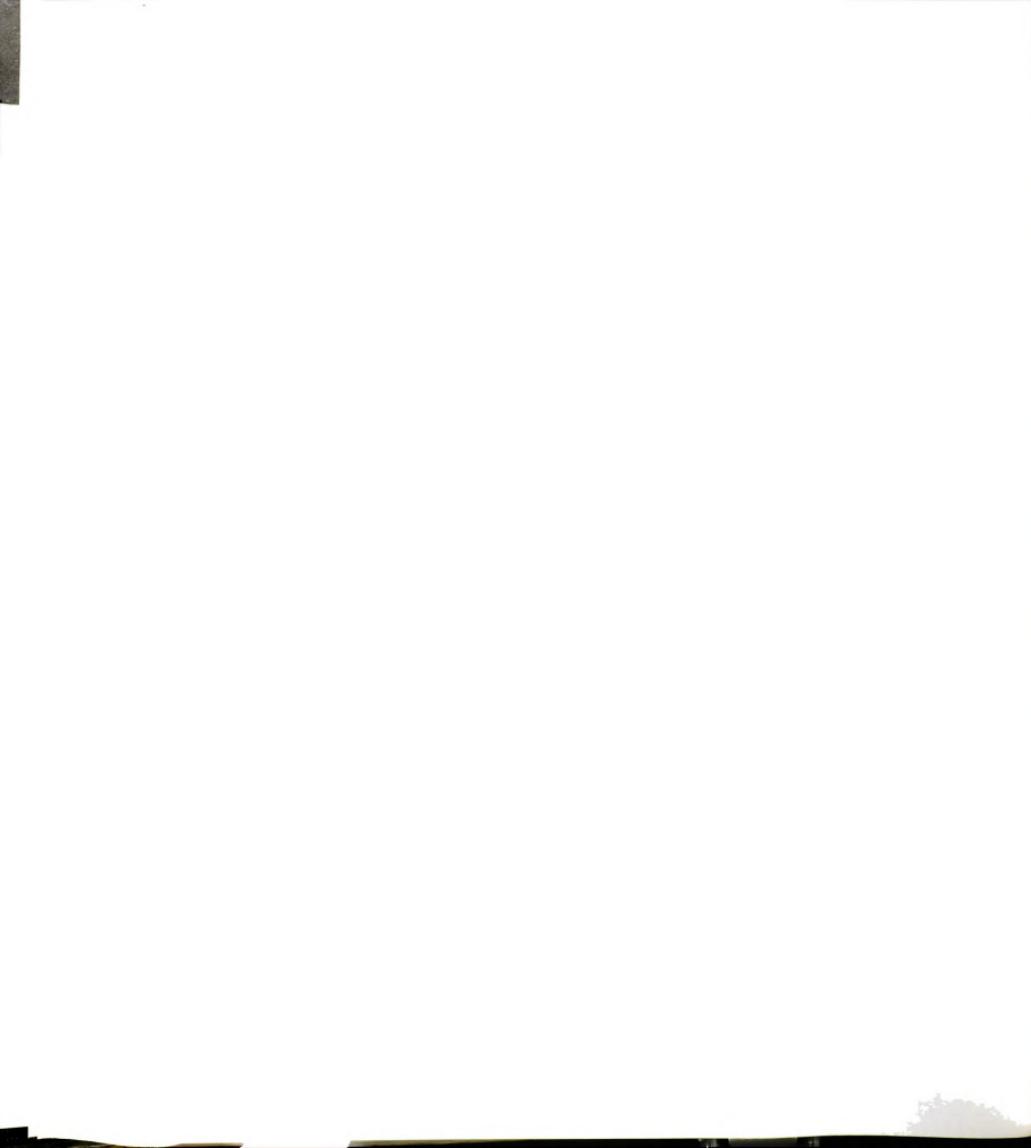
bask in the sunshine of secure and just  
government. (71)

Condict asserts the clear connection between education and citizenship. Public schools were poised to mold good citizens out of Filipinos. And this could only be fully realized if the government first lived up to the ideals it advocated. Anything short of this would result in an unstable and corrupt institution, which would basically be a repetition of the same kind of abuse perpetuated by the Spanish colonizers.

But Condict does set certain boundaries for the "civilizing" agenda. As she states in the following passage:

Let us breathe a loving prayer, that with the incoming hurry and bustle of American civilization, these simple people may not lose the charm of their sequestered life. Oh! that our coming to these islands may only mean lasting and real benefits; and not useless luxuries, or a higher civilization with less comfort and more anxiety. (102)

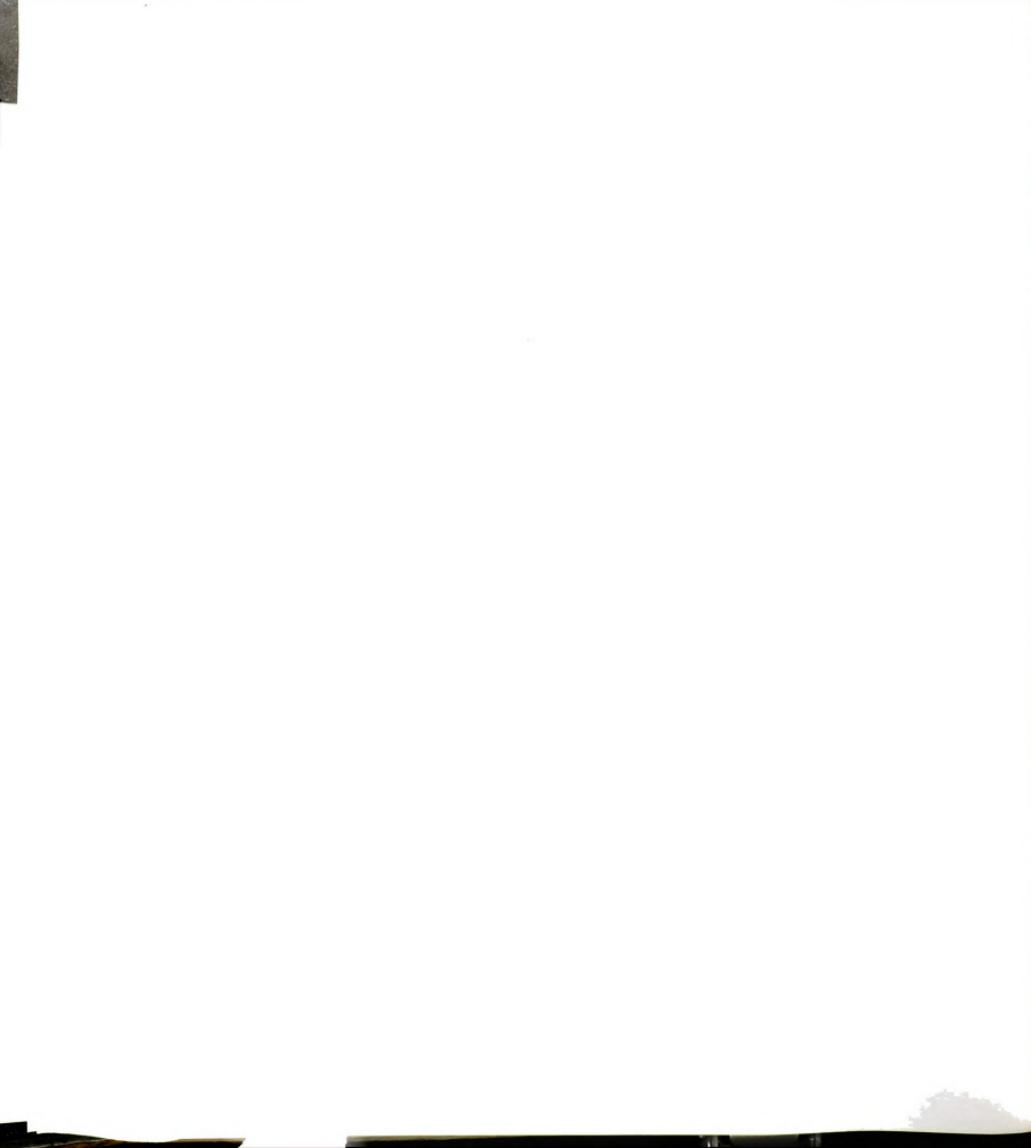
For Condict, Westernization and Christianization must never pave the way for any disruption in the colonial hierarchy. Lest the Filipinos acquire enough resources and power to subvert the dominant polity, they had to be quickly held back to other "lasting and real benefits" (102).



Another aspect she discusses relates to the issue of land ownership:

Thus the land is practically divided between immense trusts, and in consequence the large land owners hold the balance of power. It is a most difficult problem our American authorities have to settle—to give the people of the soil their lands and still respect those who have unlawfully had them in possession, in many cases, over a hundred years. (54)

American administrators recognized that the redistribution of this resource to the landless majority could not be enforced unless they continued to maintain relations with and support the Filipino elite, including those within the Catholic church hierarchy. As Condict surmises in the course of her work, the collaboration between American administrators and this particular social class was a precondition to the successful application of American colonial policy. She could identify important contradictions in American aims and the practical reality. She understood the oppressive tendencies of the landowners and the Catholic church hierarchy but also accepted the need to negotiate with them.



### Other Visits

In the course of her journey, Condict was able to see both the urban and provincial landscape of the islands. Like other travellers, she takes her readers on a tour of the land. During the first part of her sojourn, she witnesses the "cosmpolitan character" of Manila manifested in the presence of Spanish families, mestizos, German and English merchants, Indian Parsee and Chinese peddlers. For her, the constituency brought to mind numerous old cities of Europe wherein several small towns were consolidated.

As she travelled through the provinces, she paid close attention to the "rustic" and lush environment that for her, manifested the "sense of God's tender care." Included in her narrative were gardens of oranges, pomegranates, cocoa trees, bananas, mangoes, cocconut palms, mangoes, breadfruit, custard apples, and plantations of sugar, tobacco, corn, and rice (94). Condict automatically draws a connection between this display of abundance and fecundity with the character and lifestyle of the locals:

There are large plantations of sugar cane, and rice is provided them from their own paddies; with cocoa and coffee in their own gardens; with mangoes, bananas and oranges to be had for the plucking. Is it any wonder that these people have



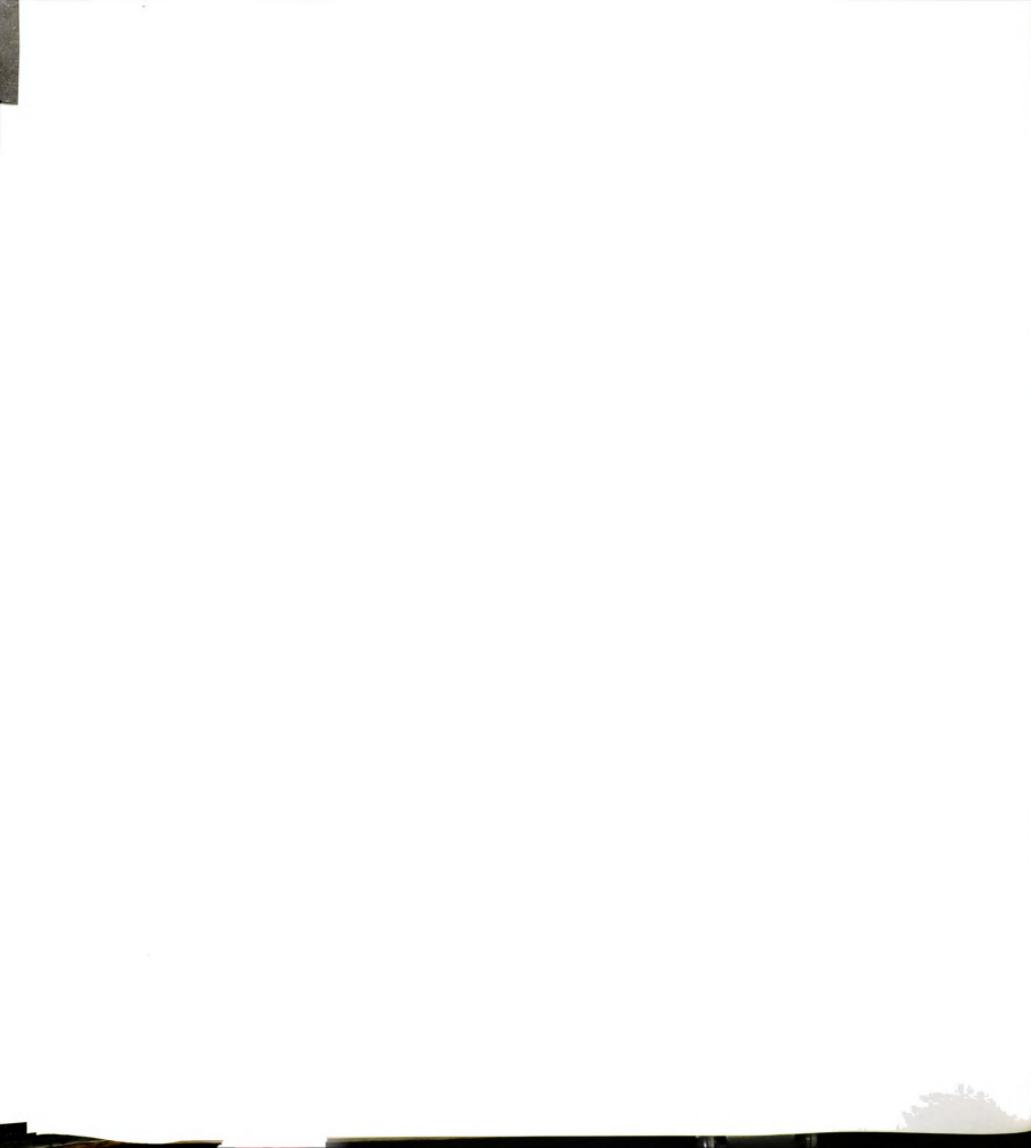
the name of being a very easy, happy-go-lucky race?

With abundance of tobacco, men and women alike smoke all day. Their clothing is made in their own homes; therefore they never need go shopping for food or clothes. (102)

In fact, Cheryl McEwan, in her work on white women travelers in West Africa, asserts that missionaries "established more personal relationships and were able to respond to west Africans on a more intimate, subjective level" (94). I argue that this assertion does not hold true in the case of Condict during the initial stages of her travels. It is apparent in the above passages that she objectifies the people she encounters and makes no significant attempts to gain their confidence nor their goodwill.

Throughout the course of her stay however, she makes a more concerted effort to change this situation. Communication was limited, but there were more opportunities for Condict to interact and engage with the people who formed the basis of her account. During one occasion, she describes the "wonderful experience" in which she is able to witness how people gather in various public spaces as a community:

It was a wonderful experience, learning to understand the people, holding large meetings in

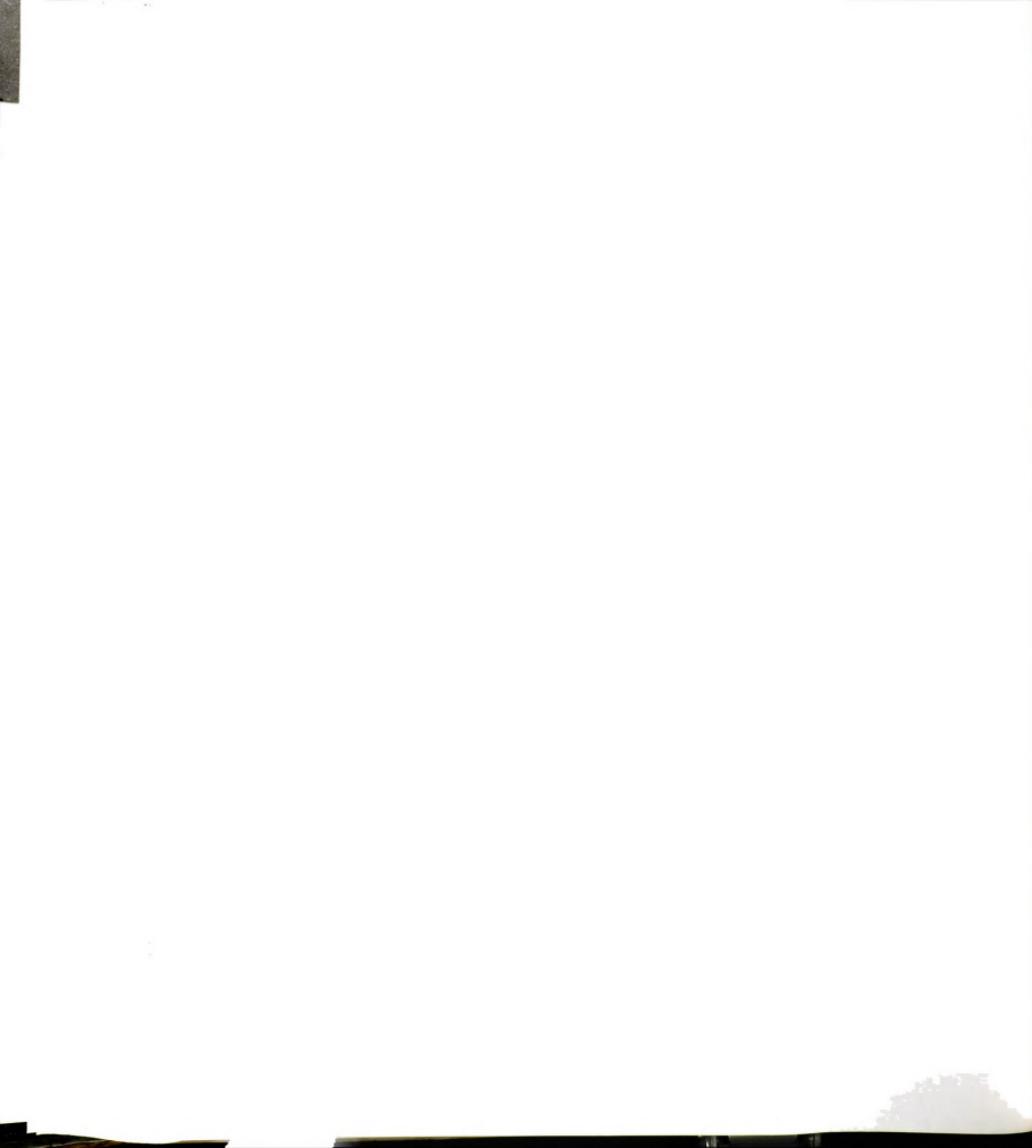


cockpits, theaters of rude bamboo construction, or in town halls, buildings of better and more modern style. More frequently in the afternoon the largest gatherings were in the open air, while in the evenings we had smaller meetings in their quaint "nipa shacks." (63)

Condict eventually attends meetings as she fulfills concrete tasks such as taking care of the sick and eventually proselytizing to participants. At one particular meeting, she provides a vivid description of the dynamics characterizing one particular session:

The place was soon filled with all sorts of Filipino people; they were so eager to get a close view of us American ladies. [. . .] We distributed hymns on leaflets, each one receiving a copy, which they afterwards took to their homes. [. . .] They are passionately fond of music, and they sang with a will, and seemed to read easily. [. . .] The interest was intense, not one moving from his place; it was a time of seed-sowing, and many broke into the discourse to ask questions, or to supply a Spanish word if our speakers halted for an instant. (67)

During this particular encounter, she attempts to demonstrate how people manifested their openness, interest



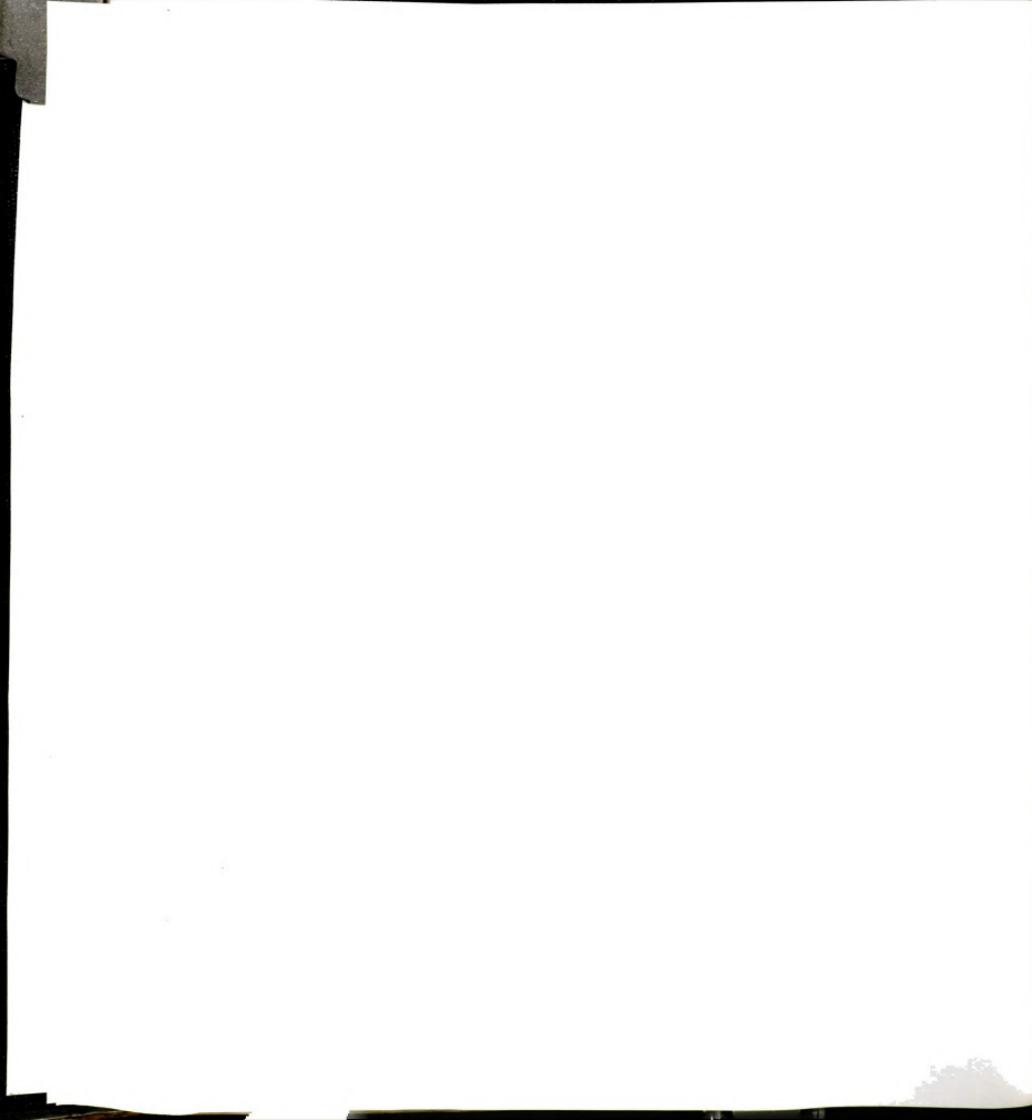
and support of the missionary endeavor. Condict had actually expressed surprise in previous parts of the account at the seeming "cheerfulness" of the locals, given the fact that Spanish authorities had still been able to exert some influence:

What an enormous amount of faith it must take for these Filipinos to be as cheerful as they are in accepting American rule, after the stories with which the Spanish Priests have been filling their ears of the terrible way you Americans treated the American Indians. [. . .] For the Priests assured the Filipinos that a like fate awaited them, and why not die bravely fighting such a foe, for surely extermination would soon follow if they gave up to such a power. (84)

Condict reveals her optimism in the Filipino people's capacity to assimilate and to finally resist the power wielded over them by the Catholic church. The text provides a good source of information for future missions. She shows how, despite the influence wielded by the Catholic church, there is hope for religious transformation.

#### Group Classification

When Condict proceeds to give a breakdown of the different Filipino groups, she notes how the diversity ranges



from the highly intelligent Filipino of the better type, who is a man of refinement and education, speaking at least two European languages [. . .] to the lowest order, the aborigine, or Negrito, who knows only his native tongue, and lives in the mountains with no better home than many of the lower animals. (103)

The primary criteria she uses is based their capability to communicate and their capacity for permanent settlement and urban living.

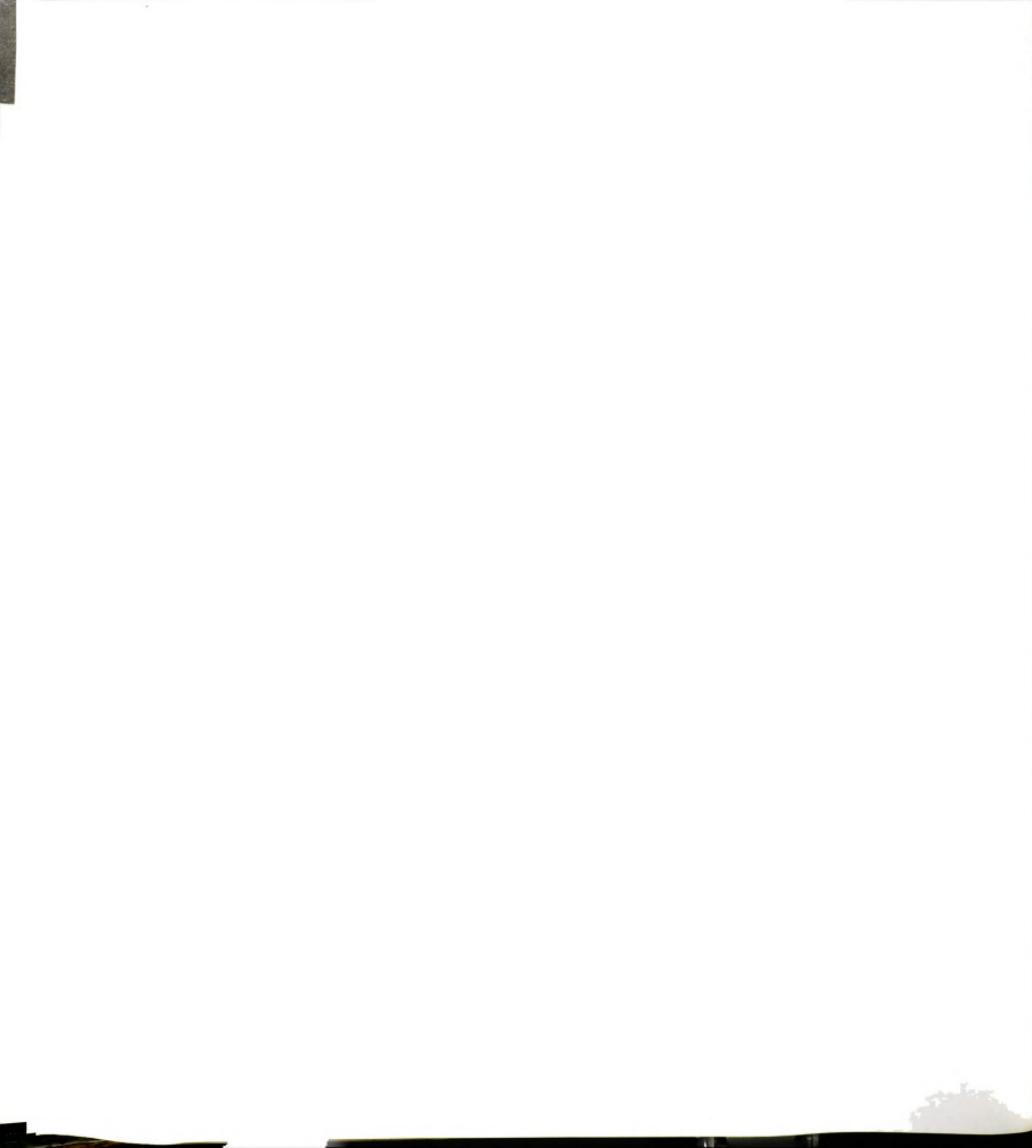
In her discussion, Condict focuses on both Northern and Southern regional groups. Tribes living in the Northernmost part of the Islands are broken down into four main groups, namely the Gaddanes, Igorrotes, Elongotes, and Negritos. While she highlights the importance of warfare in the political and social fabric of the Gaddanes, she also describes the elaborate rituals for the dead commemorated by the Igorrotes. The Elongotes are depicted to be similar to the Igorrotes, although the practice of dog-eating becomes, for her, a defining trait of their living. There is actually more of a discussion on the "lower order" Negritos who lead nomadic lives grounded on an animistic type of worship, an effective style of weaponry, and a system of slavery. As she states: "Of course under 'Old Glory' the Negrito slave will receive his freedom! And when he understands the

Gospel he will wake to a new being, for 'The entrance of Thy word giveth light!'" (104) Condict depicts these Northern tribes as a peripheral, primitive, and barbaric collective which can only receive "emancipation" and "civilization" through the American system of colonization.

In her discussion on the southern part of the archipelago, Condict concentrates on the "Mohammedan Musselmen." Said to inhabit the islands of Mindanao and Sulu, this group of Sanskrit-using Mohammedan followers, according to her, are "cruel" and "do not aspire to education" (107). According to her, "they are in appearance not unlike the Mohammedans of British India, and use the Arabic language in religious rites and books. The women dress like Indian Mohammedans in bright red and green, with a profusion of jewelry" (108). In addition to this, she also makes mention of the group's economic potential:

The warm seas in the region of the Islands are rich in 'Mother of Pearl,' and the beautiful white 'pearl of great price.' The Sultan claims all pearls beyond a certain size, so the larger and more elegant pearls are his booty from the pearl-divers. The smaller pearls are sold in Manila markets for a moderate sum. (108)

It is interesting to compare this depiction with the previous discussion of the Northern tribes. While Condict



reaffirms the need for sending missionaries and Bibles to the Southern region as much as to the North, she also recognizes the religious and economic power wielded by the South. The Muslims were not an isolated group that posed no relevance in the American imperial framework. In fact, in one part she states: "Let us remember that these Mors, so little removed from barbarians, are now our children. Easily pleased with trifles, let us beware how we trifle with them" (109). Muslims were deemed to be power-wielders in their own right and as Condict implies, had to be treated as such.

She ends with the following postscript:

With better sanitation and medical skill the Filipino people will rapidly increase in numbers. With advanced education they will surprise the world with their material progress, even as much as the Japanese have done. With characteristic, warm-hearted enthusiasm, the prosperous Filipino will never disappoint us in his want of appreciative gratitude. God grant that we may be true to President Roosevelt's forecast of their future. "We are not trying to subjugate a people; we are trying to develop them, and make them a law-abiding, industrious and educated people; with God's help we hope a truly Christian and self-governing people." (124)

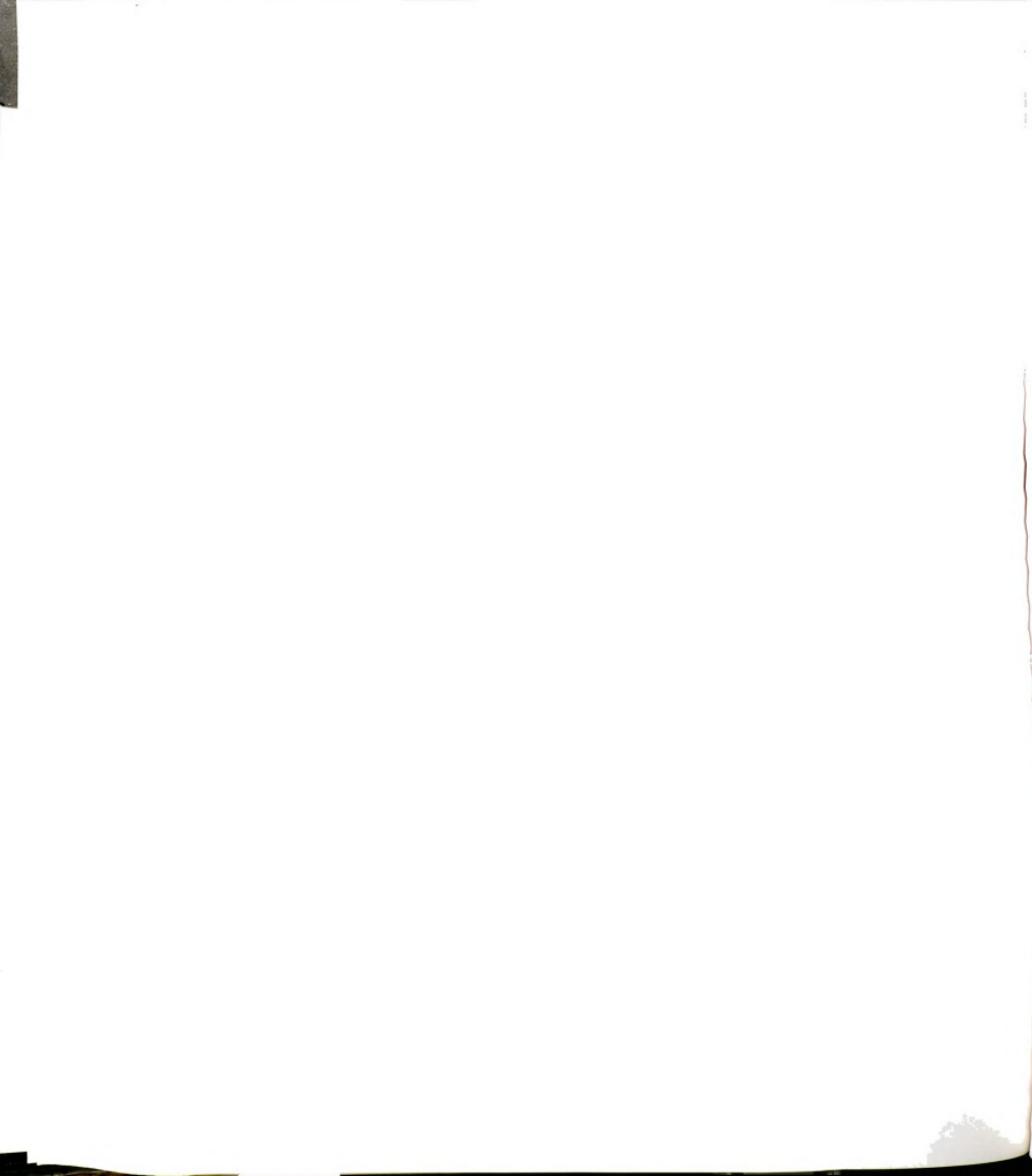
For Condict, the mission of Christianity could only triumph through the infusion and reproduction of Western technology and knowledge through the American state apparatus. Again she reaffirms how the crucial interconnectedness of all these aspects.

### **AN OHIO WOMAN IN THE PHILIPPINES**

#### Iloilo and Jaro

Emily Bronson Conger worked as a nurse for the American army in Central Philippines right after the end of Philippine-American war in 1901. She had embarked on the journey with the hope of "finding something useful to do" for her son, Lieutenant A.L. Conger, who was at that time leading a detachment of the Gordon Scouts, a detachment composed of volunteers from the Eighteenth U.S. Infantry (160). She also expressed her willingness to accept, if it was practicable and if she was physically able, the appointment of nurse from the Secretary of War, General Russell A. Alger. When she first landed in Manila, Conger and her party eventually proceeded to their assigned station in Jaro, Iloilo, in the Visayas. After a journey marked by a successful avoidance of what was perceived to be less than palatable cuisine, she finally cast her first gaze at the islands:

As the sun declined, I sat watching the islands.  
We were passing by what is known as the inner

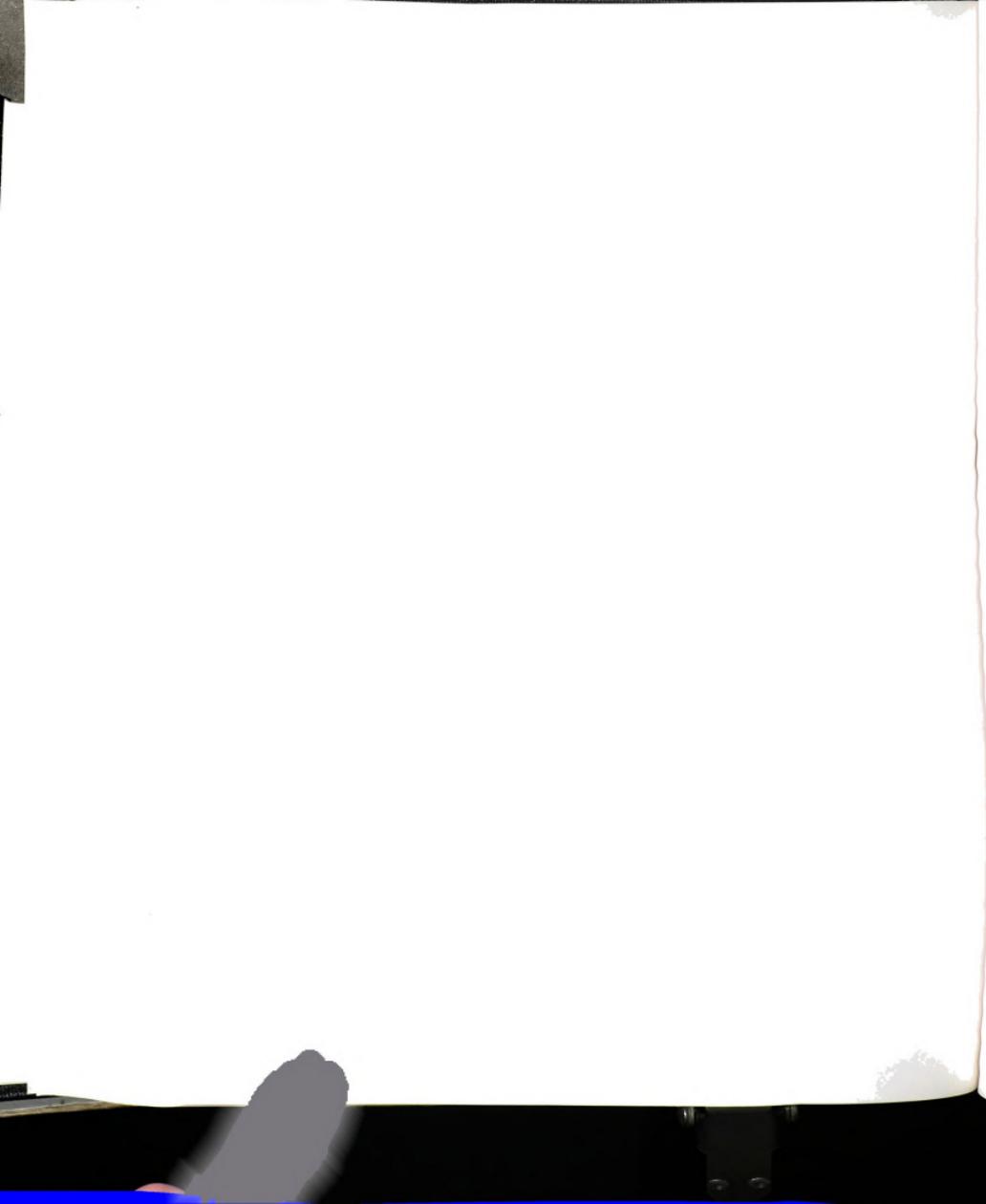


course. They lay fair and fragrant as so many  
Edens afloat upon a body of water as beautiful as  
any that mortal eyes have ever seen. Huge palms  
rose high I the air, their long feathery leaves  
swaying softly in the golden light. Darkness fell  
like a curtain; but the waters now gleamed like  
nether heavens with their own stars of  
phosphorescent light. (57)

Being the "second city in size of the Philippines," Iloilo  
was the venue for large-scale trade involving steamers,  
warehouses containing exports and imports, caravan trains,  
and immeasurable amounts of sugar, hemp and tobacco (57).  
Formerly a hotbed of insurrection, Iloilo still exhibited  
the vestiges and remains of "devastation and waste" from the  
war (58). And despite the presence of American forces,  
from the moment she arrived, Conger constantly felt restless  
and anxious. This is reflected in the following passages  
which mark various stages of her journey:

I soon realized that the war was still on, for  
every day and night, the rattle of musketry told  
that somewhere there was trouble. (58)

We were so frequently threatened that we stood  
ready every moment to move on. Shots during the  
night are not, as a rule, conducive to sleep, and  
I did not like the sound of the balls as they



struck the house. I had my plans laid to get behind the stone wall at the rear of the passage and lie on the floor. (61)

My first evening in Jaro was one of great fear. We were told by a priest that we were to be attacked and burned out. (64)

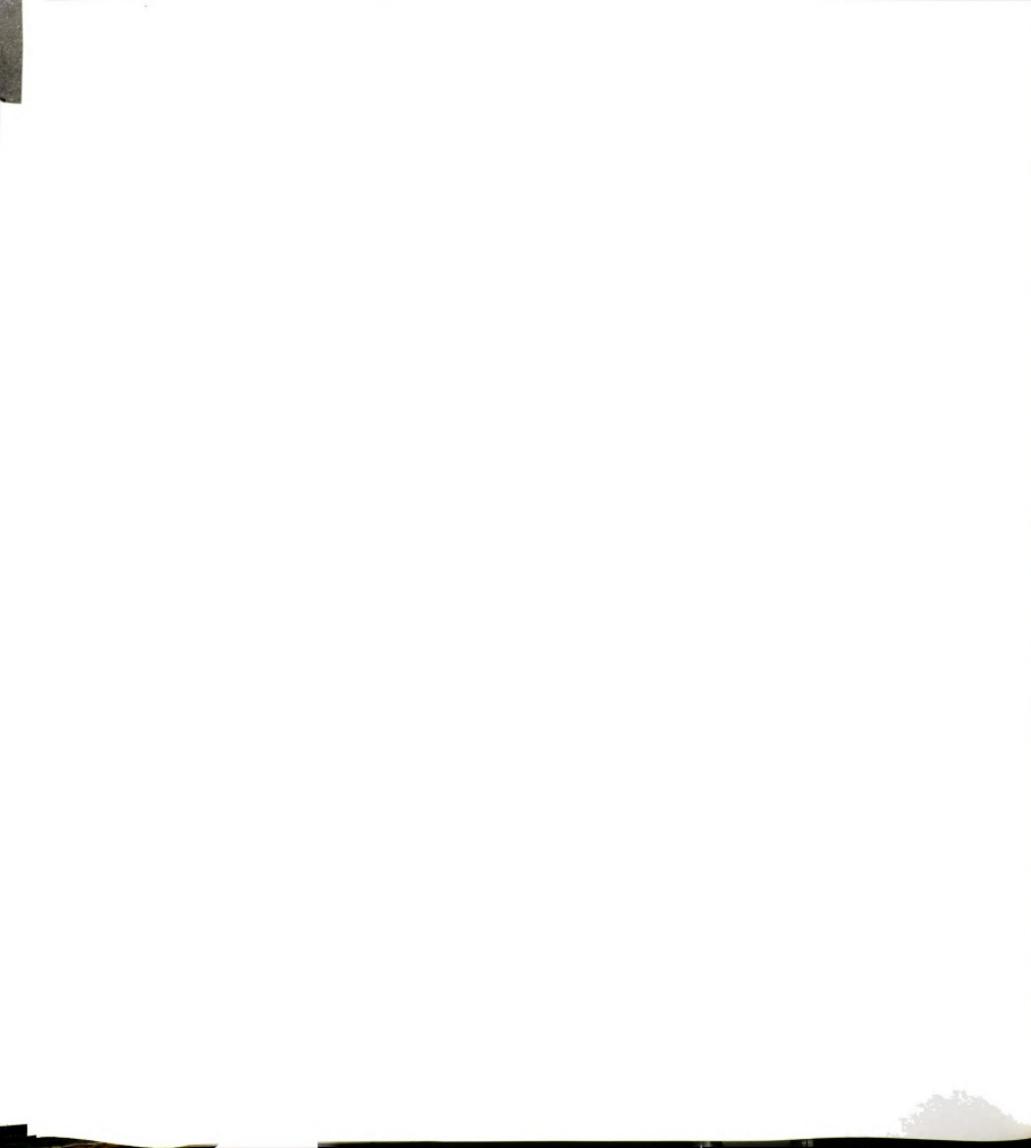
In her discussion of such aspects as houses, furniture, schools, currency, and pestilence, Conger constantly expresses her fears and apprehensions of the unstable situation. Fully aware that this stage of colonial rule was a time of transition and political realignment, she tries to instill a degree of normalcy to the existing situation by fusing the public and private worlds she became part of. She also responds by taking on tasks she felt would contribute to establishing the system of order being enforced by American authorities. The following passage shows how she negotiated her positioning within the colonial setting:

To open the large doors it was necessary to pull the latch by a cord that came up through the floor to one of the inner rooms. I used to occupy this room at night and it was my office and my pleasure to pull the bobbin and let the latch fly up when the scouting troop would come in later at night. Captain Gordon said that he never found me napping, that I was always ready to greet them as

soon as their horses turned the corner two squares away. (62)

Because the unstable situation limited their movement and their "venturesome" tendencies, Conger and the two other women she was with were forced to stay put in their new home. She gives vivid observations about the surrounding "rude dwellings" that housed families who "do not use a single article that we consider essential to housekeeping" (59). She also mentions how traders were bringing them many "beautiful things," foremost of which were "lovely" and "surprisingly beautiful" fabrics like jusa (made from jusi fiber), piña (from pineapple fiber), cinemi (a fusion of two), and sada (silk) (99-100). In addition, she makes mention of other observations such as the reliable wireless telegraphy with signals generated by kites, the schools which, with their "deafening, rasping noise," approximated "pandemonium let loose," and currency in the form of Mexican dollars which, because of their weight, necessitated the use of "(a) good sized garden shovel on one side and a big canvas bag on the other" in conducting bank transactions (61).

In the latter part of the narrative, she concentrates on the structure and layout of their house. This was one of the "better houses" which had a lower part built of stone and the upper level made of boards (62). The eighty foot

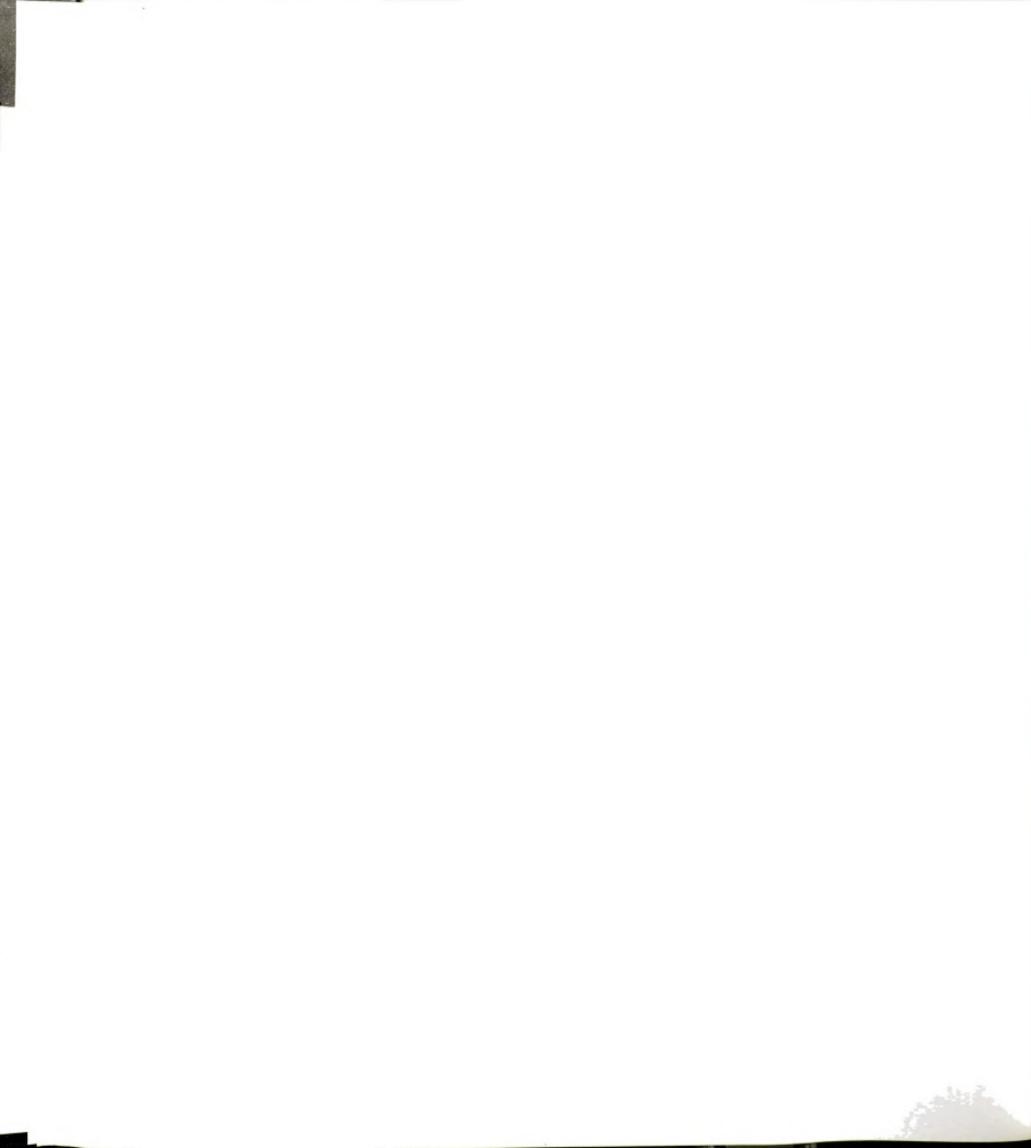


square dwelling had pillars which were decorated with orchids, large and heavy doors which virtually kept intruders out, and rooms used for "domestic purposes," including food and goods storage (62).

She makes mention of the "uninvited guests" who came in the form of little creatures which one way or another, were able to make their presence felt (64). The first of these was the "immense" lizard which while giving out a "fearful noise" became most useful in getting rid of numerous bugs that infested the islands (64). There were also the ants, "miserable pests" which lay claim to everything including the beds and tables. Finally there were the rats who managed to be regular "visitors":

Never before had I known what rats were. [. . .] I used to lay in a supply of bricks, anything to throw at them when they would congregate in my room and have a pitched battle. They seemed to stand in awe of United States officers. A soldier said one night, glancing about, "Why, I thought the rats moved out all of your furniture." They would often carry things up to the zinc roof of our quarters, drop them, and then take after with rush and clatter, the snake in full chase. (65)

This focus on the home, in fact, reflects how Conger attempted to achieve some sense of mastery amidst her new



surroundings. As Rosemary George indicates in her article entitled "Homes in the Empire, Empires in the Home":

There was an assumption that the successful running of the empire required the womanly skills of household management. Most importantly [. . .] imperial occupation [. . .] allowed for the prescription of the domestic, as the most fulfilling arena in which a modern female subject could operate. [. . .] (T)he colonies provided a contemporary situation in which housework and home management were valuable national contributions and celebrated as such [. . .]. (97)

In comparison to wives who had accompanied their administrator husbands, women in the professions such as Conger, whose roles were more pronounced in the public sector, also found themselves asserting the same kind of dominance and mastery within their more immediate private domains.

#### Race Encounters

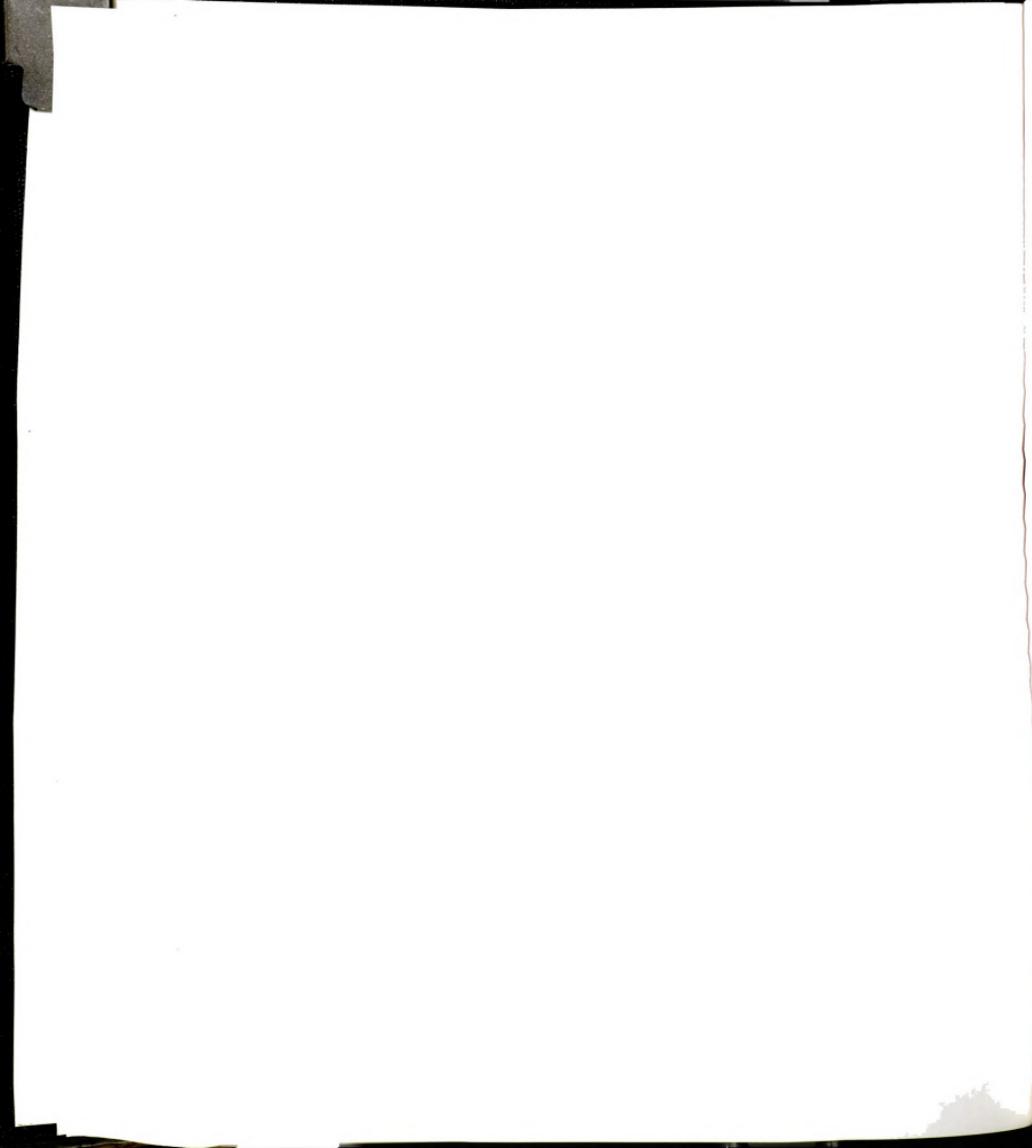
When people started filing in after the insurrection threat had passed, Conger writes about her first observations of the populace and their way of living as demonstrated by their customs, attire, food, and religious rituals which provoked "intense and varied interest" (65).

I noticed, especially, how little the men and women went about together, riding or walking, or to church. Neither do they sit together, or rather should say "squat," for even in the fine churches, the women squatted in the center aisles, while the men were ranged in side aisles. (65)

Early on, Conger is able to identify gendered public spaces as she implies the nature of the existing social hierarchy and the modes of conduct and behavior that defined it.

In fact, a whole chapter is devoted to the physical appearance of "the native," the local elite, servants, and everyday rituals of "natives" who make up the Iloilo landscape. It becomes interesting to see how this particular medical practitioner tries to set a standard physique for Filipinos and establish a connection between physical traits and particular ways of living:

The natives are, as a rule, small, with a yellowish brown skin; noses not large, lips not thick, but teeth very poor. Many of them have cleft palate or harelip, straight hair very black, and heads rather flattened on top. I examined many skulls and found the occiput and first cervical ankylosed. It occurred to me it might be on account of the burdens they carry upon their heads in order to leave their arms free to carry a



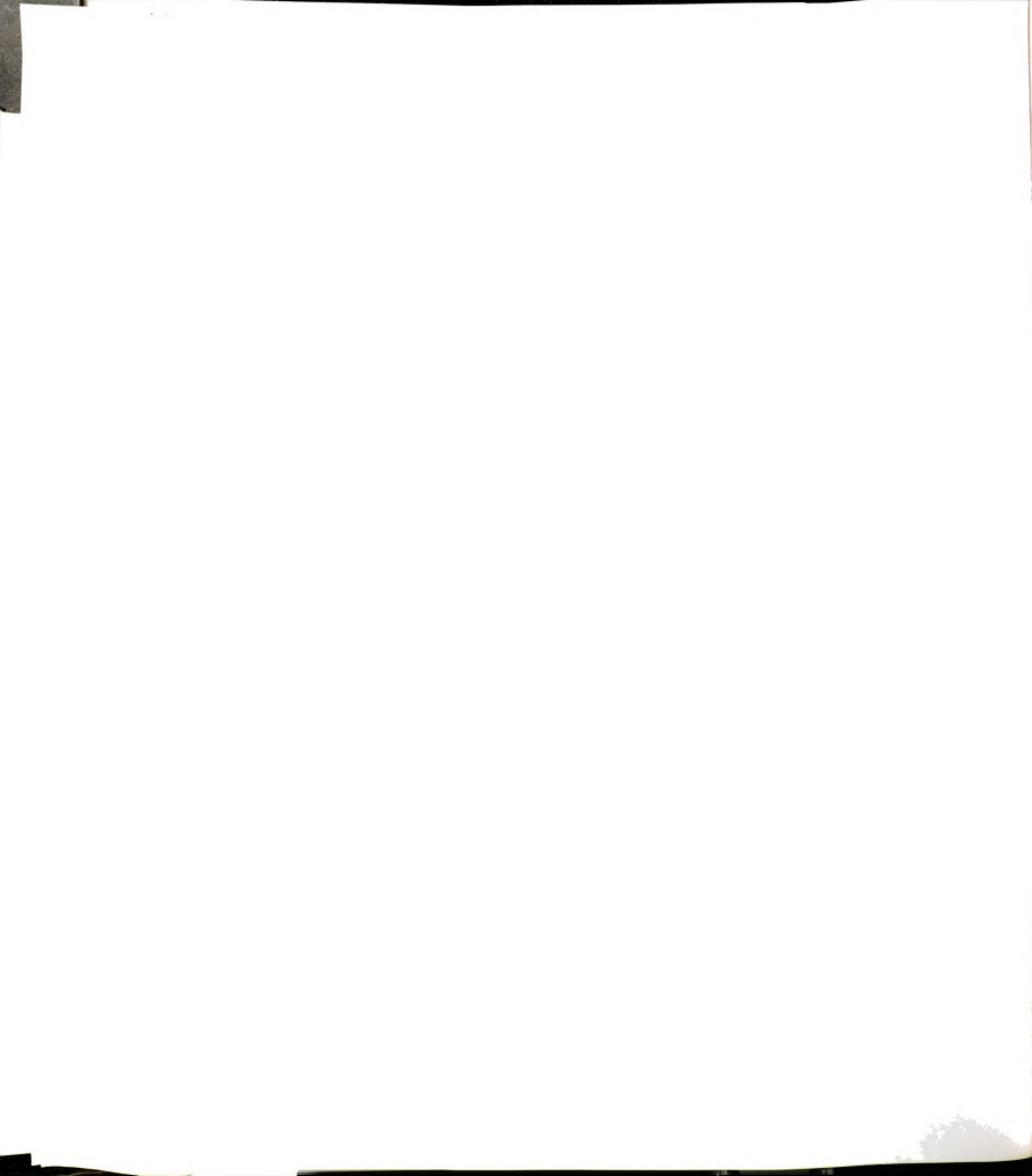
child on the hips, to tuck in a skirt, or care for the cigars. (67)

Interestingly, it appears that although Conger purports to use objectivity and science in her discussion, her assumptions fall far short of being scientifically logical and sound.

### Social Hierarchy

Conger focuses, to a large extent, on the upper class and on the dynamics underlying the hierarchical relationship between employers and their domestic help. For Conger, one had to be wary of the Filipino elite, for while they professed loyalty to the American administration, they were in truth continuing to aid and abet the Filipino insurrection forces. As this passage indicates:

It was evident that many of the better class of natives in spite of oath and fair face, were directing and maintaining the murderous bands of banditti. Often letters were found that the Filipino generals had written to their women friends in Jaro, Iloilo and Molo, to sell their jewels, to sell all they could to buy guns, ammunition, and food, and later other letters were captured full of the thanks of the Filipino army for these gifts. While the good Filipinos were taking the oath of allegiance with the uplifted



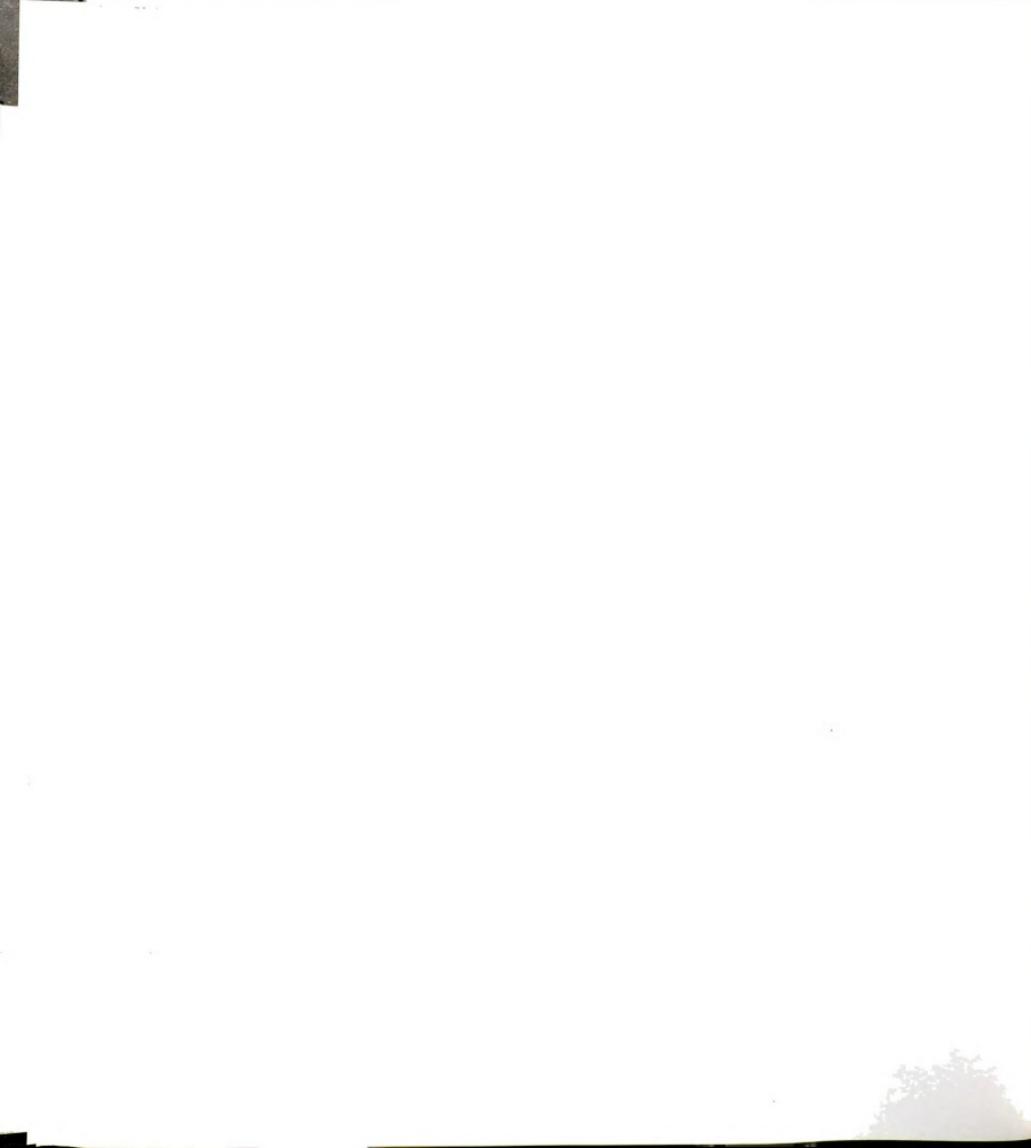
right hand, the left was much busier sending supplies to the insurrectos. (117)

In addition to being considered hypocrites, the same upper class is also characterized as cruel, especially to those under their immediate employ. She described the abusive treatment wherein the "so-called ladies" of the house were usually identified as the culprits:

None of the so-called better class work at anything. They all carry huge bundles of keys at their side, and in most stentorian voice (sic) call out many times during the day "machacha" to a servant, who is to perform some very small service which her mistress could easily have done herself without any effort. [. . .] These so-called ladies beat their servants. I often interfered by pounding with a stick on the side of my window to attract their attention; that was all that was necessary. They were ashamed to have me see them.

(73)

On another occasion she describes a situation involving a servant who, after running a significant distance with a heavy load on his back, had finally caught up with his master on horseback and was subject to such abuse that American soldiers had to intervene:

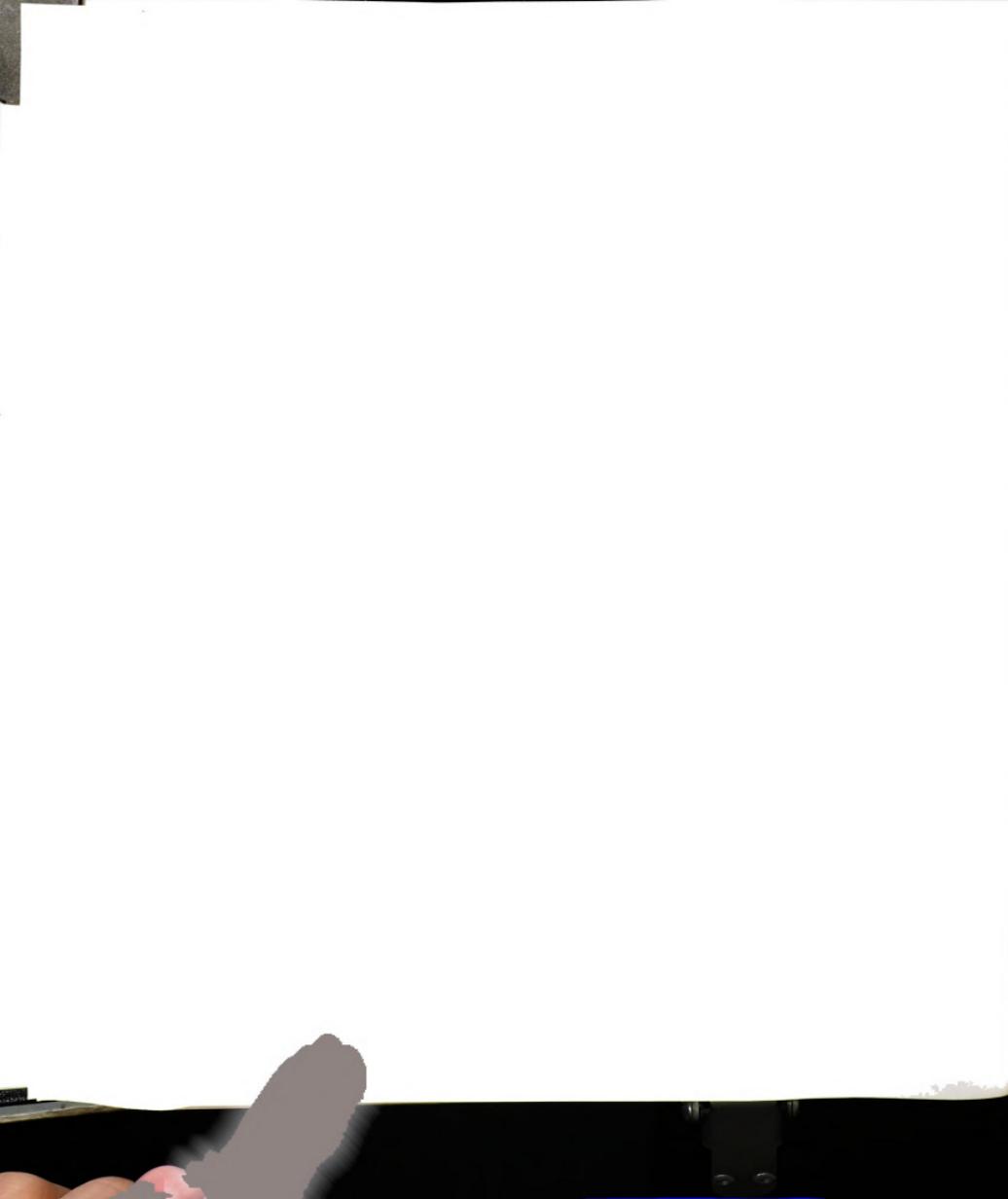


The master calmly got off his horse, motioned to the servant to drop his load, and proceeded to beat the man unmercifully with a cane made out of fish tail, a sword-like, cruel, barbed affair, about four feet long. The poor servant never uttered a cry. As soon as possible the officers interfered and stopped the torture. So bloody and faint was the poor victim that they gave him a horse to ride. The master was angry, declared he would not have his authority questioned and left the party. (118)

Although she perceived them to be hypocritical, brutal, and oppressive, Conger consequently admits that the upper class was a group that American administrators needed to co-opt their political and economic influence into the imperial order if they were to realize their objectives significantly.

Within American homes, Conger also discusses a common problem posed by "native" servants within their employ. Many of these were found to be unabashed thieves. Recounting her experience with her first domestic, Conger depicts how deceitful and conniving such help could be:

The first native, Anastasio Alingas, whom we employed proved to be the very worst we could have found. He not only stole from us right before my



eyes, but right before the eyes of our large household. He took the captain's pistol, holster, and ammunition. We could not have been more than five or ten feet from him at the time, for it was the rule to have our fire-arms handy. [. . .] He used to come with tears streaming down his face and say that some man had stolen market money intrusted (sic) to him. He plundered the store-room [. . .]. He had pretended to be eager to learn, and had been so tractable that we were greatly disappointed to have him turn out such a bad boy. We found this true of every man we tried, and most strongly true of the ones who pretended to be the best. (72-73)

Filipino employees are also depicted as lazy workers who had to be constantly under the employer's supervision if they were to remain driven to fulfill the task at hand.

According to Conger,

The natives so disliked to work that nearly every one who employed men kept for them a gaming table and the inevitable fighting cocks; as long as they can earn a little money to gamble that is all they care for; houses, lands and families are not considered. (98)

They also expected to be paid a certain amount for their services, lest they plot some form of vengeance. For Conger, "they have no idea of justice or honor. What is true of business is true of every act of theirs, as far as I know" (76). She shows how servants who were members of "secret societies" could even become perpetrators of executions (77). This, in fact, convinced the author that the people "place little value upon life; they seem to think death is but the gate to great happiness, no matter what its manner may be" (77). Like the wives of officials, Conger uses her limited experiences with the domestic help in forming grand assumptions about the entire populace.

#### Habits and Rituals

The rest of the section delves into various rituals Conger observes to be quite prevalent within the homes of many of the "common natives." With regard to mealtimes, the people are depicted as having none. Besides having no set time for gathering, "even the best of them" eat with their hands as they squat on the floor. Morning rituals and personal hygiene are seemingly more systematized:

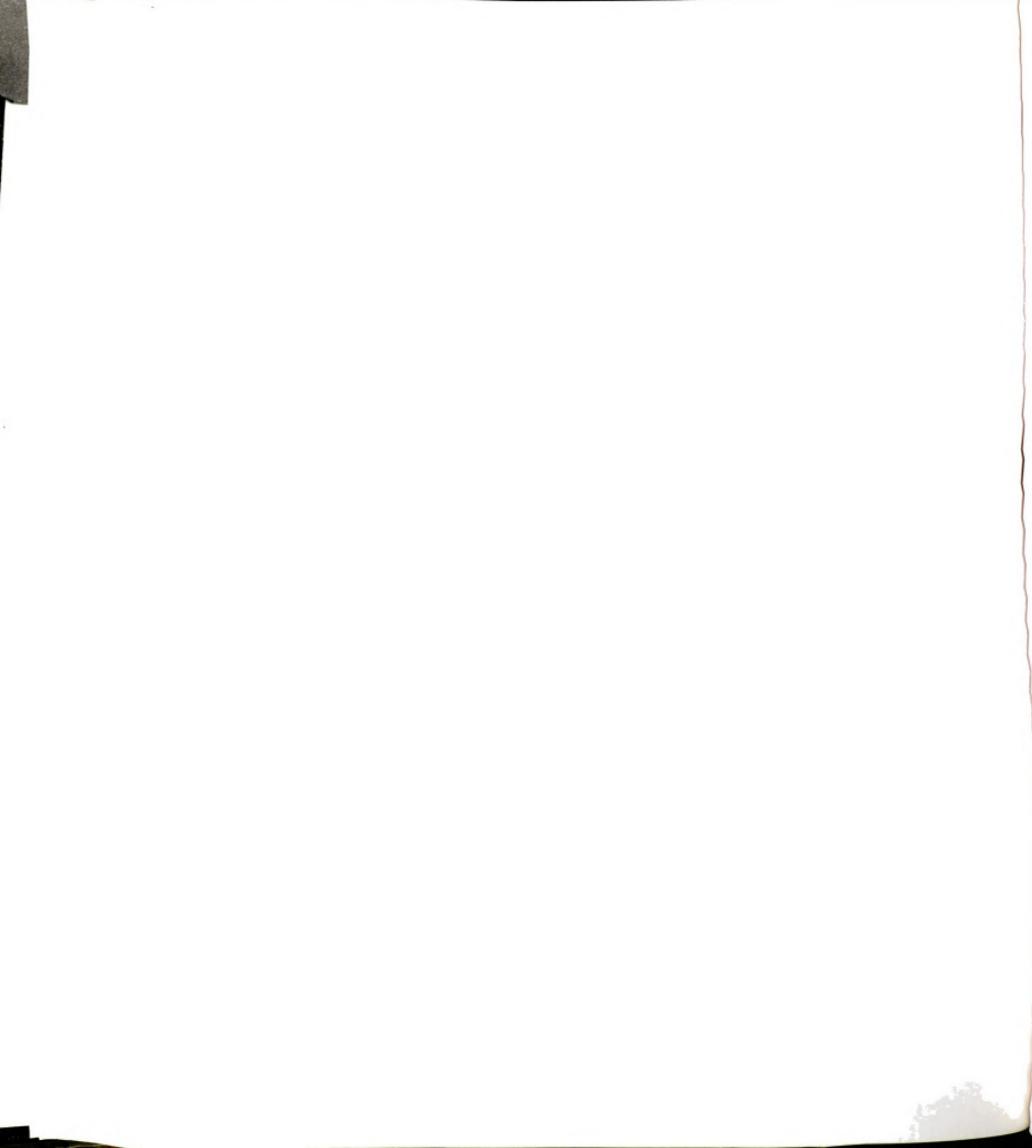
As soon as there is the slightest streak of dawn, the natives begin to work and clatter and chatter. No time is lost bathing or dressing. They [. . .] rise and go to work next day without change of clothing. It never occurs to them to wash their

hands except when they go to the well. [. . .]  
While at the well they will pour water from a  
cocoanut shell held above the head and let it run  
down over the body, never using soap or towels.  
They rub their bodies sometimes with a stone. It  
does not matter which way you turn you see  
hundreds of natives at their toilet. (70)

The descriptions above correspond to a large degree to the imperial rhetoric of "debasement" which directly correlates individual weaknesses with bigger political issues. Thus, social problems associated with health and sanitation were connected to such aspects as "individual filth, indolence, and sexual promiscuity" which in turn lead to the formation of serious implications about civilization and self-government (Spurr 76).

#### Family Migration

Families, which according to Conger, usually had anywhere from ten to twenty children, constantly migrated many times in the course of a single year, travelling, according to Conger's account, as many as thirty or forty miles a day. This occurrence may have had direct impact on the dynamics that went on in the said group. In fact, she writes about the welfare and well-being of children mattered very little to parents. As she indicates, "They do not seem to make any great ado if one or more die. Such little bits

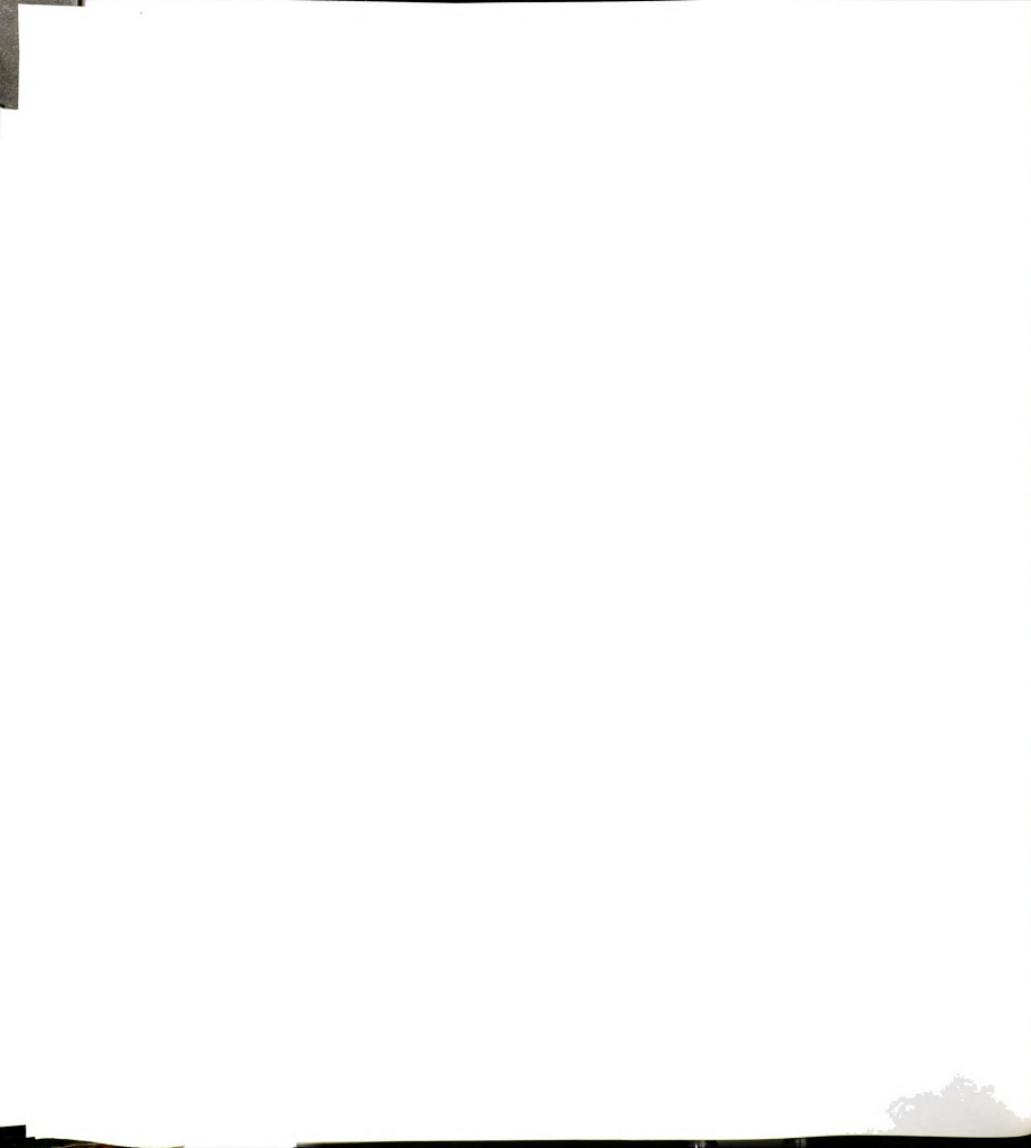


of humanity, such wasted corpses; it hardly seems that the shrunken form could ever have breathed, it looks so little and pinched and starved" (70).

### The Domestic Life

For Conger, there were four major aspects that defined the "Filipino domestic life": religion, Filipino-American collaboration, and the commemoration of death. In relation to the first aspect, she writes about how beneficial Protestantism would be, especially for the lower classes who received very little, if any, support for their "miserable" state from the Catholic church. Like Condict, she is invested in the Christianization of the people.

As a race they are solemn even in their looks, and no wonder, such is their degradation, misery and despair. They have so little sympathy and care for each other, so little comfort, and so neglected and hopeless, so sunken beneath the so-called better class that when a little mission gospel was started one could hardly refrain from tears to see the joy that they had in accepting the free gospel. [. . .] They were outcasts from society and too poor to pay the tithes that were imposed upon them by the priests in their various parishes. (94)

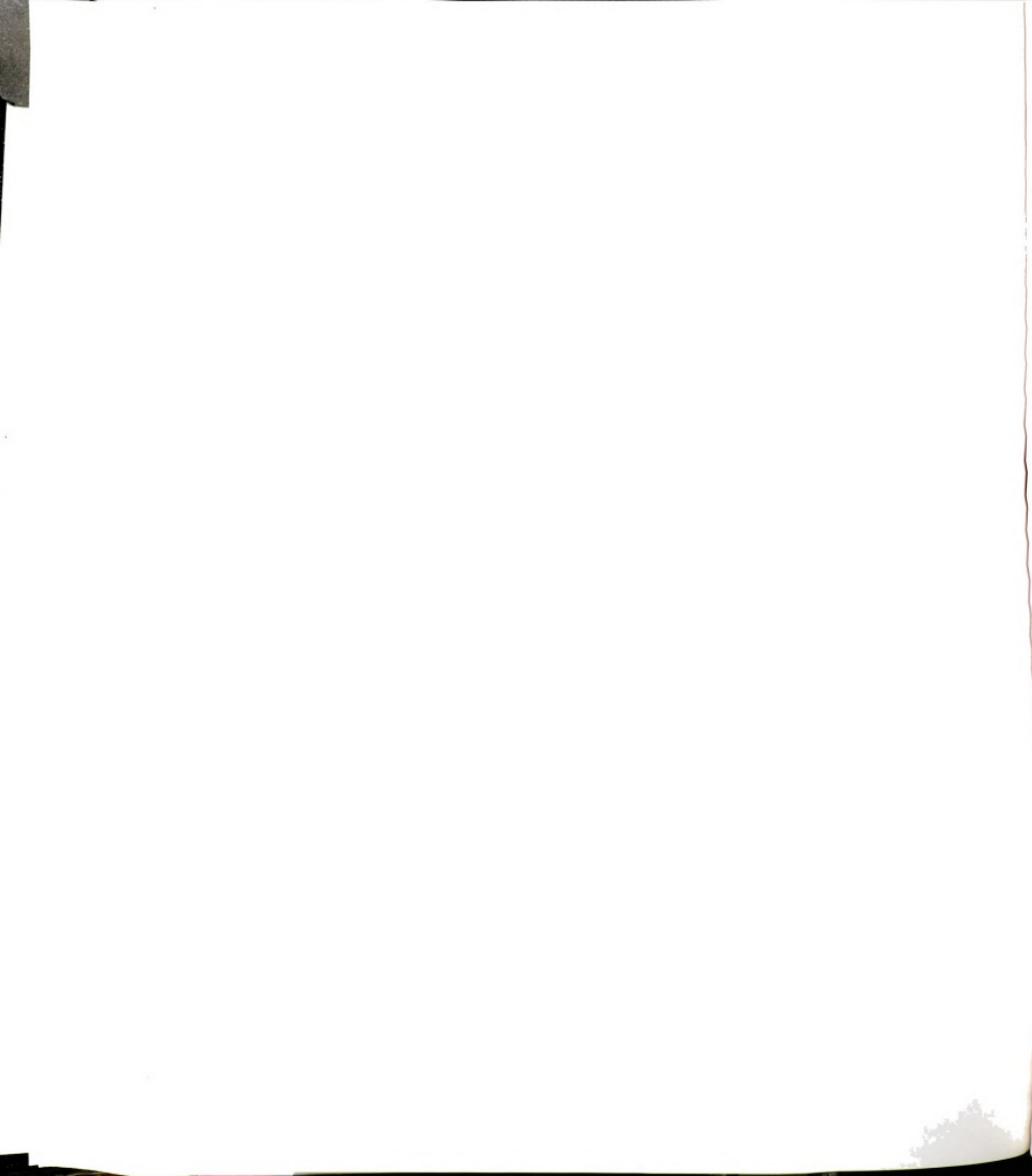


Despite the significant progress in promoting Protestantism, the "cheap religion," as it was called by the Catholic hierarchy, was always directly contested by the constant surveillance of priests and even by life-threatening situations Protestant missionaries were subjected to. In fact, Catholicism maintained its constant presence in the daily fabric of Filipino lives through its various rituals and ceremonies. Conger witnesses the more regular ceremonies undertaken in the cathedral right across the street from where she lived:

Daily services were held, and all the Saints' days were observed. On festivals of especial importance there were very gorgeous processions. The principal features were the bands of music, the choir, acolytes, priests, and rich people,-- the poor have no place--all arrayed in purple and fine linen; gold, silver, pearls, and rare jewels sparkled in the sun by day, or at night, in the light of the candles and torches carried by thousands of men, women and children. (143-44)

She also writes about the strong hold priests had over their parishoners:

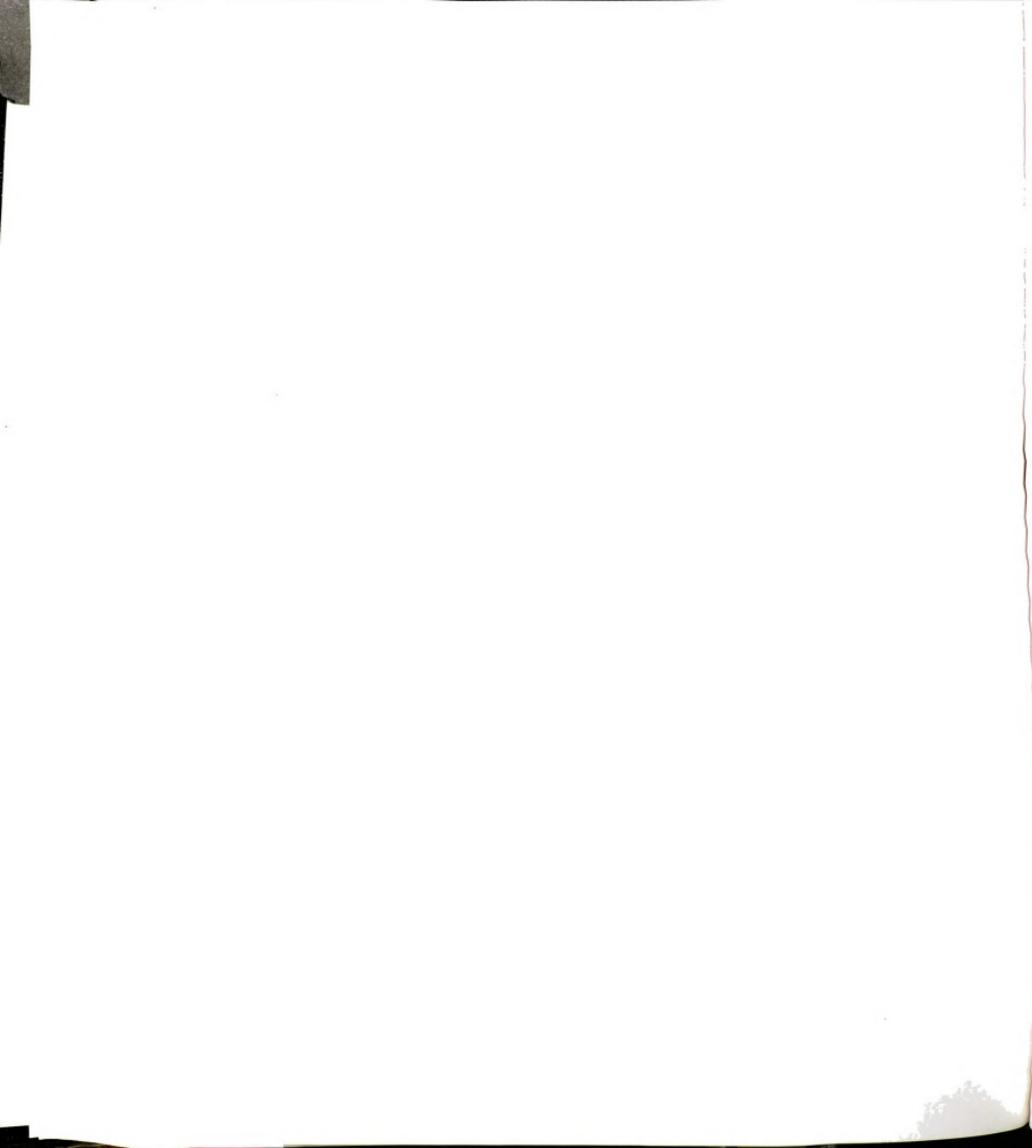
It may be that these people need to be terrorized by the priests; certain it is that, when a priest walks through the village or when any of the



people see him, they kneel and kiss his hand, if he is so gracious as to honor them with the privilege. The people bow down before him and reverence him though he may at any moment lift his cane and give them a good whack over the head or shoulders. [. . .] They do literally rule these people with the rod. (113)

Conger offers an important insight into American struggles to impose their version of Christianity. In spite of the relative progress made by missionaries in introducing other faiths, the ubiquity of the Catholic church served to maintain the institution's hegemony.

Regardless, efforts were undertaken to foster relations between Filipinos and Americans. One of these involved the formation of a peace society. Participated in by "all the women" of Jaro, the association was formed "for the maintenance of peace and fraternal feeling with the Filipinos" (142). Conger, the only American woman who joined in the said organization, accompanied by a "native woman," a guard of soldiers and an interpreter, indicated she had "a very agreeable time" (143). Interaction went beyond the more formal framework and the Filipino women, who at first eventually became more friendly and gracious. According to her, "They offered mes(sic) very handsome cloths and embroideries, which I declined with thanks. It is



a common custom to make presents" (143). Later on, the ladies even felt comfortable enough to exchange viewpoints about etiquette and social manners:

This Filipino friend told me that I committed quite a breach of propriety in allowing the interpreter, who was a soldier, to ride on the front seat of the carriage; that it would become known everywhere that she and I actually had a man ride with us. It is not customary for even husbands and wives to drive together. My criticism was, "We do not like the manner of your ladies expectorating. In America we consider it a very filthy and offensive habit." She was quite surprised that we were so very particular and asked me if we chewed the spittle. (143)

Such demonstrations of cooperation and interchange in Conger's narrative significantly lent some sense of voice and agency to the other.

Another prominent part of everyday living were funeral ceremonies. In her discussion, Conger demonstrates the marked contrast between the rituals conducted by different classes. The poorest families would sometimes have to settle for having the body of their deceased wrapped in a coarse mat and slung over a pole in lieu of a coffin. If they were unable to pay for the burial in the cemetery,

their dead was left to "decay and bleach upon the surface" (145). The richest families on the other hand throw an extravagant ceremony replete with a coffin intricately lined with blue satin, a funeral procession attended by mourners dressed also in satin and jewels, three members of the clergy, thirty to forty choir boys, acolytes, and others. The ritual is made to resemble a "huge burning pile" and culminates in a regal reception held in the evening in remembrance of the deceased (145). Again, Conger provides important insights into the notion of public display and its effect on community formation.

#### Work in these Islands

If I could not find something useful to do for my boy and for other boys, I could accept the appointment of nurse from the Secretary of War, General Russell A. Alger. But, if it proved practicable, I preferred to be under no obligation to render service, for my health was poor, my strength uncertain. (7-8)

Although Conger, as shown in the passage above, was at first hesitant to accept any appointment that would have entailed a commitment to serve under the U.S. government, she eventually became inspired, in the face of the realities underlying the colonialist endeavor, to provide assistance to both American soldiers and Filipinos. Armed with a degree

from the American School of Osteopathy, she expresses pride in her contribution to the colonialist cause as she states:

In the islands it was a great pleasure to me to help our sick soldiers; scores of them, with touching gratitude, have blessed the use that I made of my hands upon them. Officers and men came daily for treatment. Soon the Filipinos came, too. Women walked many miles carrying their sick children; the blind and lame besought me to lay my hands upon them. It was noised about that I had divine power. My door was best. I gladly gave relief where I could, but for the most of them help was one hundred years too late. (115)

Conger also makes mention of, even as she lauds, other women who were also involved in administering medical aid to American soldiers. As Conger writes: "God bless the dear women who nursed our sick soldiers; it was my pleasure to know quite intimately several of these girls who have made many a poor boy more comfortable" (149).

In the course of her work, Conger observes how poverty and disease become the social reality in the islands. Beggars who were mostly "everywhere, blind, lame, and deformed," were usually seen in the marketplace (159). On a more serious level, smallpox was said to be a "common occurrence that the natives have no dread of it" (144).

Another scourge was brought upon by leprosy. A leper colony, in fact, lay just three miles from Jaro. In contrast to people who eschewed the colony, Conger was even witness to how they conducted confession:

During confession, the lepers kneeled several rods away from the priests. I saw one poor woman whose feet were entirely gone lashed to a board so she could drag herself along by the aid of her hands, which had not yet begun to decay. (148)

Unfortunately, there seemed to be no reprieve from this pitiful situation. According to Conger, the people themselves made the situation worse by not washing their bodies and by merely lying "hopeless and passive" on the ground or small bamboo mats.

There were no visible means of caring for the sick and afflicted; the insane were kept in stocks or chained to trees, and the U.S. hospitals were so overtaxed by the demands made upon them by our own soldiers that little space or attention could be spared to the natives. Charity begins at home. (148)

Towards the end of the work, she makes general assumptions about infirmed and the rest of the population:

You poor miserable creatures, utterly neglected, utterly ignorant and degraded. [. . .] No wonder



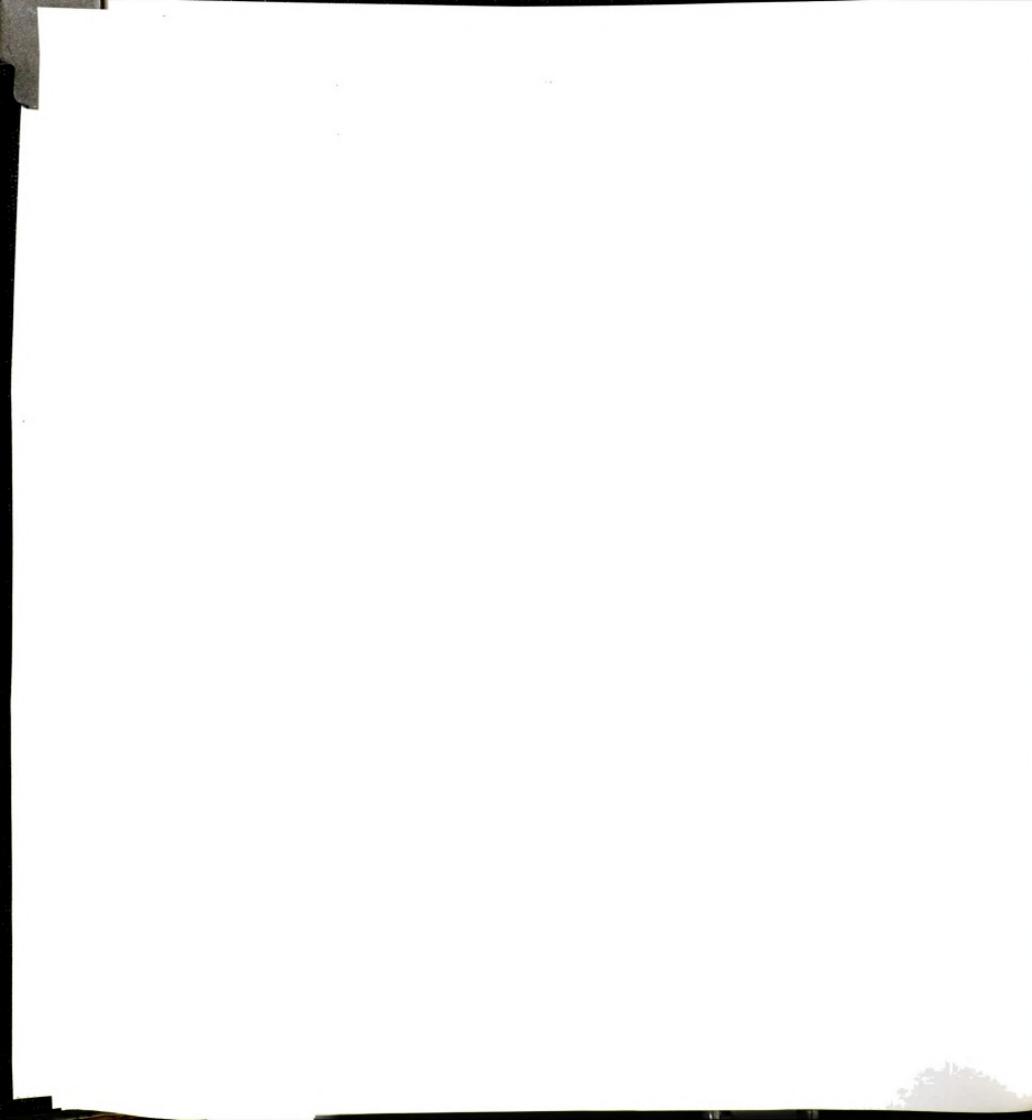
that the diseased, the deformed, the blind, the one-toed, the twelve-toed, and monstrous parts and organs are the rule rather than the exception. These things are true of nine-tenths of this people. (159)

Again, physical weakness and debilitation is highlighted in her account. And once again, she attempts to incorporate supposedly veritable facts in supporting her conclusions about the dismal fate of the people. In the end, she does not consider it the responsibility of Americans to improve their health situation.

#### Life Ceremonies

Conger describes local courtship practices to be "peculiar" what with emphasis being placed on the involvement of the whole family and the limited contact between the would-be bride and groom (including such venues as the theatres, concerts, and dances). With regard to weddings, she makes mention of the one-week period before the wedding, wherein the bride is carried in a wicker bamboo hammock as she goes about visiting her closest friends and, at the same time, never being made to lay her feet on the ground nor do menial tasks.

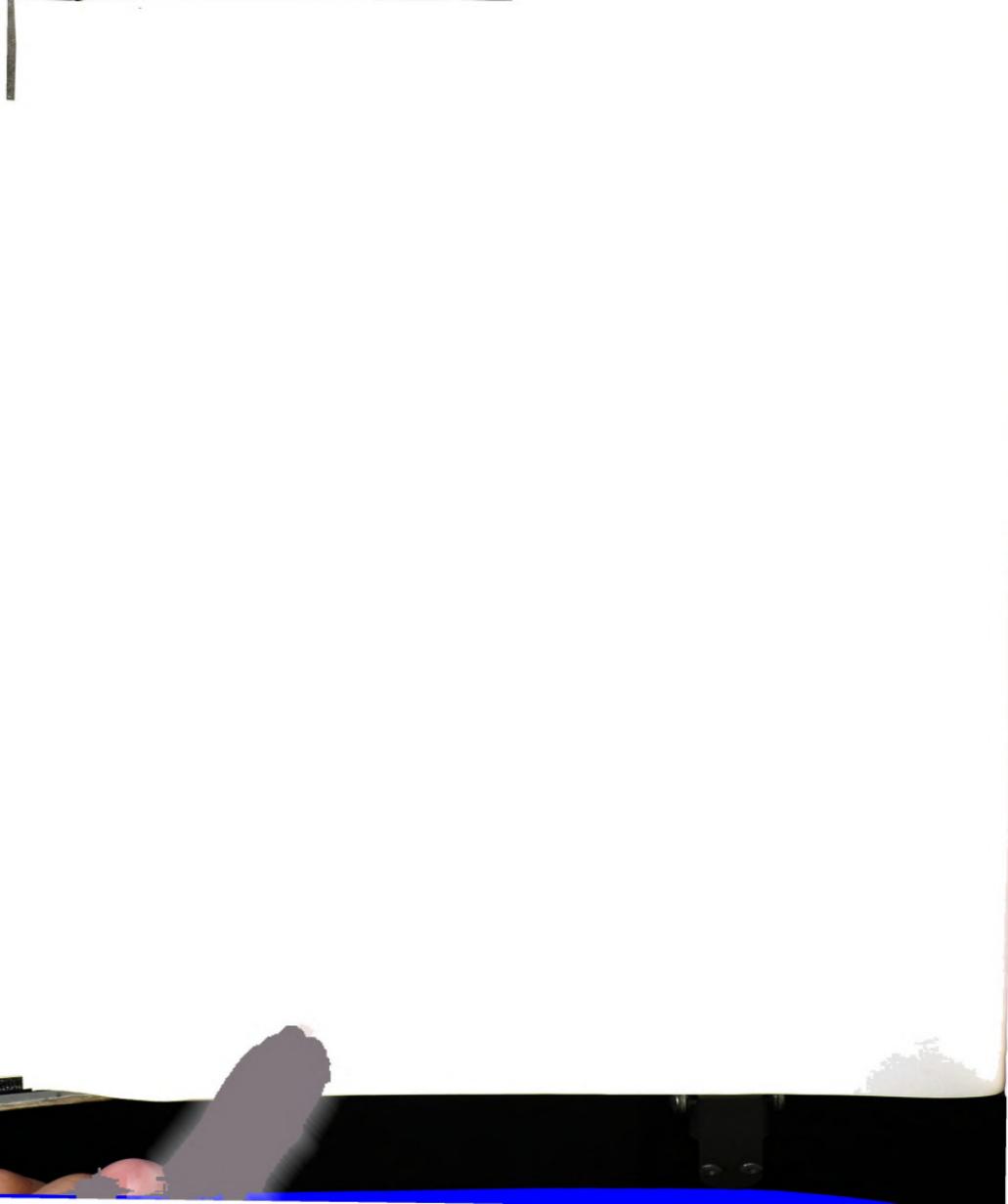
Wedding ceremonies varied according to class. The "first class matrimony" was a relatively simple rite (79-80). Guests came in their Sunday best and "squatted upon



the floor of the cathedral." And while the bride "sauntered" in with three or four of her attendants, the groom "shuffled" in. The ritual then proceeded, culminating in the groom taking the bride's hand for a second, and the priest's official closing of the ceremony. An elaborate reception then followed, and festivities lasted for around two to three days. There was also the "wholesale matrimonial" conducted on Saturday mornings (80). As many as ten couples could be married at once.

Another ceremony described was that of "cheap baptisms":

These pitiable little creatures, deformed and shrunken, were too weak to wail, or perhaps they were too stupified with narcotics. A large candle was put into each little bird-claw, the nurse or mother holding it in place above the passive body covered only with a scrap of gauze but decked out with paper flowers, huge pieces of jewelry, odd trinkets, anything they had—all dirty, mother, child, ornaments; the onlookers still more dirty. The priest whom I knew very well . . . told me that few of these cheap babies live long. I am sure they could not; not one of them would weigh five pounds. They were all emaciated; death would be a mercy. (81)



Although what were described were ceremonies that were celebrated in many societies, Conger clearly locates these within a specific cultural context in which peculiarity and spectacle predominate.

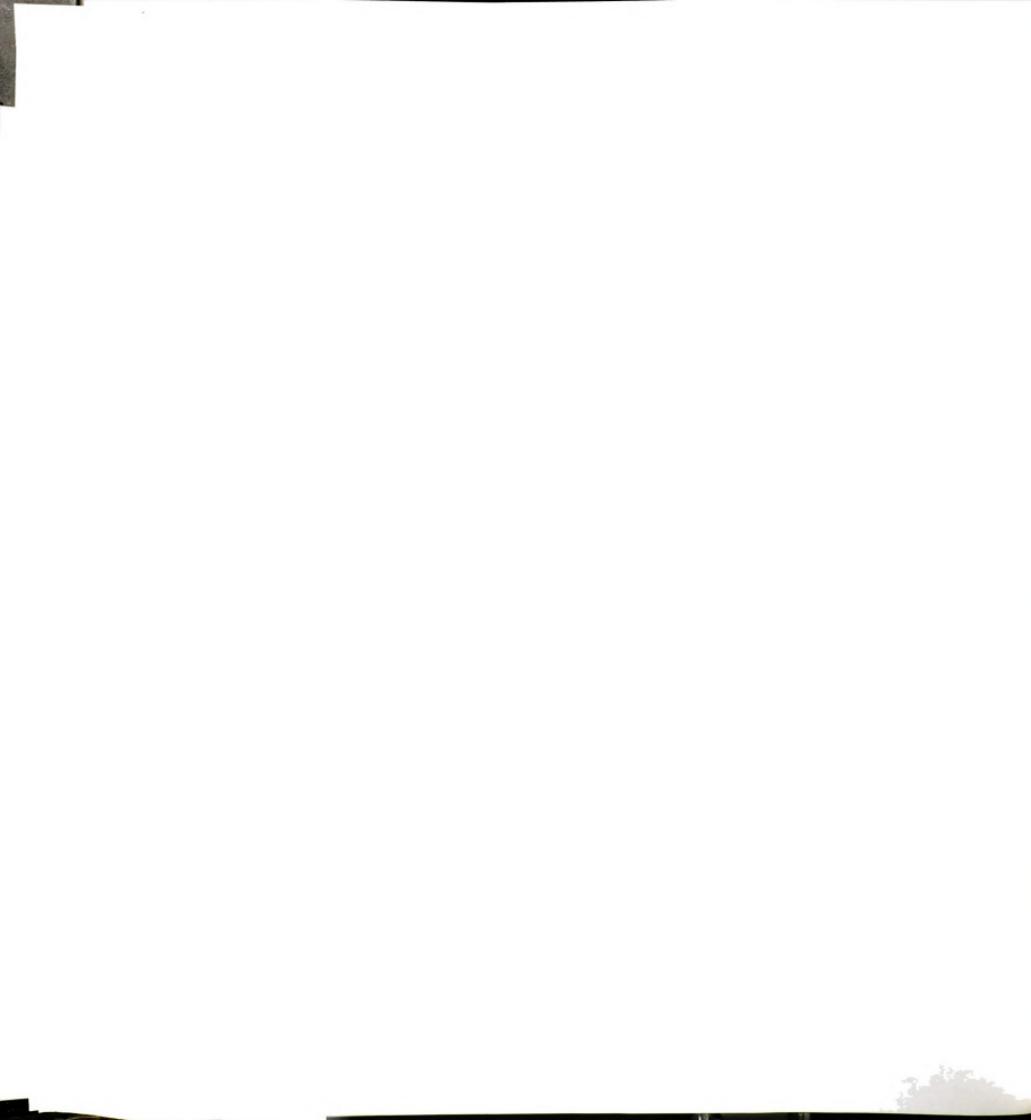
### A WOMAN'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE PHILIPPINES

Mary Helen Fee was one of the host of school teachers who followed the flag into the Philippines; but, unlike many of her associates, she had the fortitude to remain there long enough to gather more than surface impressions. A decade of work in the islands, chiefly at Capiz and Manila, enabled her to gather sufficient interesting and instructive material to write her book of "A Woman's Impressions of the Philippines." Though Miss Fee has a goodly amount of humor [. . .] and plentifully sprinkles her volume with it in describing her ardent endeavors to engraft western civilization on the hybrid native stock, she dwells at length on the greater problems of the political, religious, social, and industrious conditions of the Filipinos.<sup>2</sup>

Born in Missouri, Mary Fee first arrived in the Philippines in 1901 together with about 800 other male and women American teachers who constituted the first and "most

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<sup>2</sup> Review of A Woman's Impressions of the Philippines, Mary Fee, The Dial 1 June 1910: 390.



celebrated" group of educators sent to the archipelago (Rafael, "Mimetic Subjects," 146-47). Fee was eventually assigned to teach in Capiz, in the Visayas region and ended up remaining in her post for the next ten years, the longest time an American woman woman has ever stayed in the country. Like Condict, Fee had reforming impulses, although her responses to the Filipino people would be starkly different.

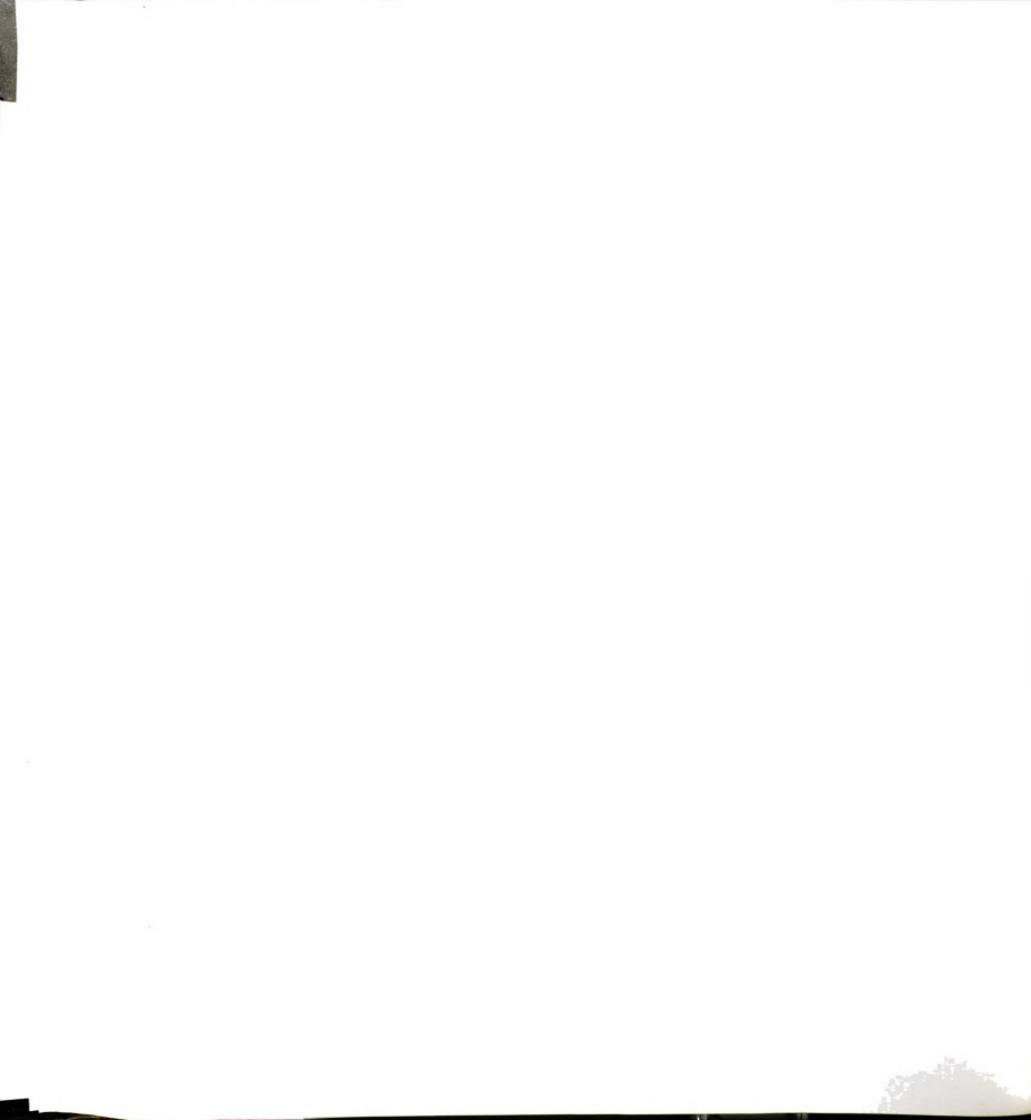
#### Background of a Journey

At the start of her sojourn, Mary Fee exclaims:

To me the occasion was momentous. I was going to see the world, and I was one of an army of enthusiasts enlisted to instruct our little brown brother, and to pass the torch of Occidental knowledge several degrees east of the international date-line. (12)

Upon her arrival to the islands, Fee was open to being assigned to any station. Eventually, she found out she would be bound for Capiz, situated on Panay's northern shore, "once a rich and aristocratic pueblo, but now a town existing in the flavor of decayed gentility" (61). The teacher was ardent in starting her assignment right away and "time seemed fairly to drag" (61).

At the time of her arrival, she described Romblon as a "most attractive place," what with "great" and "plummy" mountain ranges, "gayly colored waters," a town encompassing



short buildings, an old gray church, a "graceful" *campanile*, and a dam using the mountain stream and clean streets. Fee expressed a fondness for the place rather early on:

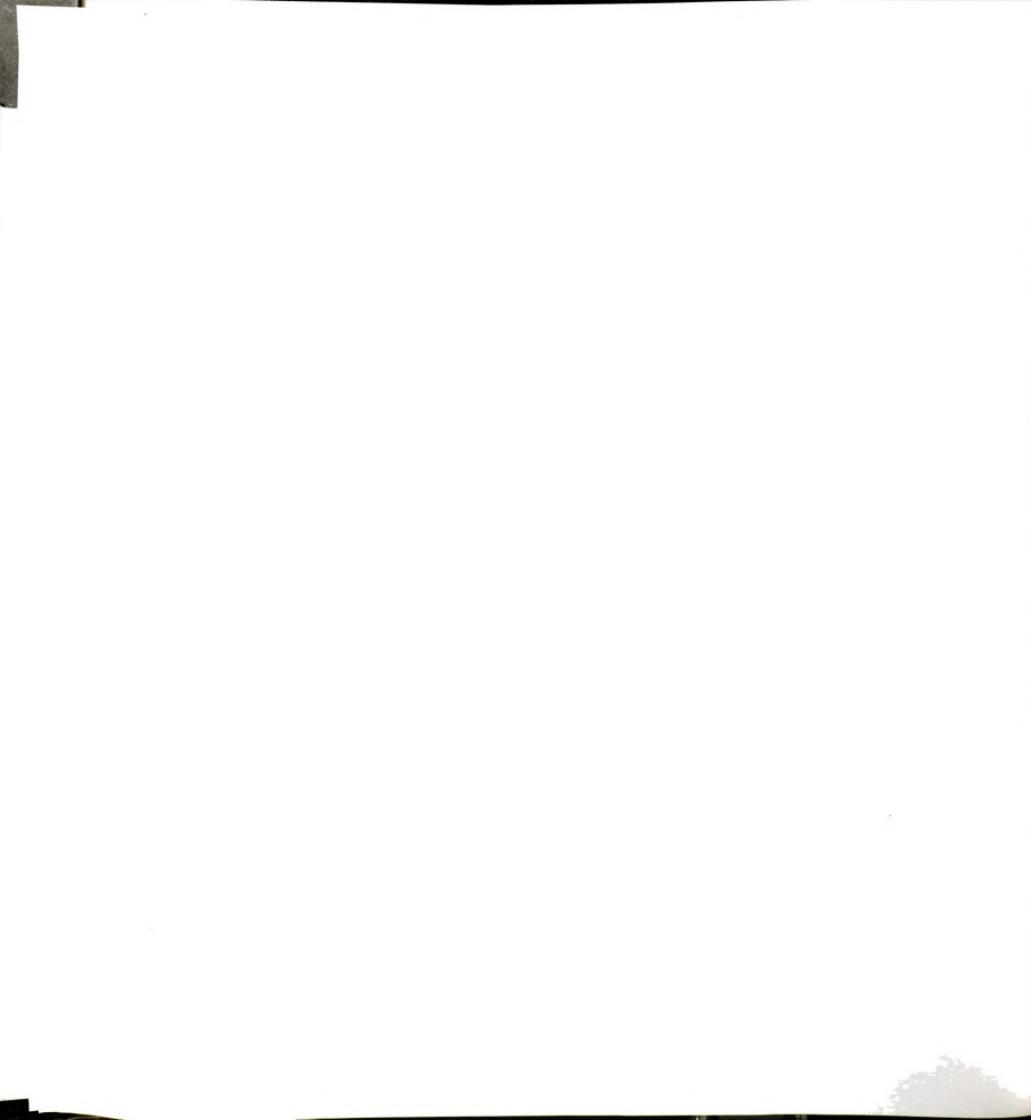
Though subsequent familiarity has brought to my notice many details that I then overlooked, that first impression was the one of greatest charm, and the one I love best to remember. There were the great, square, white-painted, red-tiled houses lining both banks of the river; the picturesque groups beating their clothes on the flat steps which led down to the water; and the sprawling wooden bridge in the distance where the stream made an abrupt sweep to the right.

I knew that I should like Capiz. (71-72)

#### First Experiences with Teaching

"Disorder and excitement" were two of the early stumbling blocks Fee had to overcome in asserting absolute control and authority over the school classroom:

The hardest thing to overcome was their desire to aid me in matters that I could manage better alone. If some one whispered and I tapped a pencil, instantly half the children in the room would turn around and utter the hiss with which they invoke silence, or else they would begin to scold the offender in the vernacular. Such acts



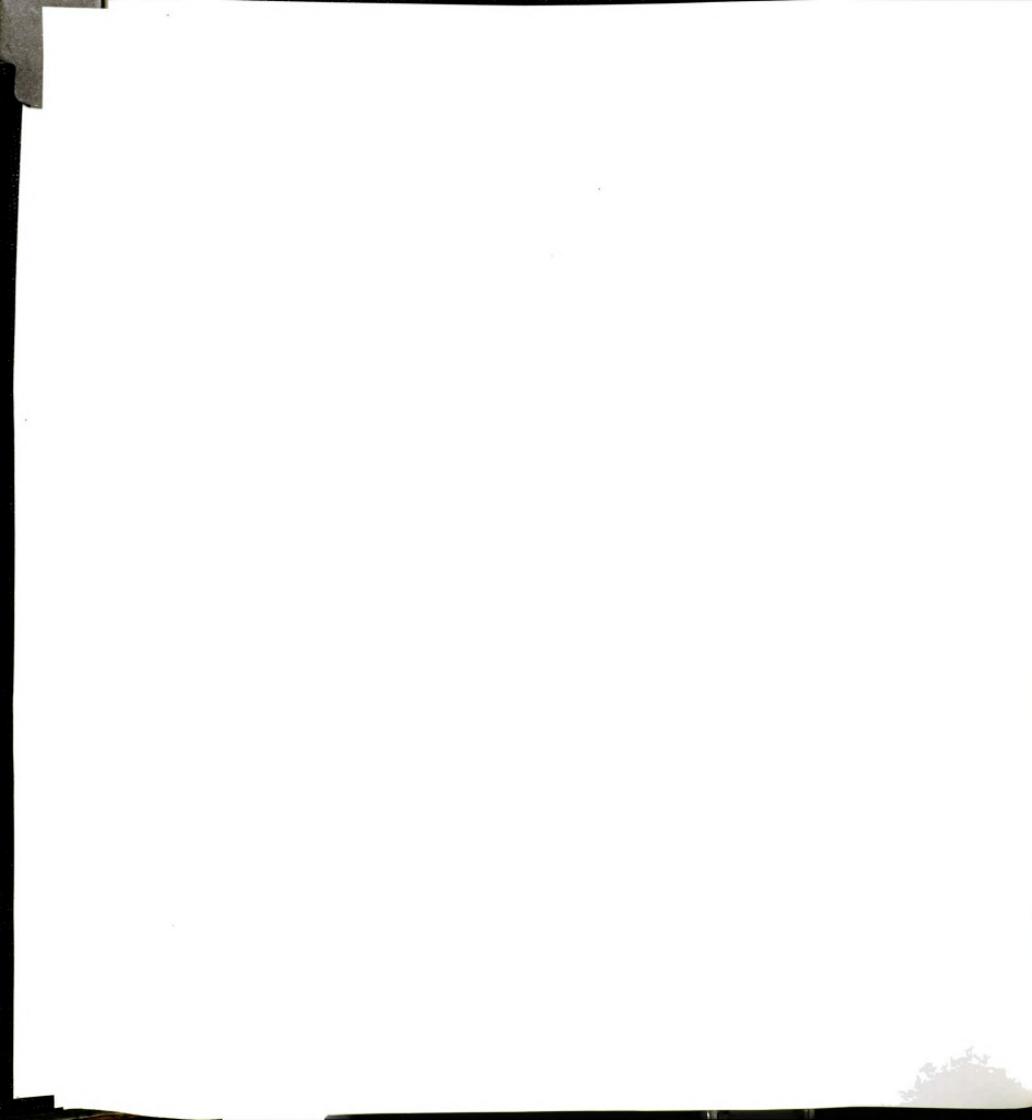
led, of course, to unutterable confusion, and I had no little trouble in putting a stop to them.

(85)

After constant admonition and practice, Filipino children eventually began to behave "with more order and regularity [. . .] and the school began to show the organization and discipline to which Americans are accustomed" (85).

When it came to the actual learning process, Fee developed the tendency of comparing Filipino children in Capiz with their American counterparts. For one, Filipino children were observed to be more disciplined as long as they perceived their mentor to possess both traits of firmness and justice. Unless this condition was met, "(a)t the first sign of weakness in the teacher or in the Government which is behind him, they are infinitely more unruly and arrogant than are the children of our own race" (86).

A second factor she mentions involves the right kind of "discernment." Fee asserts that even the most "truculent" American child possesses a knowledge of the proper positionings of "fitness of things" within the American classroom (86). According to her, despite their mischief, American children are:

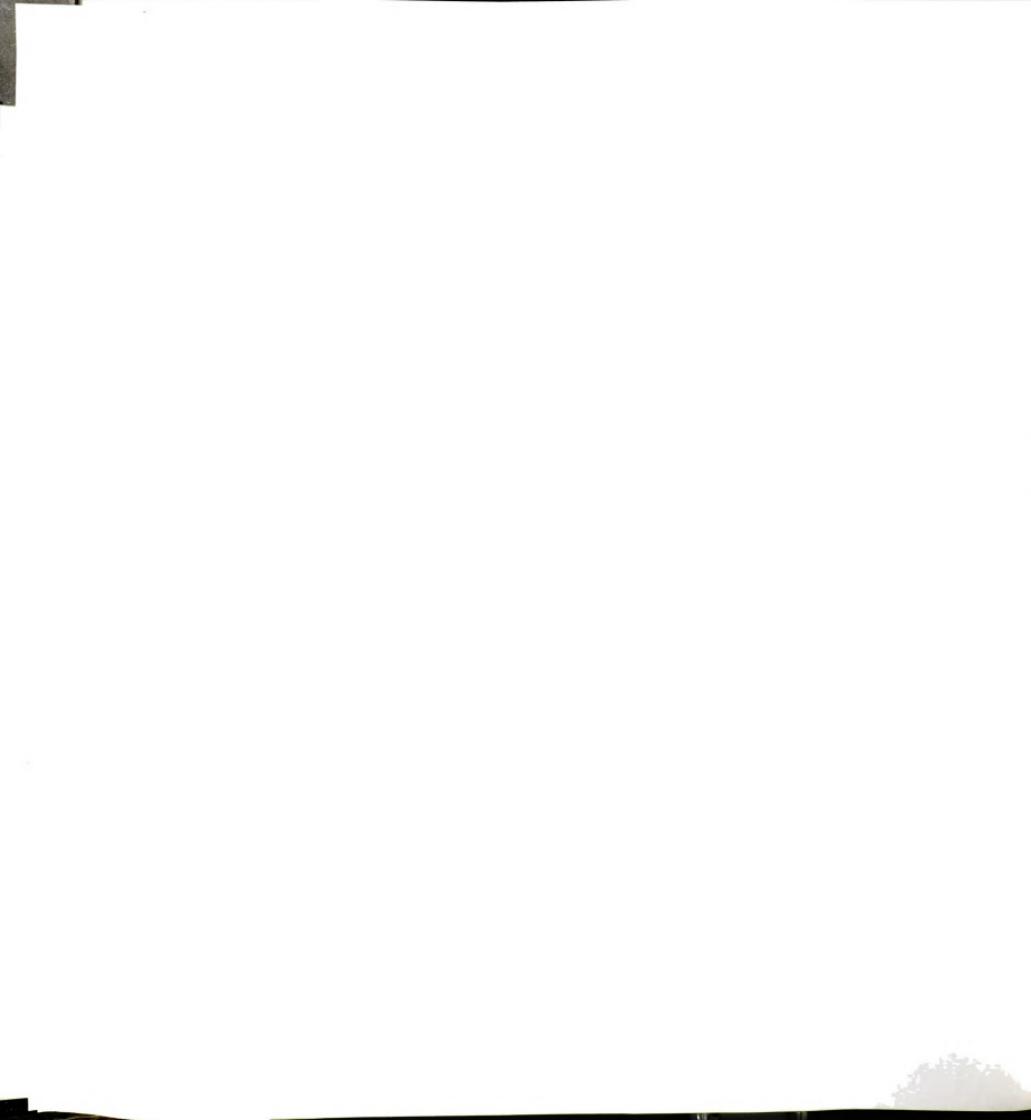


on the alert for any sign of overstepping the limits of lawful authority on the part of the teacher, and they have no compunctions about forcing him to recognize that he rules by the consent of the governed, and that he must not mistake their complaisance for servility. (86)

But these same children also value the "opinion" of the teacher on the subjects he or she teaches and will rarely contest nor question the said mentor on these matters of learning. Filipino children, on the other hand, while prone to be obedient and unquestioning of a teacher's way of disciplining, will "naively cling to a position and dispute both fact and philosophy in the face of quoted authority, or explanation, or even of sarcasm" (86).

Fee also criticizes Filipino children for their pride and arrogance. According to her, American children do "not mind doing wrong" but will rarely opt to make a spectacle of himself. In contrast, their Filipino counterparts will not hesitate to question and engage in "long-winded eloquence" so much so that own up to their mistakes; Filipino children, on the other hand, give"

no more real impression upon the silent than upon the talkative, and that, indeed, the gentle reserve of some of your auditors is based upon the



conviction that your own position is the result of indomitable ignorance. (90)

With regard to mental ability and capacity, Fee makes certain assumptions about the intricate relationship between mental prowess and race:

Their powers of concentration are not equal to those of American children, and they cannot be forced into a temporarily heavy grind, but neither do they suffer from the extremes of indolence and application which are the penalty of the nervous energy of our own race. They are attentive (which the American child is not) but not retentive.

[. . .] In fact, they prefer routine work to variety, and grow discouraged quickly when they have to puzzle things out for themselves. They will faithfully memorize pages and pages of matter which they do not understand, a task at which our nervous American children would completely fail.

(91)

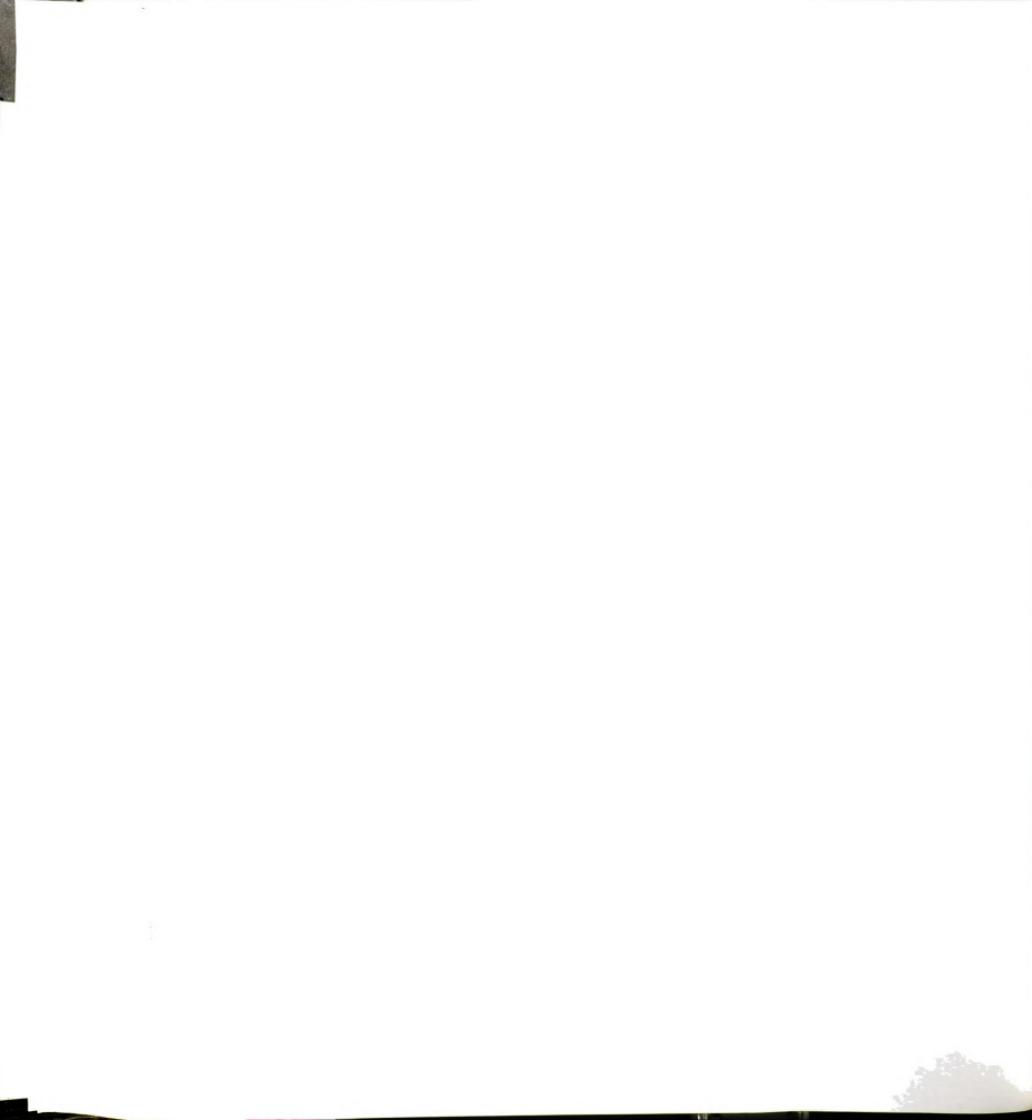
Again, Fee draws a direct correlation between race and certain types of mental abilities, critical and analytic skills in this case. In relation to this, she also alludes to the areas or fields they would be more suited for. In the following passage, she is short of asserting that Filipino

children should stop deluding themselves from pursuing fields which are "literary" in orientation:

Not one of them could have written a page of clear, grammatical, idiomatic English. I tried to make it clear to them that literary English and colloquial English are two different things, and that what they needed was plain, precise English as a medium of exchange in business, and I said, incidentally, that such was the English possessed by the major portion of the English-speaking race. I said that although the American nation numbered eighty millions, most of whom were educated and able to make an intelligent use of their language in conversation or in writing, the percentage of great writers and speakers always had been small and always would be so. (89)

Fee's discussion was evidently lodged within the parameters of the American colonial policy of "benevolent assimilation" which is based on the premise that Filipinos lacked the capacity for self-governance. She never acknowledges that English was not their own language. As Vicente L. Rafael argues in his article entitled, "Mimetic Subjects: Engendering Race at the Edge of Empire":

The legitimacy of American rule was thus predicated on the recurrent infantilization of



Filipinos. [. . .] While it is commonplace in American women's texts to refer to the child-like character of native peoples, only Mary Fee's account contains a sustained description of Filipino children as such. (139)

The narrative unabashedly reinforces the notion that the Filipinos' ability for self-determination was compromised early on in childhood wherein misplaced pride, misappropriation of the Western model of civilization, and self-indulgent attitudes were already clearly manifested. This argument was continually bolstered by passages like the following:

They are exceedingly sensitive to criticism, and respond quickly to praise. Unfortunately the narrow experience of the race, and the isolation and the general ignorance of the country, make praise a dangerous weapon in the hands of a teacher; for a child is apt to educe a positive and not a relative meaning from the compliment. Filipino children have not attained the mental state of being able to qualify in innumerable degrees. (92)

The weakest point in a Filipino child's character is his quick jealousy and his pride. His jealousy is of the sort constitutionally



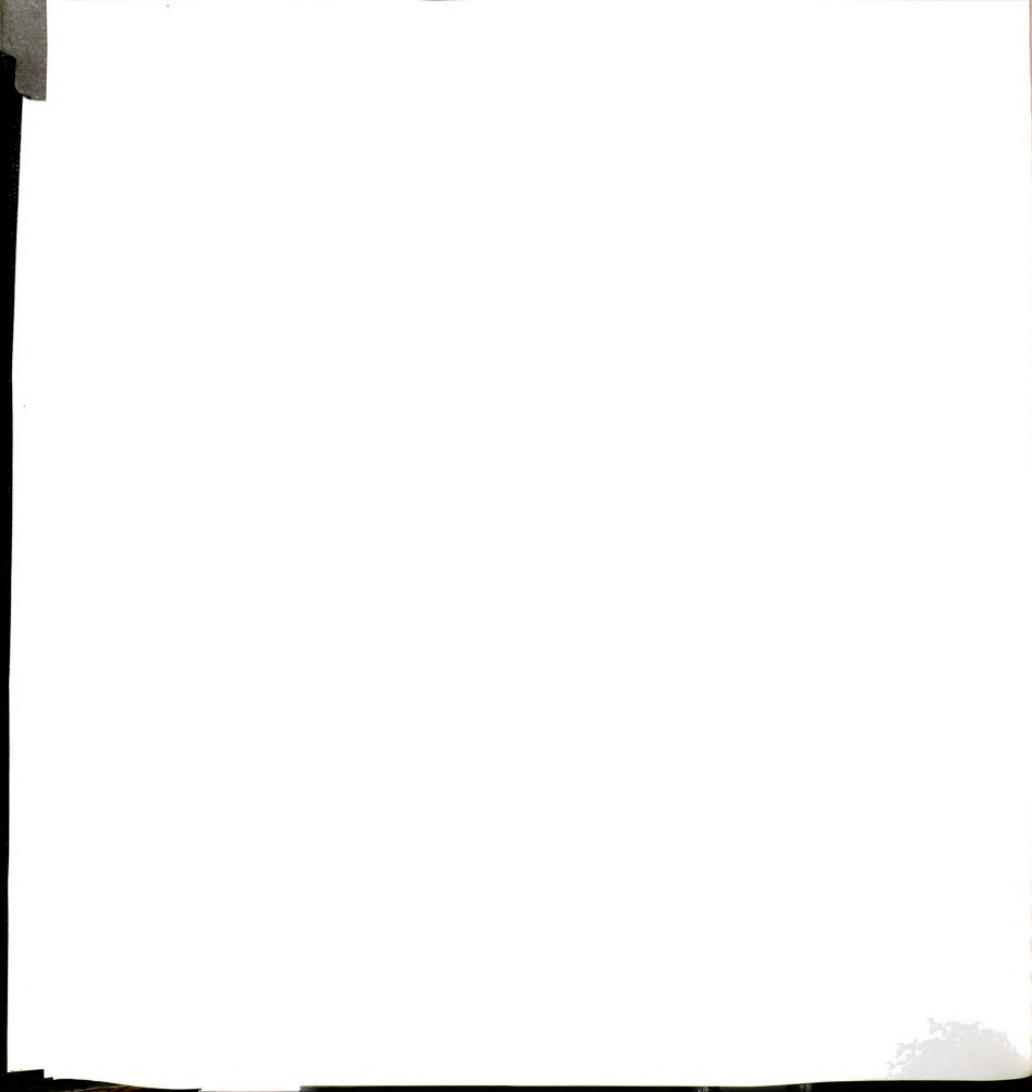
inimical to solidarity. Paradoxical as the statement may seem, the Filipinos are more aristocratic in their theories of life than we are, and more democratic in their individual constitution...The personal jealousies, the personal assertions of individuals continually interfere with the normal conditions of trade.

(101)

### Filipino Women

Although Filipino women are characterized by Fee as "Occidental" what with their agency in choosing a husband and the absence of "seclusion" some "Oriental" women were subject to, she also mentions the stark differences between these women and their American counterparts:

Filipino women never affect the dominating attitude assumed by young American coquettes. They have an infinite capacity for what we call small talk and repartee; and, as they never aim for brilliancy and quite natural and unaffected, their pretty ways have all the charm that an unconscious child's have. [. . .] They are adepts at mimicry and among themselves will lash us mercilessly . [. . .] They themselves are full of magnetism and can advance with outstretched hand and greet you in such a way as to make you believe



that your coming has put sunshine in their lives.

(120)

Filipino women, then, are essentially portrayed as individuals of little consequence who never really aimed to move beyond the public show of their shallow, childish, uncritical, and unoriginal personas.

### Filipino Girls

Fee's discussion of young women in the Philippines was fundamentally class-based. An assumption about these women's sexuality overrode the section:

Their conception of marriage and of their duty to their own husbands and their children is a high and noble one. Nevertheless, [. . .] they cannot take half as good care of themselves as can the American girl who is more indiscreet, who knows much less of the matters pertaining to love and sex. [. . .] Our prudery of speech is the natural result of the liberty permitted to women (125).

The result of general freedom of speech and the process of safeguarding a girl from its results is to make a Filipino girl regard her virtue as something foreign to herself, a property to be guarded by her relatives. If, through negligence or ignorance on the part of her proper guardians, she is exposed to temptation, she feels herself

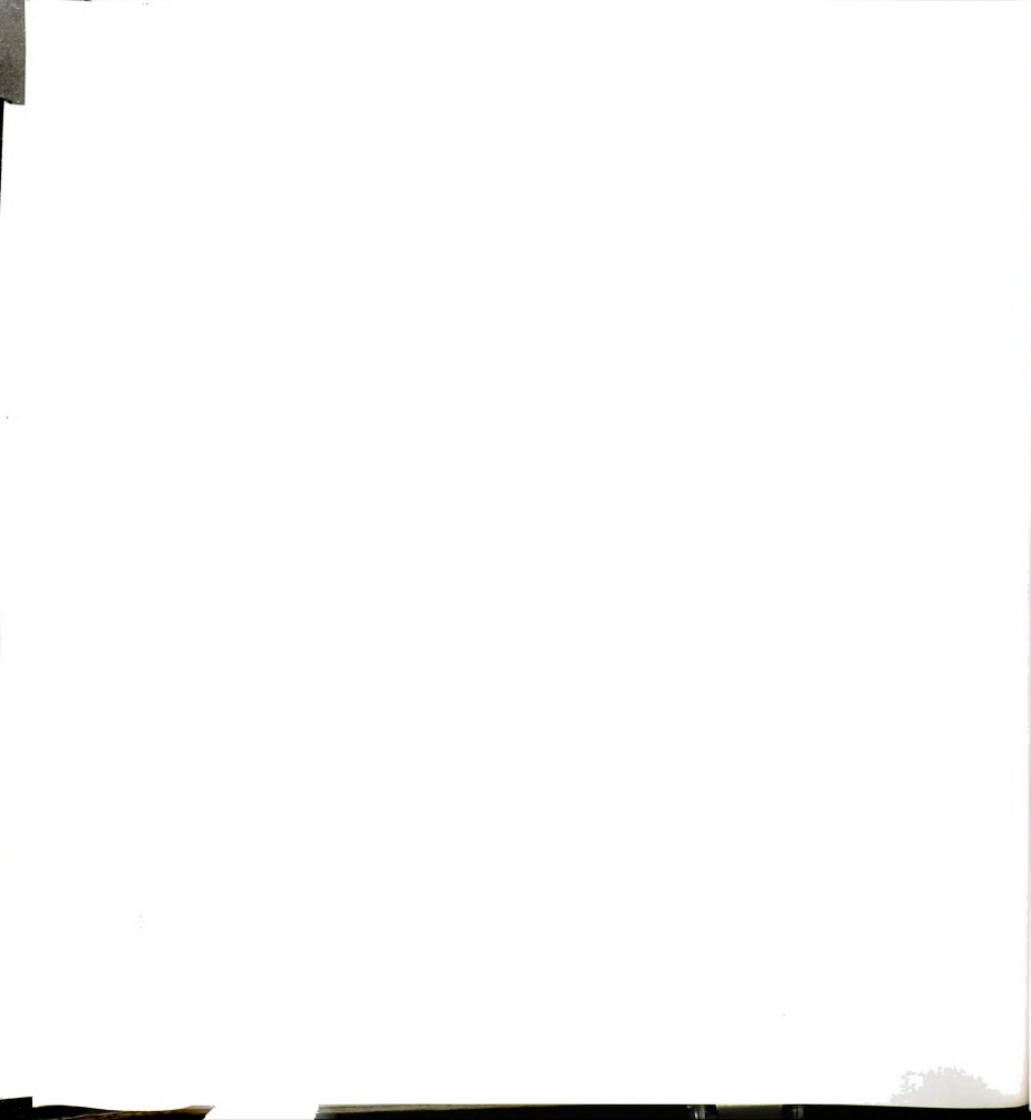


free from responsibility in succumbing. Such a view of life puts a young girl at a great disadvantage with men, especially with men so generally unscrupulous as Filipinos. (126)

Ironically, "prudery" is made to correspond with a notion of "liberty". It is evident that Fee considers this group of women seriously affected by the pitfalls of Filipino patriarchy and male domination. Thus, she perceives them to be victims who, in a larger worldview, would rank considerably lower than their other sisters because of this lack of agency and empowerment.

In the case of girls from the lower classes, the situation is worsened by the fact that because families assume they take care of themselves, they become subject to constant surveillance. There is an added and less evident motive for this strict regulation:

This jealous watching of a child's virtue is not, however, always inspired by the love or purity. Too frequently the motive is that the girl may bring higher price when she reaches a marriageable age, or when she enters into one of those unsanctified alliances with some one who will support her. Filipino men are merciless in their attitude toward young lower-class girls, not hesitating to insult or annoy them in the most shameless way. (127)



## Filipino Character

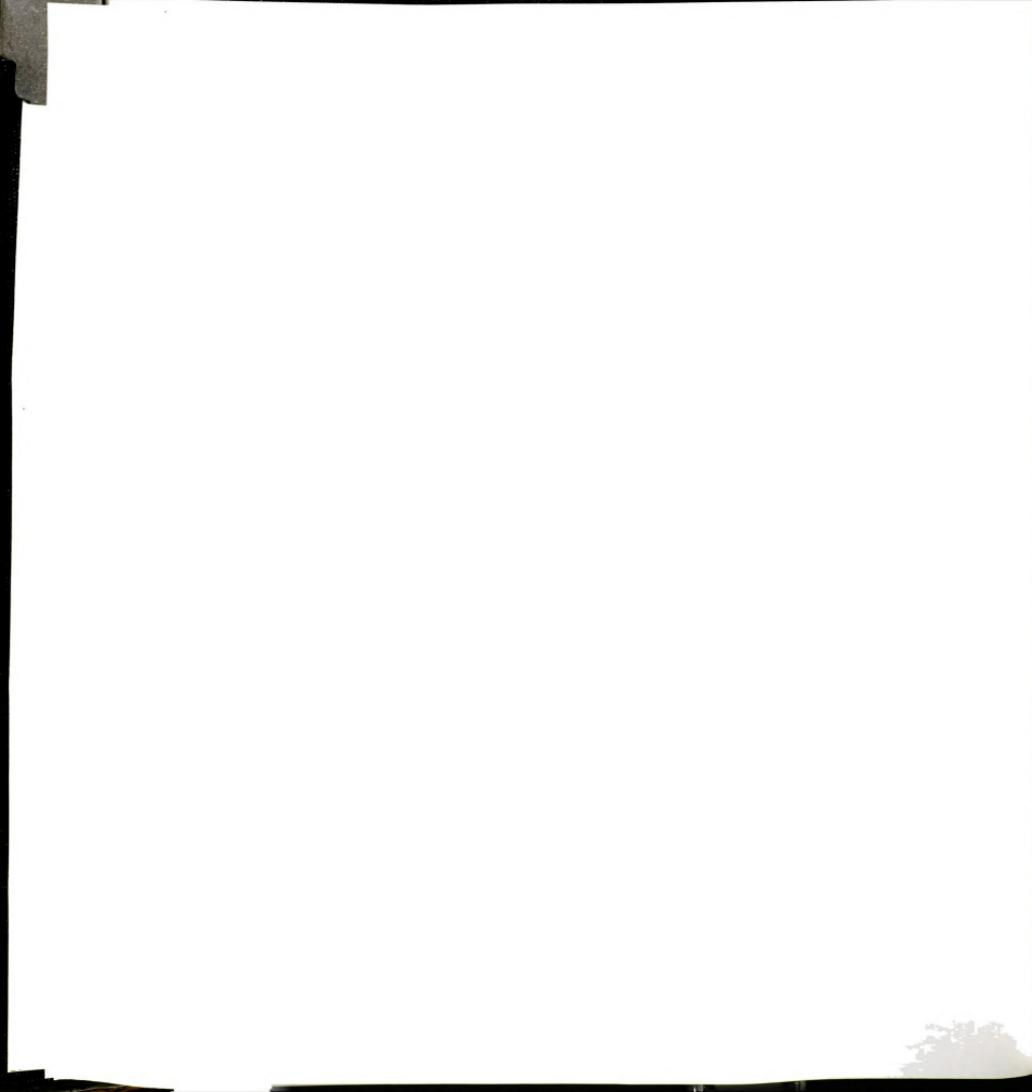
Aside from the assumptions she makes about children, Fee also ground her definition of the "Filipino character" on assumptions drawn about social classes. Depicting the construction of society as "mediaeval" and "aristocratic," Fee attempts to show how the inherent weaknesses in the class system blocked any significant political and societal changes the American administration could effect.

## Middle Class Arrogance

Fee showed that just as children took pride in their knowledge and possession of artistic talent, so did members of the middle class:

Middle-class Filipinos have a very inadequate conception of the tremendous wealth of artistic, literary, and musical talent interwoven with the world's development, and are especially inclined to pride themselves upon their racial excellence in these lines, where, in truth, they have achieved almost no development whatever in spite of the possession of undoubted talent. (92)

Fee makes it clear that the Filipino middle class deluded themselves into thinking too highly of their capabilities, when in fact, they had no idea whatsoever about the value of intense training and preparation (not to mention racial background) required of anyone who deserved



to be accorded such recognition. A similar argument is made in relation to Filipinos' pursuit of education:

The desire for education . . . does not come from any real dissatisfaction which the Filipinos have with themselves, but from eagerness to confute the reproach which has been heaped upon them of being unprogressive and uneducated. It is an abnormal condition, the result of association of a people naturally proud and sensitive with a people proud and arrogant. (94)

In relation to class dynamics, Fee also shows the inimical effects produced by the same rigid hierarchical structure:

There is a perfectly defined class system in the Philippines, and, between class and class, feeling is not bitter; but within each class jealousy is rampant. The Filipino [. . .] does not yet conceive of a leadership based upon personality to which loyalty must be unswervingly paid. He feels the charm of personality, he yields to it just so long as it falls in with his own ideas, but the moment it crosses his own assertiveness he is ready to revolt. [. . .] (I)t makes a great difference in the life of the individual and of the social body as a whole that each unit has fixed his ideal of conduct upon an illimitable



consciousness of personal importance, instead of upon perfectly defined ideals in particular matters. It makes for femininity in the race.

(104)

Fee continues identifying the factors that would be inimical to absolute independence. According to her, there would be no national unity what with the Filipinos' self-motivated interests. Thus, any chance of a responsible and judicious system predominating could only be realized by an external authority that supposedly had the common good in mind.

#### The Potential for Self-Government

Throughout the work, Fee discusses the considerations and conditions under which Filipinos could be granted absolute independence. According to her, any chance of self-governance was already compromised by Filipinos' outright appropriation of a "ready made civilization." This "artificial impetus" deluded them into believing in their potential for autonomy without first rectifying the fundamental flaws originating from their own class system. Thus, the advancement and sovereignty of the country hinged on certain conditions. As she elucidates:

There are two things which are absolutely necessary to the future development of the Philippines. [. . .] One is a new aristocracy to be a new type of incentive to the laborer; the



other is an increase in the laborer's wants which will keep him toiling long after he has discovered the futility of the hopes which urged him in the beginning. (145)

According to her, absolute independence could only be realized if the social structure itself was overhauled. Leadership would have to be placed in the hands of a class properly educated in the ideals of democracy and republicanism. At the same time, the "ignorant" and "lazy" working class also needed to be co-opted into the same republican ideals that would give more meaning to their hard work and service to the new leadership. Only then could all become legitimate subjects of the state.

During the colonial era, women who travelled for the sake of serving in professions that would assist in implementing colonial rule adopted very strategic positions and provided very important information in their travel narratives. Condict, Conger, and Fee essentially occupied positions in the public domain that made them privy to the concrete mechanisms used in enforcing and stabilizing the imperial establishment. At the same time, their occupations allowed them the opportunity to closely examine and form conclusions about the private lives of the local people. In many instances, their tendency to make overarching claims and predictions about the other arose out of a certain



notion of legitimacy and authority emanating from a seeming pride or arrogance that came with performing their respective work. Out of all the narratives in this study, it is these writings that possess the strongest potential of defining and impacting the narrative of imperial rule.



## EPILOGUE

Undoubtedly, gender performs a crucial role in the textual production of US imperialist discourse on the Philippines from 1899-1913. As active producers of this discourse, American women travel writers published "imperial knowledges" that received significant attention from an American readership and influenced their views about the Philippine Islands and the American colonial process. Indeed, many of the works are still cited in important works pertaining to Philippine-American history.<sup>1</sup>

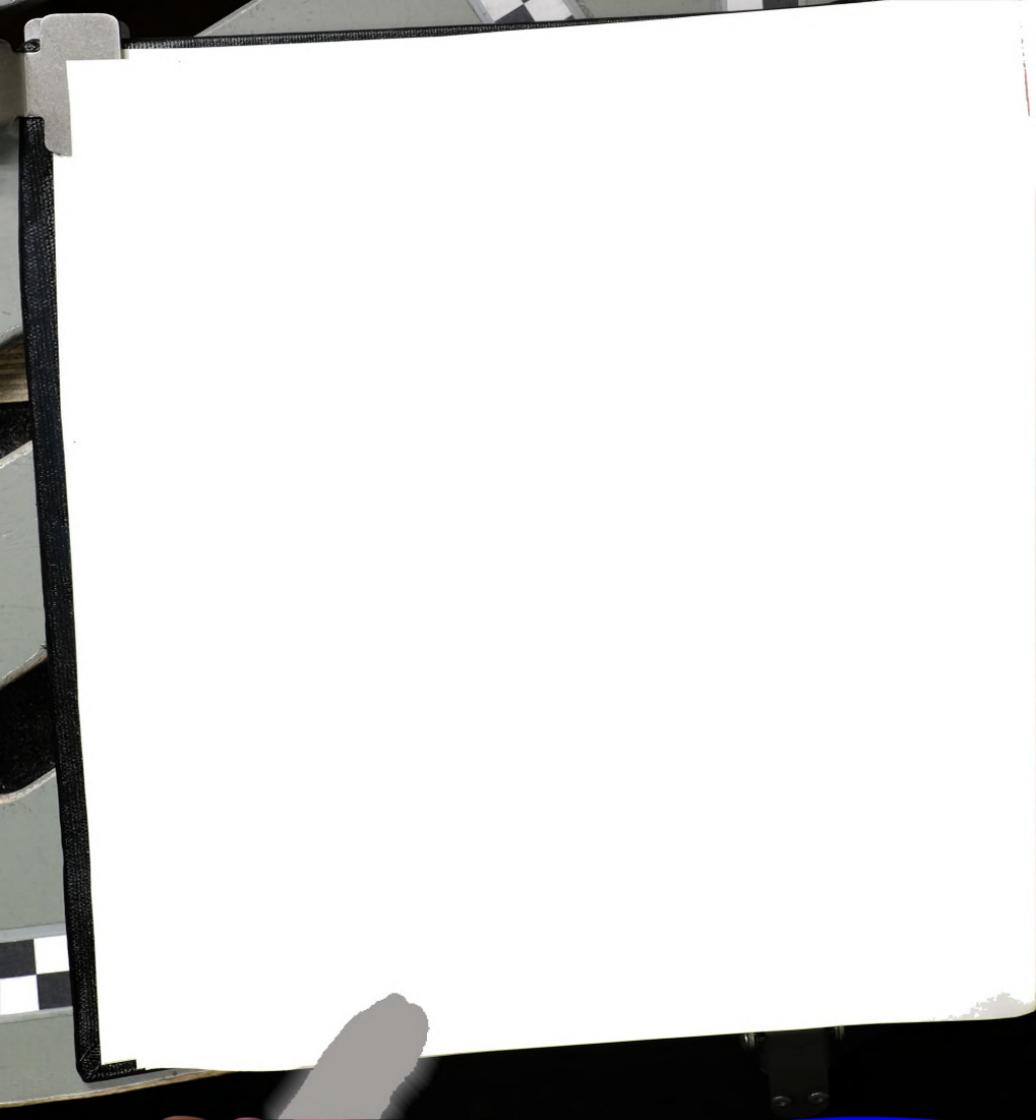
I argue that the uniqueness in their writings stems from their ambivalent positions as agents of empire who considered themselves superior in the racial hierarchy, and yet were still subordinate to the patriarchal order. However, their range of responses as described earlier, included a complex interaction with the "native" Filipinos: for instance, they patronized their servants, admired the beauty of Filipino women, and wanted to arrange society dances for the upper classes. Most importantly, with the opportunity to cross geographical boundaries came the

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<sup>1</sup> Babette P. Resurreccion, "Engineering the Philippine Uplands: Gender, Ethnicity and Scientific Forestry in the American Colonial Period," Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars 31 (January-March 1999): 13-30; Warwick P. Anderson, "The Trespass Speaks: White Masculinity and Colonial Breakdown," American Historical Review 102 (December 1997): 1343-1370; Warwick P. Anderson, "Immunities of Empire," Bulletin of the History of Medicine 70 (September 1996): 94-118; Vicente L. Rafael, "Colonial Domesticity: White Women and United States Rule in the Philippines," American Literature 67 (December 1995): 639-66; Warwick P. Anderson, "Excremental Colonialism, Public Health and the Poetics of Pollution," Critical Inquiry 21 (September 1995): 640-69; Owen Ng, "Winding Down War in Albay, 1900-1903," Pacific Historical Review 48 (1979): 557-89.

opportunity to also share in the power wielded by their male counterparts. Women participated in the agenda of colonial expansion, and although many of them expressed criticism over specific issues of colonial rule, overall, they wrote narratives that supported the presence and domination of the Western colonizers. No American woman writer strongly advocated the end of American presence in the Philippines. This was true especially in the case of women who were directly involved with the establishment of the colonial structure, especially wives who had accompanied their husband officials and women who were engaged in specific professions.

But this national allegiance did not automatically translate into a repetition of the writings produced by their male counterparts. Clearly, there are significant distinctions that define their writing and highlight the diverse and multifarious responses evoked by colonialism. American women travel writers, whether they were wives, tourists, or professionals, attempted to realize the goals of empire within a separate sphere. As such, they were able to combine traditional domestic identities with roles that required them to assume public personas. Consequently, even as they continued to embody the American imperialist rhetoric of "benevolent assimilation," these women helped



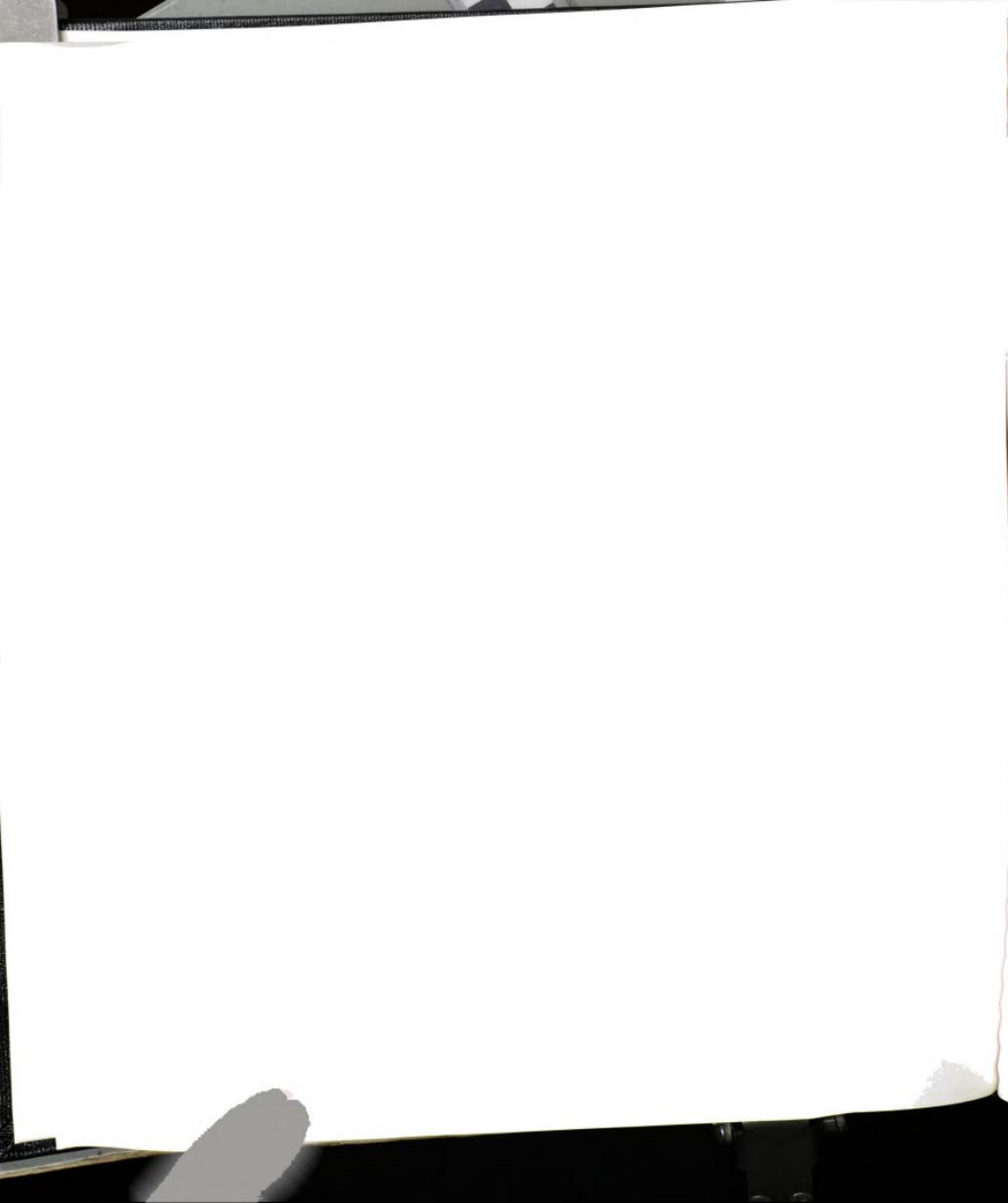
realize the goals of Westernization and Christianization within the domestic spheres or sites such as the home, school, and social gatherings.

In contrast to their male counterparts, these women travel writers also used different strategies in sharing knowledge about the subjects of their narratives. Many of these texts are autobiographical accounts, which seemingly gain authority from their detailed observations. Many of them used letters that reflected the more personal and emotional aspects of their journey. Several also attempted to use their knowledge in science and social science in supporting their broad generalizations about the dynamics of the colonial process. Overall, many were seen to have embarked on "psychological journeys" that led to the reflection and exploration of issues associated with self-discovery.<sup>2</sup>

Women's writings are also distinctive because of the themes presented in their writings. They delve into more areas that would usually be glossed over in narratives that attempt to assert official or academic authority. This study has tended to focus on issues associated with the picturesque settings, racial difference, colonial women, and the customs and traditions of Filipinos. Among all of

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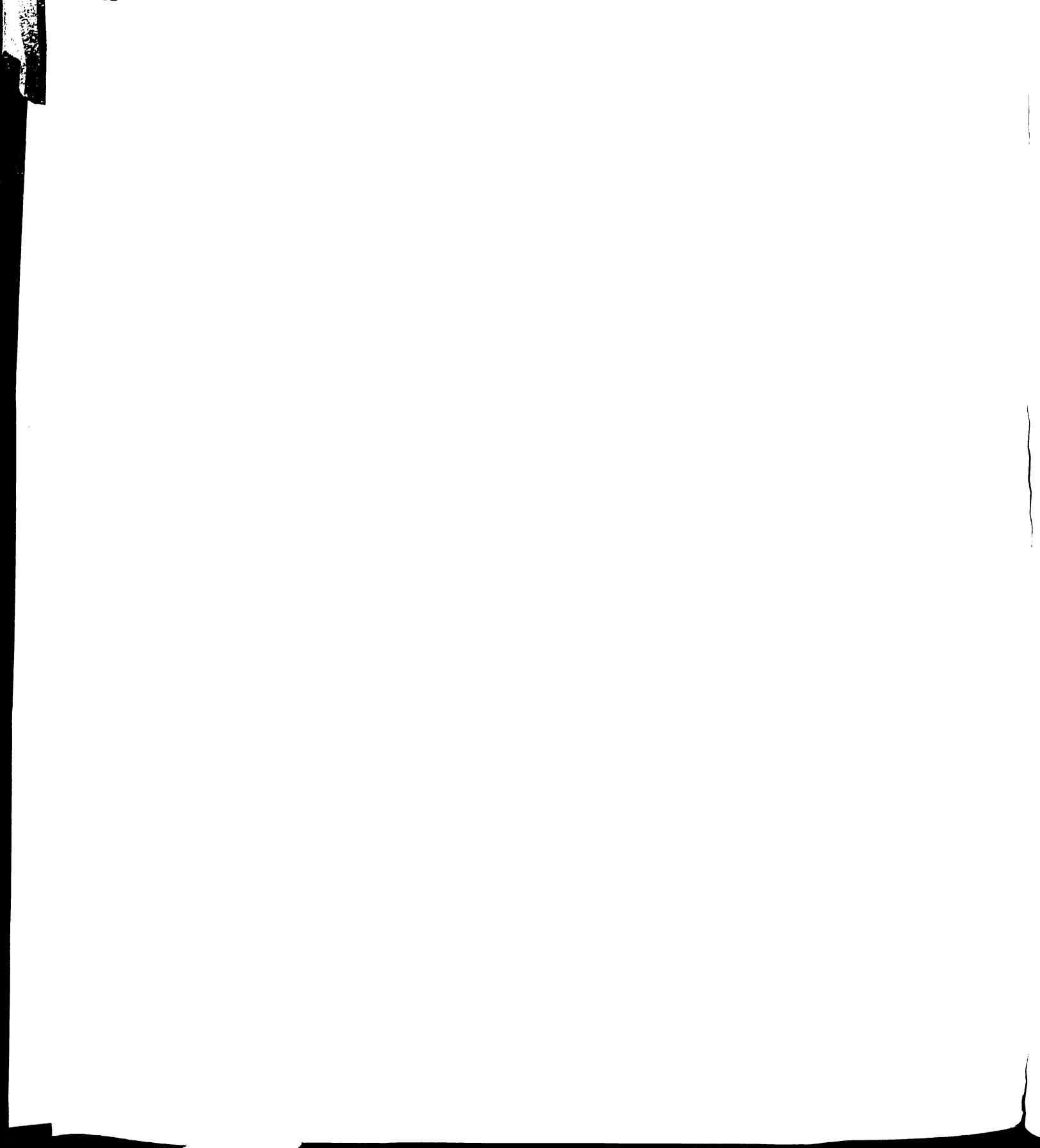
<sup>2</sup> Blunt 21.



these concerns, there is no doubt that their efforts to define race and otherness are privileged above all others. Interestingly, the narratives that are part of this study draw on a shared system of geographic and social classification, whereby for instance, Northern headhunters and Southern Muslims are differentiated from each other, and yet are used as markers of "primitive" otherness.

Unfortunately, the traditional devaluation of women's writing has prevented these from being put on the same plane and receiving the same credit as those authored by male travelers. But there is no doubt that the women of this study make a significant equal to, if not more, to the works put out by male travel writers. They were able to transgress and literally travel beyond domestic and private borders to assume a more prominent place within the colonial order that enabled them, in turn, to write about issues and themes related to gender, colonialism, and the construction of imperial knowledge.

Throughout this dissertation, I explore these American women's attitudes toward America's colonial role in the Philippines, but I do not approach "colonial discourse" as a stable and monolithic category. Instead, my aim is to show how this dissertation is a part of a discursive field in which travel narratives, personal letters, and official



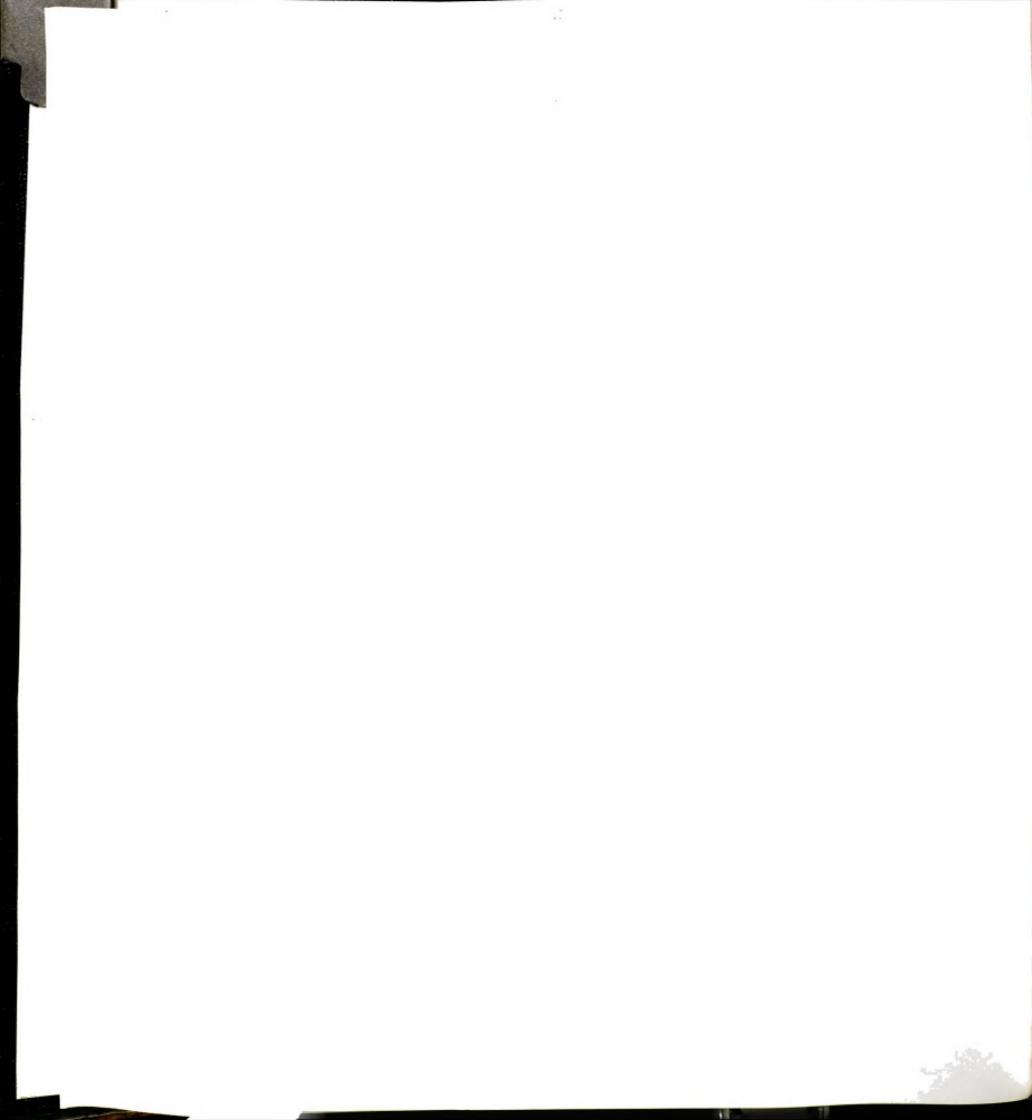
documents intersected with each other in the production of a colonial ideology that naturalized American rule in the Philippines. Finally I believe that this dissertation opens the possibility for me (and other scholars) to study more aspects of the popularity of travel writing during this period, and how this mode of writing became an important source of "official" knowledge.



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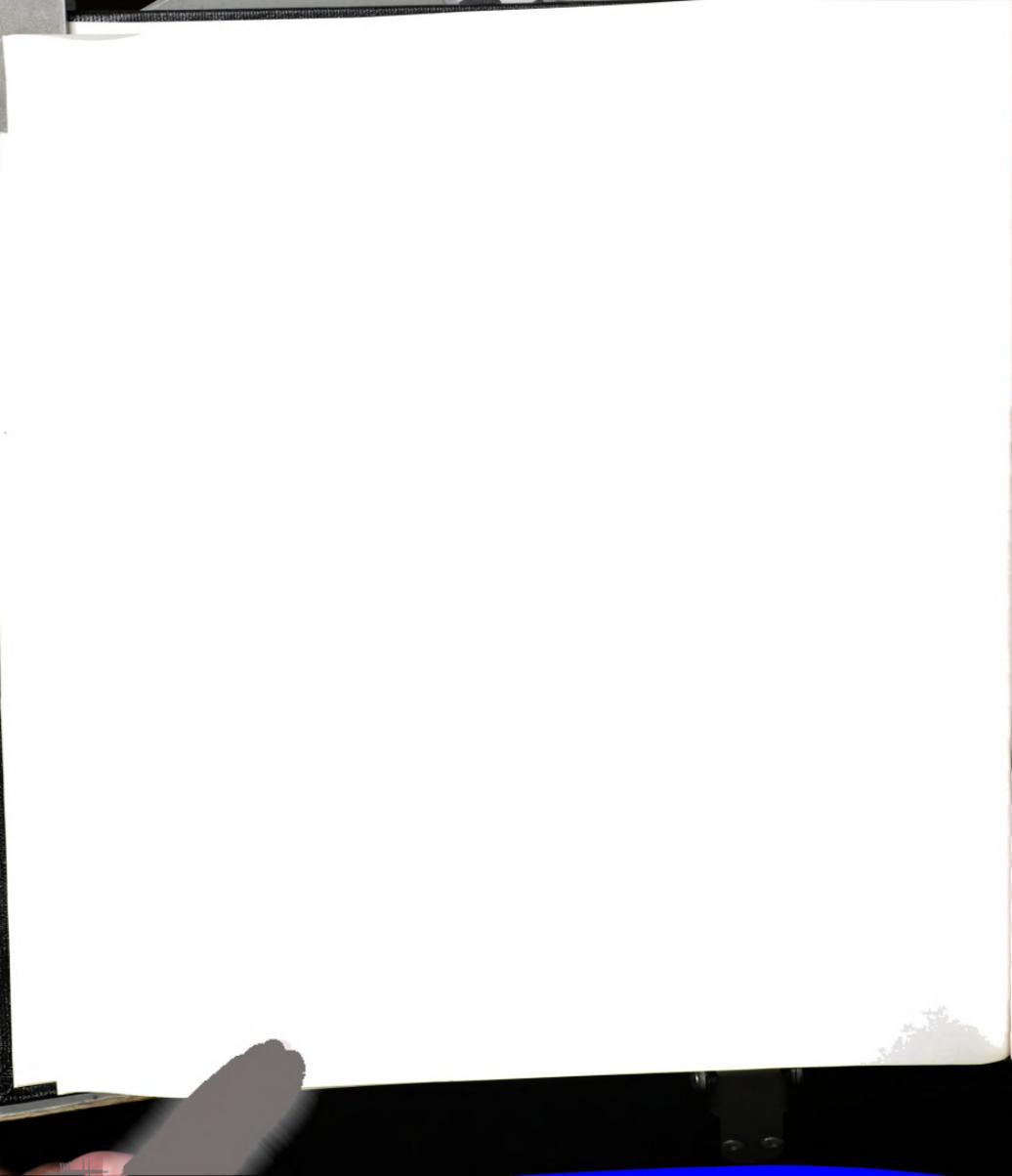
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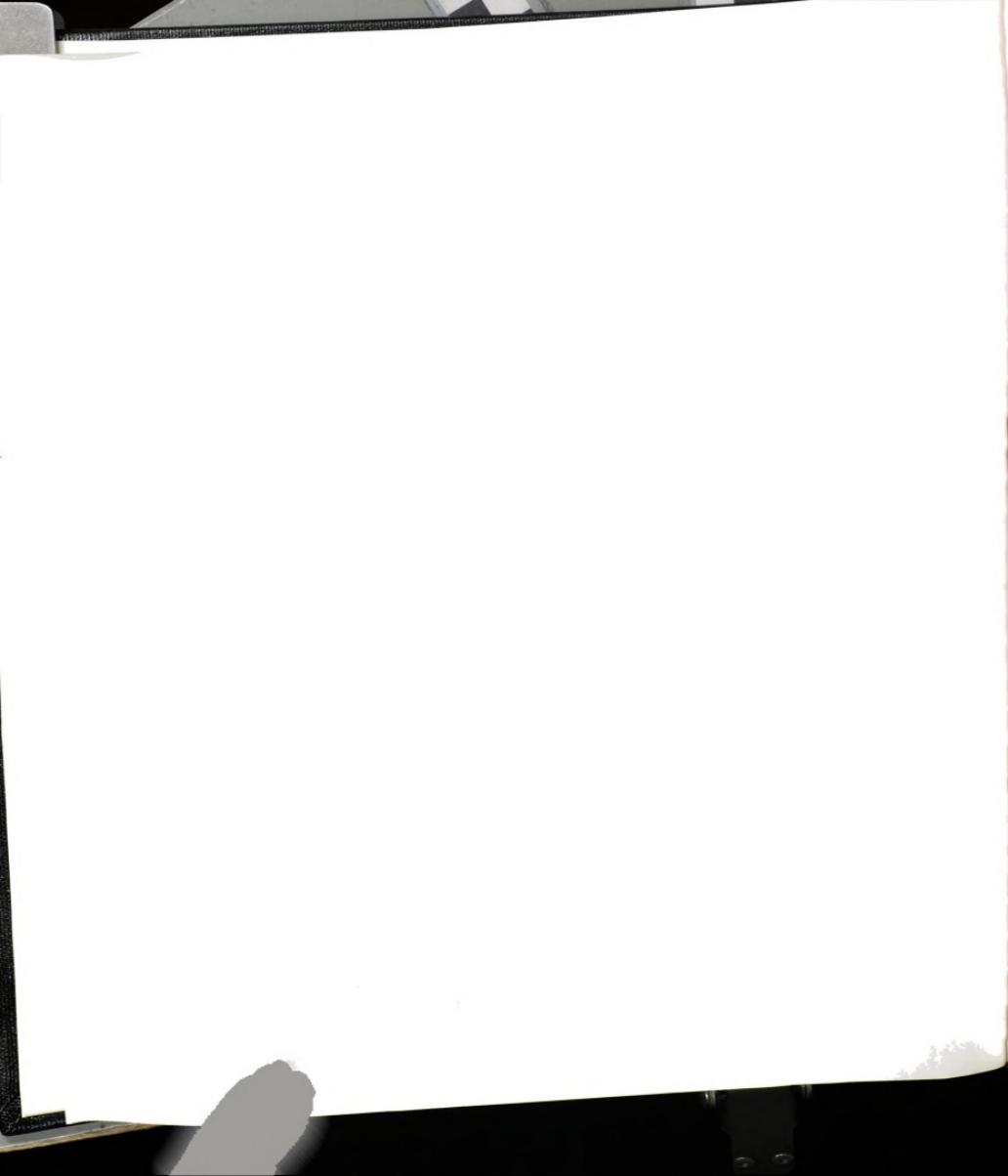
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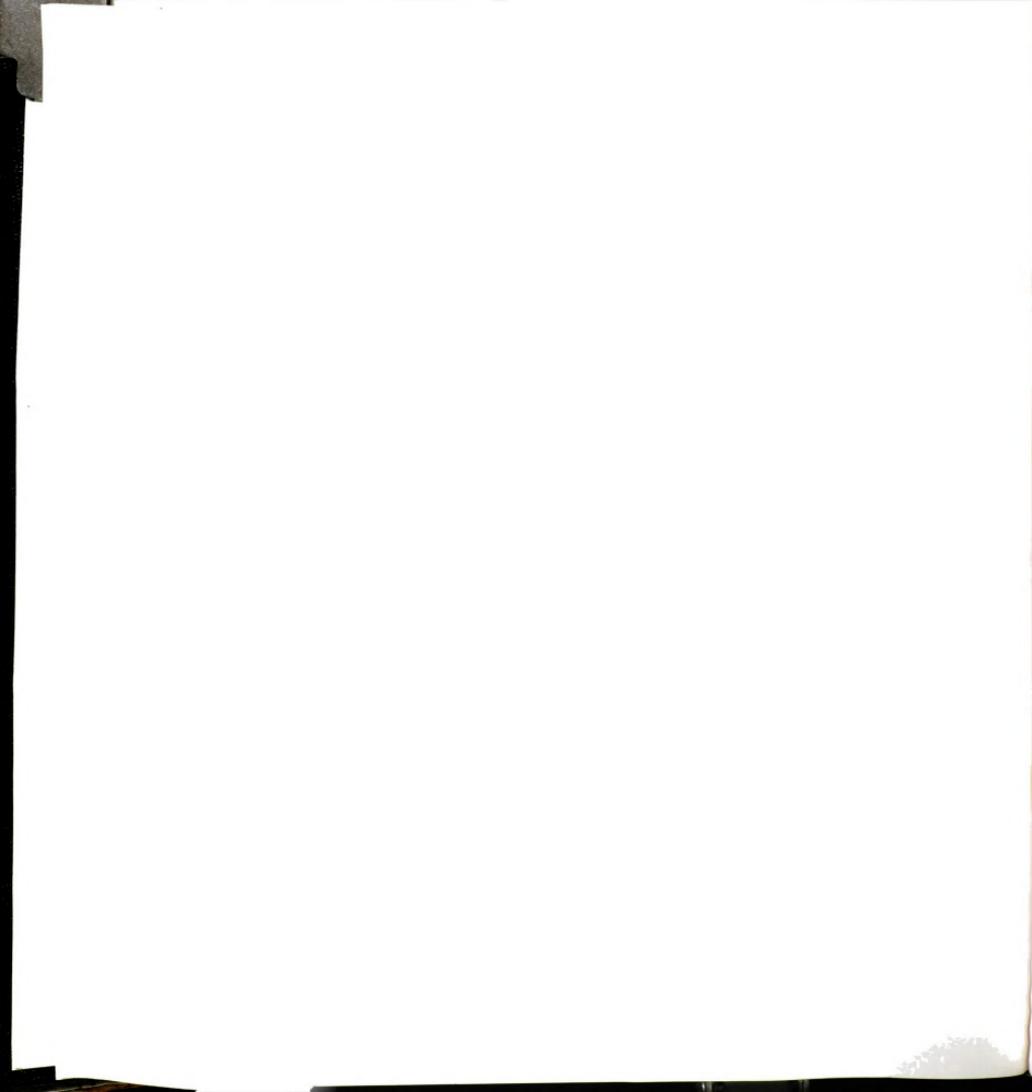
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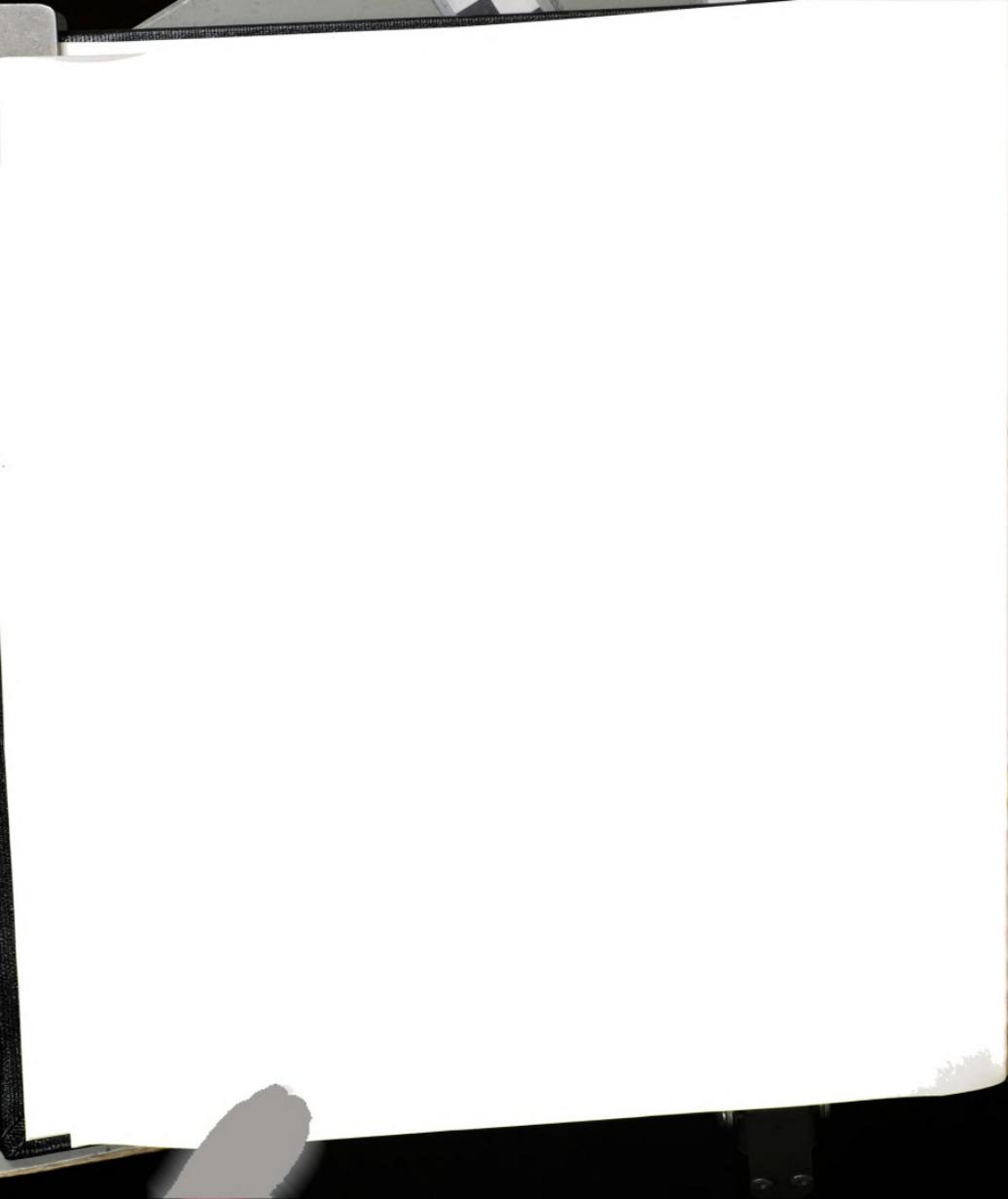
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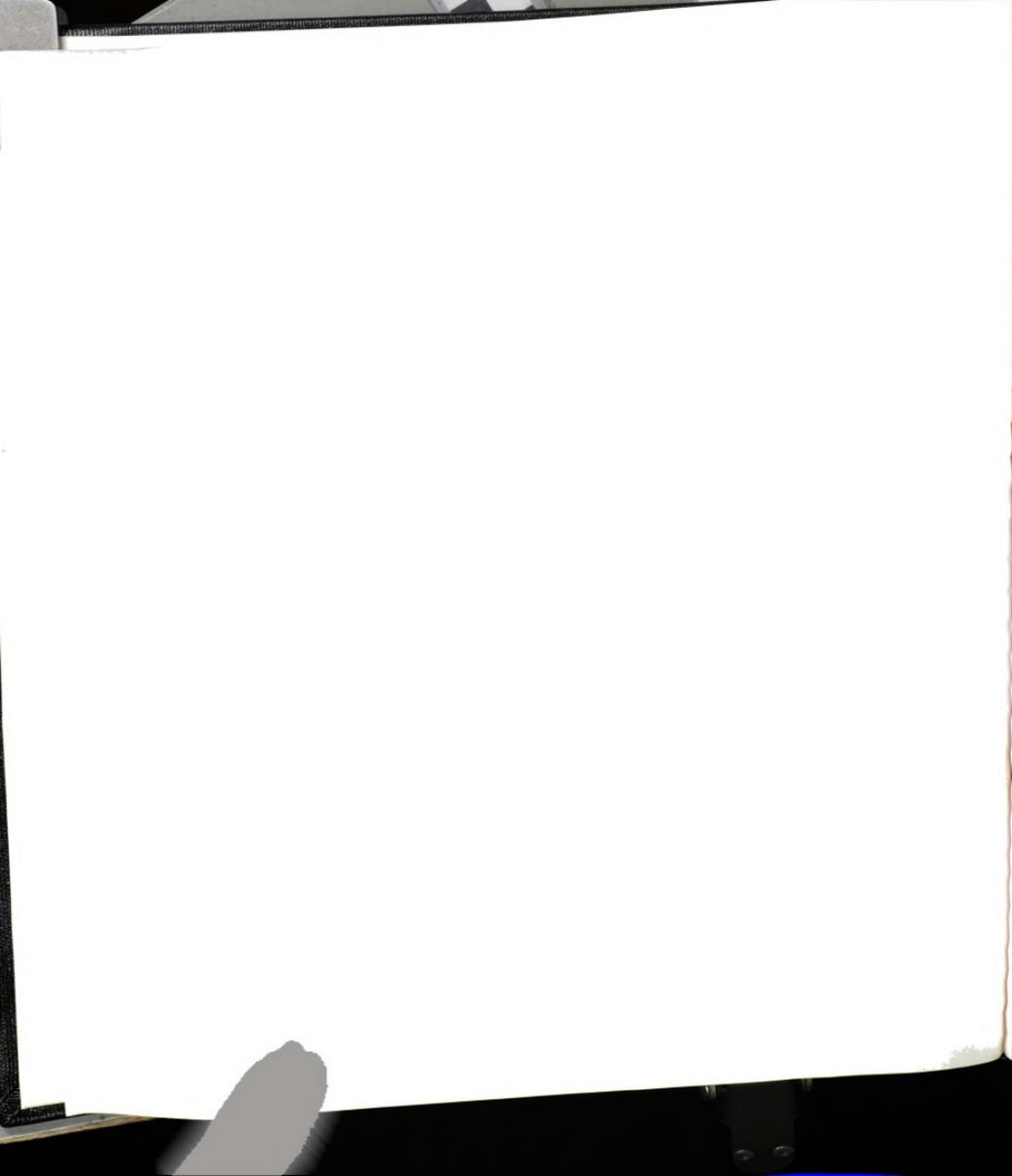
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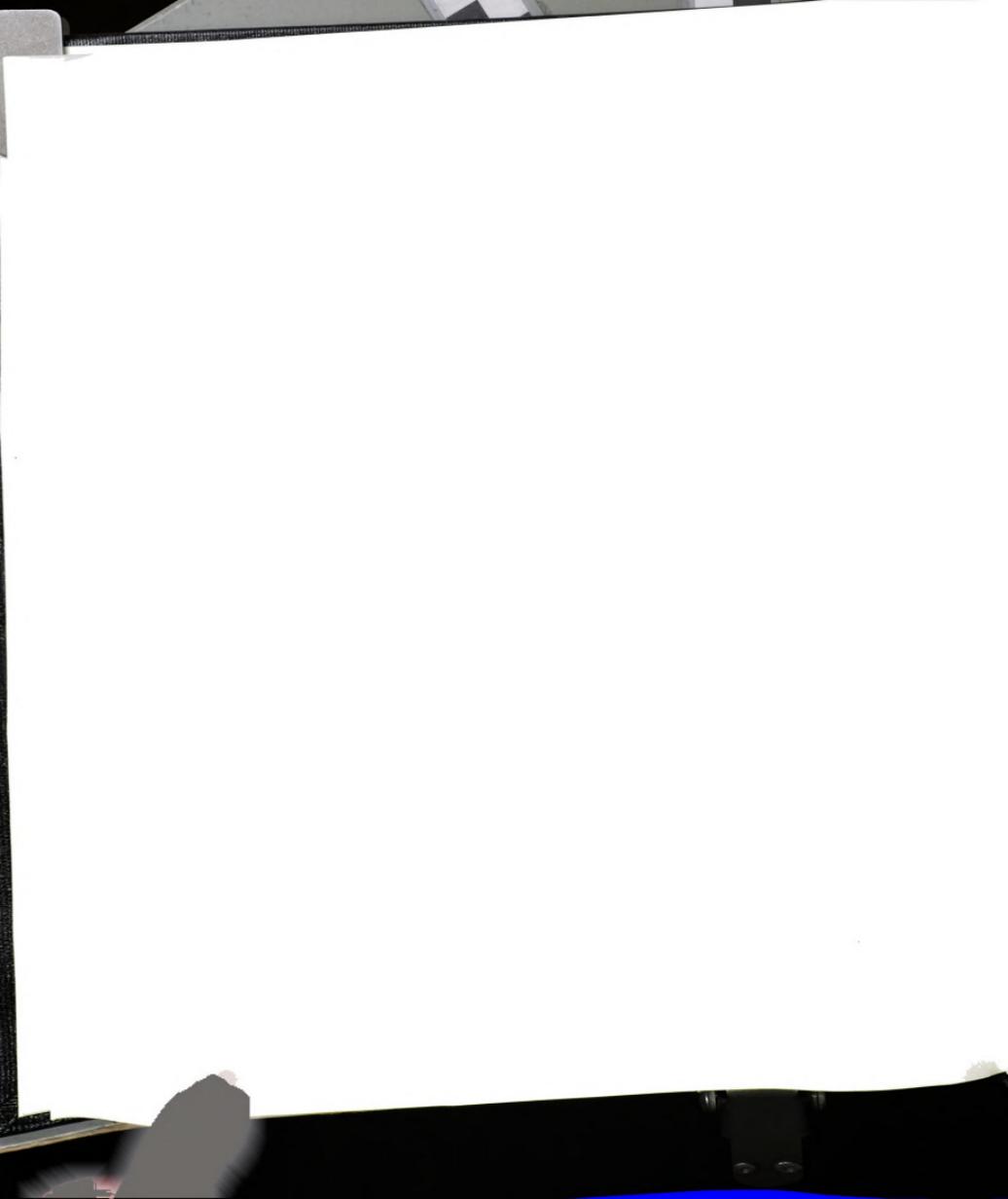
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