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“BAHALA NA ANG DIOS”: THE CHURCH’S ROLE IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF
FILIPINOS IN THE GREATER TORONTO AREA

by

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B.A. (Hons), University of Toronto, 2003

A Major Research Paper
presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts

in the Program of

Immigration and Settlement Studies

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2008

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Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the role that the Roman Catholic church has played in the socialization of Filipinos in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The research is based on scholarly acknowledgement of the important place of social institutions—such as churches, synagogues, mosques, temples and other places for religious and faith-based gatherings—in the settlement and integration experiences of immigrants. The paper argues that Roman Catholicism, first introduced into the Philippines via Spanish colonization, has become an important marker of identity for many Filipinos and has functioned—aided by their facility in the English language (a result of American colonization of the Philippines)—as a means of easing the barriers to Filipinos’ integration into Canada.

To better analyze the role the Roman Catholic church has played in Filipino-Canadian immigrant life, the study provides an overview of the history of migration to Canada and discusses the place of the church as seen from the perspective of representatives of diasporic, transnational and second generation communities of Filipinos in Canada. As such, the main data for the study is drawn primary material comprising interviews with Filipino-Canadians from each of these community groups.

Key Words: 1) Immigrants; religion; Filipinos; Greater Toronto Area; identity politics

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CHAPTER 1:

An Introduction to Filipino History and Philippine Immigration into Canada

1.1 Colonial Roots: A reaction to Hispanization

Since the colonization of the Philippines by Spain in 1565, Roman Catholicism has been an important part of the religious identity and culture of Filipinos. In 1968, author and traveller, Fred R. Von der Menden, took an early yet extensive look at how religion became inextricably linked with national sentiment in the Philippines in his book, *Religion and Nationalism in South-east Asia: Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines*. Although the Philippines is known for its multiple colonization by the Spanish, the Americans and the Japanese, the author reminds us that the rapid spread of the Christian faith, mainly through the Roman Catholic institution, was to have perhaps the most profound and lasting influence on the country's inhabitants and culture:

The Philippines were under Spanish control for four centuries (during which time the vast majority of the population was converted to Roman Catholicism) and then became an American colony. The islands rebelled against Spain but enjoyed a peaceful development toward freedom under the United States. Against this varied background, religion played a vital role in the evolution of nationalism.

(Von der Menden, 1968: viii)

In his book, Von der Menden focuses on Catholicism in the Philippines and discusses it in relation to the emergence of nationalism and nationalist sentiment leading up to and after the Philippines sought political autonomy. He posits that “[n]ationalism in countries under colonial rule arose primarily as an ideology directed against imperialism and for national independence” (Von der Menden, 1968, 4). Yet, in its bid for political independence, the Philippines did not reject the religion of their Spanish colonizers. Instead, Roman Catholicism underwent an indige-

nization, resulting in the emergence of—as Philippine-American scholar Evelyn I. Rodriguez notes—a unique practice of Roman Catholicism. This “indigenous” form of Roman Catholicism provided a large majority of Filipinos with a liturgy, albeit rooted in the religious practice of one of their colonizers, through which to express themselves spiritually and culturally. For example, one of the ways in which the practice of Roman Catholicism in the Philippines took on a local “flavour” is evident in the incorporation of indio folk beliefs in religious worship and celebration. Among other things, in local performances, Catholic rituals took on a more theatrical dimension than in Spanish Catholic orthodoxy. One Filipino tradition that still exists today, which reflects this mode of resistance via transformation is the interpretation of the Passion play to display the Filipino flair for the dramatic and the theatrical. Every year, Filipino productions of the Passion play are highly gruesome. A group of people take on the mantle of Christ quite literally, not only by partaking in a procession through the streets, flagellating themselves with real blades along the way, but also by voluntarily offering themselves for crucifixion—literally allowing themselves to be nailed to a cross. This cross is then raised and left in the open for several hours for bystanders to gape at. (This flair for transformation is also evident in the jeepney, which resists not Hispanization, but rather American culture. These jeepneys are old military jeeps left behind by the American army stationed in the Philippines in World War II. In Filipino hands, these vehicles have been transformed, through layers of bright paint and elaborate patterns, from military transportation to domestic conveyance for the lower classes, indicating the Filipino tendency to transform transforming symbols of colonization and turning them into uniquely Filipino cultural items.) Localized versions of Spanish Catholic rituals developed as a form of resistance to “full Hispanization” (Rodriguez, 2006: 9)¹. Hispanization is the term

¹ Rodriguez’s use of “Hispanization” refers to her focus on the Spanish colonialization.

used to refer to a situation where Spanish way of life, perception and worldview replaced or transformed traditional indio folk beliefs and customs.

But while Filipinos transformed the religion of the colonial masters for their own spiritual, expressive purpose, I also argue that religion, in the form of Roman Catholicism, has become what Marx calls, “the opium of the masses.” Regardless of their physical location, the collective trauma of Filipinos created the social climate in which the people remain dependent on Catholicism for emotional support generations after the end of colonization. Filipino Catholicism has changed from being a tool of resistance against Hispanization to something crucial to the survival of Filipinos. It has grown beyond a reaction to colonization and has become so much a part of Filipino culture that it affects the lives of Filipinos even as they immigrate to new countries, such as Canada. However, before a fuller discussion of the role that Roman Catholicism plays in the survival of the Filipino community in Canada is undertaken, it is necessary to provide a context for the discussion by outlining the history of Filipino immigration to Canada.

1.2 Filipinos in Canada: An Introduction

Filipinos are a fairly recent ethnic group within the Canadian landscape as they began immigrating to Canada in substantial numbers only in the twentieth century. Yet they have become one of the fastest growing communities in the country and currently are the fourth largest visible minority group in Canada. With a heavy American colonial presence in the country’s history, it is no surprise that most Filipinos are fluent in English. In 1991, 95% were conversationally fluent in English and 3% could even speak both English and French (CIC, 1999). Statistics Canada indicates that Southeast Asian immigrants are the strongest performers in the labour market, and that the frontrunners are Filipinos. This bit of information from Statistics Canada is important because it demonstrates that even the most recently arrived Filipino

immigrants are finding work; the unemployment rate for Filipinos is only 5.4%, falling closely behind the Canadian-born rate of 4.9% (Nova News Net, 2008). The Filipino education system is American-based, using English as the main language of instruction. As such, Filipinos have the advantage over other many other immigrants in this respect because speaking English is one of the main impediments that prevent many newcomers from finding gainful employment. Regardless of when Filipinos arrived in Canada, they have always been able to secure employment in Canada. In fact, distinct periods of Filipino immigration into Canada closely follow trends in the Canadian labour market.

In a November 2000 study, the Philippine Women's Centre of B.C. (PWC) outlines roughly three periods, or "waves," of Filipino migration (15). The PWC considers the first wave as that from the 1960s to the early 1970s. In this wave were the professionals (doctors, nurses, teachers, etc.), who came to Canada as landed immigrants. The second wave of Filipinos came in the latter part of the 1970s. Interspersed among this second wave were professionals as well as skilled workers. What is significant about the last and most recent wave, which covers the period from the 1980s to the present, is the predominance of domestic workers who have come on work contracts to Canada. The PWC study classifies the Filipino community into two broad groups: immigrants (permanent residents and citizens) and migrants (migrant workers, the undocumented, students, professionals or bureaucrats sent to study or train abroad and government officials) (15). It is important to note, however, that statistics made available about the Filipino community do not include those who have temporary worker status (for example, participants in the Live-In Caregiver program). Yet, in 2000, such temporary workers made up about one third of the Filipino community in Canada.

It is evident that these three waves are each marked by distinct categories of workers. Herein lays an important aspect of Filipino immigration: family members may have become separated as a result of their having differing marketable skill sets. For example, in one family where the husband trained as an auto-mechanic, a wife trained as a nurse, and her sister recently graduated from high school, it is very possible from an historical standpoint that migration would have split up the family as the labour market in Canada demanded different skill sets at different times: the wife would have been more desirable in the 1960s for her medical training; the husband in the late 1970s for his vocational skills; and the sister in the 1980s and 1990s as she would meet the requirements for a nanny. It is also true that under the Canadian government's "Family Reunification" category, family members with no desirable skills to effect migration on their own behalf could seek to be reunited with family members already in Canada. This migration category functioned, and indeed, continues to function just as its name implies, and is the main avenue through which many elderly Filipinos left behind when their children left the Philippines for gainful employment are able to enter Canada.

1.3 Filipinos in Canada: A Brief History

1930s, 1940s, and the 1950s

The standard account is that the first Filipino entered Canada in 1931 (Makilan, 2006; Bustamante, 1984). However, Aranas reports that even prior to 1931, there were already two Filipinos in Canada. Between 1931 and 1945, the Filipino population numbered only, and after that, five others made their way to Canada (two in 1946 and three in the early 1950s) (Aranas, 1983: 84). The Philippine Embassy reports a higher number in the 1950s, with 10 Filipinos

making Manitoba their home. This group included educators, nurses and medical technicians (The Philippine Embassy, 2008).

1960s and 1970s

From 1956 to 1964 there was a dramatic increase in the Filipino immigrant population with 770 Filipinos making Canada their home (Pablo, 2007). At that time, Filipinos were officially categorized as a distinct ethnic group in Canadian immigration statistics and as such it is a fairly easy matter to ascertain numbers. In 1965, the Filipino population increased to 1,467 and by the following year, the number was up to 2,639. Filipino-Canadian writer and newspaper publisher Reuben Cusipag reports that there are not that many resources on the early Filipino immigrants as, to use his words, they were “left to their own devices” (1993: 43). Therefore, there is a significant gap in the literature on early Filipino settlement in Canada, and one outcome of this MRP is a small closing that that knowledge gap. In 1968, Winnipeg’s Filipino community grew as workers were recruited for the garment industry and their compatriots, recruited to work in clerical and manufacturing industries, came shortly after. This marked a change from earlier in the decade when it was predominantly Filipinos trained as doctors, nurses and laboratory technicians who were recruited to fill Winnipeg’s labour needs (The Philippine Embassy, 2008).

Cusipag (1993) reports that the typical Filipino immigrant to Canada is a female who is of a childbearing age. He provides a fuller profile, in the process demonstrating not only the uneven gender distribution but also a decline in the prestige of the jobs held by incoming Filipino immigrants:

If she came in the 60's, she would have been a middle level professional (nurse, medical technologist, business or liberal arts graduate), in the 70's, an office worker and in the 80's, a worker in the service industry. She would have settled in Ontario.

Immigration statistics show that the majority of Filipinos coming to Canada were from the 20-39 age group. In 1967, they made up 88 per cent of the total, 77 per cent were females...In the 1980's, the service class doubled, then tripled, to become the largest category of immigrants to date. One reason for this was the 1981 policy that gave domestics the right to apply for immigrant status after two years of residency. With the tightening of requirements concerning immigrants who might compete with Canadians for jobs, the easiest and fastest way of coming to Canada for Filipino women was to be a domestic.

(Cusipag, 1993: 7-8)

Migration to Toronto in the 1960s was mostly by Filipina nurses who were educated under the American health care system and who came to Canada after their U.S. work permits had expired. One of the nurses among this group of immigrants recalled for Cusipag that there were only fifteen of them and that Filipinos were a “non-entity” who did not see much growth in numbers in the years immediately after their arrival in Canada (1993: 41).

James Bejar's (2006) study, *Transnational Communities: Filipina Nurses in Rural Manitoba, 1965-1970*, is a more nuanced look at the lives of Filipino nurses who migrated to Canada from the U.S. He reports that in the U.S.-based Visitor Exchange Program (EVP) that hosted international graduate nurses to work in American hospitals for a maximum of two years, 80% of the nurses were Filipino by the late 1960s. He also notes that because of the nurses' “exposure to the opulence, opportunities, and conditions of professional life in North America,” their reluctance to return to the Philippines at the end of their program resulted in many applications for permanent residence in the U.S (20). Those who were unable to secure permanent residency either returned home or looked towards Canada. The nurses' desire to find a permanent home in Canada coincided with a shortage of nurses in Canada, particularly in

Manitoba where the need for medical professionals was evident from the late 1950s. Because of the American education system in the Philippines, the Filipino nurses had little difficulty meeting the expectations of the Canadian nursing institution. Notably, in 1965, Philippine university graduates were encouraged to find work abroad and were enticed by offers from United, Philippine and Northwest Airlines of “no-interest fly-now-pay-later’ plans targeted specifically at doctors and nurses” (Bejar, 2006: 29). In 1969, nurses from the United Kingdom, U.S., Australia and Korea also filled the staffing needs of Canadian hospitals and clinics. In a cohort of 285 foreign trained nurses that year, 168 of them were from the Philippines (Bejar, 2006: 26-27).

After changes to the Canadian Immigration Act in 1967, more Asians were “welcomed” to the country (Corrigan, 2004: 55). Corrigan writes (almost too) positively about this period in Canadian immigration history, reminiscing about the time when “Canada began to welcome Asians as a source of economic and cultural enrichment” (55) without any acknowledgement of issues, such as discrimination, racism and uncertainties about the future, typically faced by new and visible minority immigrants. Before 1961, there were 235 registered Filipinos in Canada and between the years 1961-1970, the number increased dramatically to 9, 560, in large part due to the introduction of the Points System in 1967 (Statistics Canada in Corrigan, 2004: 54). Filipino-Canadian lawyer and author, Marcial Q. Aranas, provides a breakdown of Filipinos in each professional category:

Of all the workers who came to Canada in 1967 to 1973 inclusive, 44.4% were classified in the professional, managerial, commercial, and financial category; 28.6% in the clerical; 14.5% in the manufacturing’ mechanical and construction trades; 6.8% in the service occupations; and 5.7% in the laboring, agricultural group and others.

(Aranas, 1983: 87)

There was a steady inflow of Filipinos between 1967 and 1973. Of the 26,796 immigrants that entered Canada, 16,338 were from the Philippines. The remaining Filipino immigrants to Canada were the 10,468 Filipinos from the U.S. Migration. The majority of the immigrant population was young women in their “productive years” (ranging from the ages 20-44). Women greatly outnumbered their male counterparts in this wave (13, 277 females to 6,984 males) (Aranas, 1983). By 1976, there were 54,949 Philippine immigrants in Canada.

In 1967, the top four destination provinces for Filipinos were Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia (B.C.). Six years later, in 1973, Ontario remained the top destination with 13,849 Filipinos in residence, with Manitoba (3,802) and B.C. (3,705) in second and third place. 2,312 Filipinos called Quebec home, and rounding off the top five was Alberta with 1,802 members in the Filipino community in that province. In the group that came between 1967-1973, nurses (3,564), clerical workers (2,853), and medical and dental technicians (1,104) were the most commonly indicated professions (Aranas, 1993: 94). Writer Rosalina E. Bustamante (1984) provides some insights into the social lives of the immigrants of this period, which gives a clear indication that the Roman Catholic Church was an important part of their settlement experience:

A large number of Filipinos who had come to Toronto between the mid-sixties and early seventies made their homes in the apartments on Maitland Street, near the main thoroughfare -Yonge Street - in the downtown. Some preferred the St. Jamestown area near Sherbourne and Wellesley, while others settled in the southwest of the city, in the Jameson-Queen-King Streets area. The choice of area of residence has been influenced by several factors: proximity to the hospitals and business offices, where most of the Filipinos worked, and the location of Catholic churches in the vicinity-St. Basil's Church on Bay Street, Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Sherbourne and the Holy Family Church on King Street near Jameson. Most of these Filipinos were young female Catholics who came from highly protective families in their home country. The nearness to a Catholic church offered them a certain feeling of security. These girls banded together for company as well as for economy. They lived in twos or threes in each apartment unit. They went to church and to social functions together; they double-dated with male friends.

Many of them have developed lasting bonds with each other and still bring their families together for reunions during the Christmas holidays.

(Bustamante, 1984: ¶ 5)

Addressing the preference of many Filipino immigrants to settle in Ontario, Bustamante reports that, “It was in the late seventies when Toronto finally overcame Montreal in size and when (1975-77) the Philippines was among the first top ten native countries of immigrants to Canada.” In response to the growing numbers of Filipinos in Toronto, the Silayan Community Centre opened in 1971 on Wellesley Street and the Kababayan Community Centre, which is still located in the Parkdale neighbourhood of downtown Toronto, was opened in 1977, over a decade after the group of Filipina nurses from the U.S. gravitated towards Winnipeg. Significantly, the Parkdale area of Toronto is close to St. Joseph’s hospital and because these incoming medical staffers wanted to live close to work, one of the early Filipino groups were centered in this area. In addition, living in the St. Jamestown area allowed little travel time to hospitals such as St. Michael’s, Toronto General, The Hospital for Sick Children and North Western (Cusipag, 1993: 45). But while being trained in the medical professions allowed a number of these Filipinos easier access to employment, this was not the experience of all in the community, as Cusipag points out:

However, for those who did not participate in the medical field, employment was a “hit and miss” situation. Although there were a few enterprising Filipinos who decided on opening restaurants in the downtown near Kensington Market in Toronto, they could not compete with the businesses of neighbouring Chinese venues with a more affordable cuisine.

(Cusipag, 1993: 57)

In addition to the marked feminization of migration, the late 1970s also saw an increase in the number of “manongs” and “manays”, “lolos” and “lolas” (translated from Tagalog as “elderly men”, “elderly women”, “grandfathers” and “grandmothers”, respectively). The immigration

trend shifted its focus from professional recruitment to the increase of senior citizens, which resulted in the reunification of separated families. With the increase in the numbers of elderly Filipino immigrants came an increase in the reminders to the younger generation of Filipinos establishing themselves in Canada of the values of the old country, particularly the centrality of the Roman Catholic church in Filipino everyday life. In the Philippines, the social networks of the community revolve around the Roman Catholic church, and so naturally the presence of elderly immigrants was integral to increased church activity and attendance in the community and factored into more and more Filipino Canadians renewing their faith.

Just as there is evidence that the Filipino women who came to Canada as nurses in the earlier period formed social networks through their church parishes, such as the information available on Toronto, so too have later Filipina immigrants in the Live-In Caregiver category, formed social networks through churches. The following section provides a brief overview of this later wave of migration that has contributed to the growth in the numbers of Toronto's Catholic parishioners.

1980s and 1990s

Over half the Filipinos in Canada (52%) arrived in the 1980s. Peter Li writes that, "In the 1986 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada identified visible minorities as including: Blacks, Indo-Pakistani, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, South East Asian, Filipino, Other Pacific Islanders, West Asian and Arab, and Latin American, excluding Argentinean and Chilean" (Statistics Canada, 1990: 71-2). A distinct group quickly gaining ground (but not necessarily stability due to their transient nature); the next wave of Filipinas included many overseas contract workers (often referred to in scholarly work as OCWs). The Live-In Caregiver Program was the main

method of obtaining landed immigrant status after a two-year stint, and Filipinas quickly became synonymous with “nanny.” Steill and England confirm that Filipinas make up the largest group of foreign domestic workers in Canada (1999: 47).

Steill and England also note that because of the population and greater demand, Toronto is usually the main destination for foreign domestic workers. Grace Chang (2000) observes that there is a romanticization of Toronto as evident in an article in *The Globe and Mail* which stated that by coming to Toronto and improving their economic status, Filipinas are, by gaining independence and confidence through transnational work, “challenging” the stereotype of Filipinas’ subservience to their men (136). However, Chang counters the sentiment expressed in *The Globe and Mail* by arguing that Filipinas’ domestic work in Canada is a reinforcement of subservience as “the only difference is that they provide domestic services to employers in the First World, instead of their own families, while servicing their government’s foreign debt at the same time” (136). Remittances to the Philippines are a major part of the experience and family obligations of Filipino workers abroad, providing what Rhacel Parreñas (2005) calls a “smooth flow of foreign currency” (53). However, even this steady and significant flow is not enough to service the country’s large debt to the IMF and the World Bank.

In 2001, “the Philippines was fourth among countries of origin for immigrants in” Canada (Statistics Canada used by Corrigan, 2004: 54). The Philippine Embassy claims that more Filipino immigrants are coming under independent classes, with a rise in the number of investors and entrepreneurs coming in to Canada. Yet it is hard to envision this as the reality with the predominance of low paid, temporary workers. Despite the fact that Filipinos rank highly in terms of the level of education attained among immigrants, they still have questionably low income that “suggests” a “general level of discrimination at work” (Bumstead, 2003: 318).

2000 and beyond

Statistics Canada (2006) reports that, “in 2001, there were 308,580 Filipinos in Canada. They are the fourth largest visible minority subgroup representing 7.7% of the total visible minority population and 1% of the total population. Filipinos are most frequently reported as living in Ontario (51%), British Columbia (21%), Alberta (11%) and Manitoba (10%), and a small percent reside in Quebec (6%). Similar to other visible minority subgroups, Filipinos continue to have a strong preference for Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), with approximately 95% of their total population living in one of the 27 CMAs. Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg accounted for 72% of the Filipino population.” It is relevant to note this trend as “Canada’s racialized population is mainly concentrated in urban centres, with nearly three quarters (73%) living in Canada’s three largest cities in 2001 and accounting for major proportions of the populations of those municipalities - Toronto (43%), Vancouver (49%), and Montreal (23%)”, with urban centres as the “engine of Canada’s economy” (Galabuzi, 2006: 4).

Often considered a younger group of immigrants, only 6% of the total population of Filipinos is in the 65 and over age group compared with the rest of Canada at 13%. Close to 50% of the total Filipino population fall within prime working age (25-54) (Statistics Canada, 2006).

CHAPTER 2:

A Bridge Between Worlds: The Church's Role in the Lives of Immigrants and

Filipinos in Canada

2.1 Why study the church's role in the lives of Filipinos in Canada?

For the purposes of this paper, I accompanied my mother on June 4, 2008² to the “Our Mother of Perpetual Help” Devotion, which takes place every Wednesday at noon at St. Patrick’s Church located on McCaul Street in downtown Toronto. I observed that 95% of the people in the half-full church were Filipino and that the majority were female, with an almost even split between middle-aged and younger women. The clergy was mostly White with the exception of two middle aged Filipinas, one of whom was a lector while the other was a Eucharistic minister.

The priest mentioned that people from all over the GTA were present, and that he had recently met some among the congregation who had made their way from Mississauga. My mother and I had travelled from the border of Scarborough, on the east side of the GTA, to attend the mass. When the hymns were sung, they were in tune and in distinctively Filipina voices. The names of the deceased were read were almost all Filipino and were perfectly pronounced by the lector. Later on in the mass when “Our Father” was recited, many hands were spread and uplifted to the sky, imitating Christ at the Last Supper³. It is interesting to note here that the legacy of some of the first Roman Catholic missionaries in the Philippines is still evident in prayer rituals

² This mass is televised on Vision T.V., a Canadian channel.

³ It is interesting to note that the majority of Filipinos in North America and back home display a version of Leonardo da Vinci’s “The Last Supper” in their home dining areas. This is a testament to the role religion plays in their lives.

as the brochure that was used in the mass was produced by the Redemptorists (www.redemptorists.ca) and includes prayers such as the Memoraré, Prayer of the Faithful, and one for the Mother of Perpetual Help. Hymns sung, such as “Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly,” “Immaculate Mary,” “Hail, Queen of Heav’n, the Ocean Star” and “Woman of Mystery,” are also Marian in nature. The fact that most of the parishioners at the mass were Filipina women speaks volumes about the importance the Roman Catholic church plays in Filipino Canadian diasporic life.

The mass that I attended with my mother was not reserved for a special religious feast and it did not even take place on a Sunday, the day most associated with worship in the Christian calendar. The presence of Filipina faces on Vision TV certainly reinforces the stereotype of “church-going” Filipinos⁴ as well as changes the (televised) face of the Canadian landscape. It is important to note that St. Patrick’s is not specifically a Filipino church (unlike the First Filipino Baptist Church, which is located in the Bloor and Spadina area of Toronto). This weekly service is just one of many similar services around the GTA that include Catholic parishioners that are largely Filipino, demonstrating the impact religion has on the Filipino community.

⁴ One respondent in this study referred to his Filipina mother and mother-in-law as “Psycho-Catholics”, and defined the term as having the tendency to attend mass more than once a week, be very active in church life to the extent of inquiring if their relatives have gone to mass. If one has missed mass, they will be subjected to a guilt-trip as well and made to feel personally ashamed, for which the Filipino term in the Tagalog language is “hiya.” Calling someone a “walanang hiya” (translated as “without shame”) is the equivalent to telling that person s/he has a loose and immoral nature.

2.2 “Why this study? Why now?”- The importance of the examination of Filipinos and the Church

The importance of this topic for major research paper emerges from several factors. My main goal is to answer the question: Why is it important to study the Roman Catholic church in the lives of Filipino Canadians? This section examines the role Catholicism has played in helping Filipinos carve a niche for themselves in Canada and how crucial religion is in the assimilation and integration of newcomers. My discussion of the church’s role in Filipino immigration and settlement indicates its importance to group identity formation and cultural retention; my discussion will also touch on the ways in which the church has functioned as a bridge between the Philippines as the homeland and the new host country for transnational/migrant labour class, properly diasporic and second generation Filipinos. In the latter case, attention will be given to those born in the Philippines (most accurately described as the 1.5 generation) but who settled in Canada at such a young age that their memories and experience reference only Canada.

2.3 Christianity and the church’s role in the lives of Canadians and immigrants to Canada

Canadian immigration scholar J. Kivisto (1992) states that, “[W]e do not have a critical mass of immigrant social scientists interested in religion” (cited in Ebaugh, 2000: 5). This deficiency in existing scholarship is enough of an argument in itself to justify this major research paper, especially with the lack of studies available using Filipinos and religion as variables. An exception to this rule occurs with Korean churches, as Ebaugh (citing Kivisto as a source) notes, “We know more about the Korean Christian churches than Filipino Catholic ones, even though Korean immigrants number about half as many as Filipinos” (2000: 5). If this is the case within

studies south of the border, what about the gaps in studies in Canadian where immigrant populations have a shorter history?

In order to examine immigrant religious activity in Canada, it is crucial to look at what has traditionally taken place. While the influence that religion exerts in Canadian life has declined over the years, it remains an important mode of identification for the majority of Canadians. More so, religious communities provide a vital context in which the concerns of minority groups are expressed (Bramadat: 1). Interestingly, the federal government used to consult religious communities (mostly Christian in nature) about the level and mix of immigration. (Bramadat: 158) David Lyon (2000) contends that the “Two (Canadian) solitudes in religion happen to be Protestant and Catholic (5). The focus on Christianity has dominated Canadian history and it is crucial to the way Canadian society has developed in the past three to four hundred years. In the 2001 Census, most Canadians identified religion as a major component of their self-identification (Bramadat, 2005: 3). Canadian professor Paul Bramadat (2005) argues that the Christian religion was used to “disempower” Aboriginals in Canada. Ironically, what he refers to as “the traditional exemplars of Christianity” (United, Anglican, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic) are losing their status in Canada (3). Because of immigration trends, religious diversity is a hot topic. American scholars Joaquin L. Gonzalez and Andrea Maison (2004) quote fellow scholar Putnam (2000) who argues that because of the multifaceted nature of religion as a social institution, “Churches and other religious organizations have played a unique role as incubators of civic virtue in the United States” (339). In any society, religion as agent for integration/acclulturation and/or assimilation is well entrenched. Church communities have historically been an important place for a variety of immigrant communities to build and maintain networks and links. Further on in this chapter, I will use the early days of St. Patrick’s worship community

in Toronto as an example of how the church played an important role in the settlement of German newcomers, who were then better able to assimilate into the Canadian mainstream.

2.4 Example of an earlier cohort of an immigrant church in Toronto

The church often functions as site where identity—personal and communal—is cemented and it often facilitates the bridging of the generation gap among community members. Prior to becoming a parish associated with a large Filipino population (which, according to some parishioners, has happened within the last few years), St. Patrick’s Church in downtown Toronto was predominately German, and was headed by Redemptorist clergy who were Protestant in religious orientation⁵. The blend of religious life and social outings benefitted the St. Patrick German community, especially during the increase in the population of German immigrants from the 1930s to 1950s. A Catholic Settlement House was actually “built on the church property in 1930,” functioning as a community centre with an after-school program for children, dances for adults, English and German classes, a library and a kindergarten complete with theatre evenings (Martens, 1984: 98). The Holy Name Society, the Catholic Youth Organization and the Rosary Society and a credit union were formed to add to the financial, social, and recreational life of the community. Developments included the purchasing of land and the building of facilities in Richmond Hill (such as a pool, tennis courts, a baseball diamond, and dance pavilion). The purpose for all of this development was for activities to take place within church designated space so that parishioners “would not be lost to Communist clubs and to inter-marriage with non-Catholics” (Martens, 1984: 99).

⁵ The popularity of St. Patrick’s Church is not an accident as The Redemptorist Movement was also highly prevalent in the Philippines. This church houses Marian devotions also known as “Our Lady of Perpetual Help”, which are Redemptorist in origin. In the interviews, it was mentioned several times that this is the reason why Filipinos chose this church as a place of worship.

The Redemptorist clergy assisted with the integration of German immigrants. The clergy taught the Canadian norms as well as lead homeland activities such as cooking German foods, performing and dancing to heritage songs. Naturally, the formal separation between the priests and the people decreased and true social connections were forged. However, the cohesive unit that was the St. Patrick's German church community began to decline in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, although glimmers of that decline were evident as early as the 1940s. What began to occur was that the later waves of German immigrant population began attending English masses and buying homes outside of the area (Martens, 1984: 100). Nowadays, the Catholic Settlement House has a very different demographic, even though the majority of its users at one time were German-speaking children.

2.5 The church's role in the development of social and cultural capital for Filipinos

The influence Catholicism has in the Filipino community in Canada is clearly evidenced in the pages of *Balita* and *Peryodiko Radikal*, two Filipino newspapers that intermingle prayers and photos of Jesus with the news of the day. The interconnection of the sacred and the secular is evident in other ways as well. One example will suffice to demonstrate how the church is involved in the spiritual as well as everyday life of its Filipino parishioners. Recently, in the online version of *The Vancouver Sun* (January 21, 2008), Joanne Lee-Young reported that Penfolds Roofing's vice-president, Steve Peterson, "tapped" into his church network to recruit workers directly from the Philippines, a decision which stemmed from referrals from his father-in-law: "The church wound up referring one third, maybe 40 per cent' of the 75 carpenters they have hired from the Philippines' said Peterson" (Lee-Young, 2008: ¶ 18). This example and others like it reinforce Verba, Schlozman and Brady's contention that, "Churches are not only places of worship, but also spaces for the cultivation of civic engagement and sites for political recruit-

ment, incorporation, co-optation, and empowerment” (1997, quoted in Gonzalez and Maison: 340). Gonzalez and Maison also cite examples of fundraising, classes for children and community work in addition to church attendance in “We Do Not Bowl Alone: Social and Cultural Capital from Filipinos and Their Churches” (2004). Using two case studies from Daly City, the “Filipino centre” of San Francisco, California, their study,

(...) examines how Filipinos are bringing back social capital to the fabric of American society through the churches they have taken over from declining congregations or established on their own. It also shows how they blend Filipino cultural practices and beliefs to create new and stronger sociocultural capital. Finally, it analyzes the transnational nature of sociocultural capital spread globally through the Filipino diaspora.

(Gonzalez and Maison, 2004: 339)

They argue that despite the decline in church attendance by Europeans (includes those of White and Caucasian ethnicities) and African-Americans, churches are expanding with immigrants from newer source countries. In San Francisco particularly, “Filipinos, other Asians, and Latin Americans are connecting through the church with the “non-Filipino, non-Asian world” (341)⁶. Church becomes a means to help the community and a place where they can actively acquire social and capital means to integrate. The way in which the church has helped Filipinos create social and cultural capital is by strengthening their networks, which allow them the confidence and the connections that enable them to thrive spiritually, socially and economically.

⁶ Grace Talusan, a Filipina scholar from Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts, has written an essay about the nature of Philippine diaspora titled, “The Myth of Filipino Magnetism” (*Kartika Review*, Issue 03, Summer 2008). Despite Gonzalez and Maison’s argument about connecting with the “non-Filipino, non-Asian world”, despite being miles apart, Talusan argues that Filipinos are always connected to each other through the recognition of other Filipinos in the media and through social networks. There is a general agreement within the global Filipino community that Filipinos around the world are well within of “six degrees of separation” from each other.

2.6 “Talking about my generation...”: Identity politics, generational waves and the church

The identity of an immigrant is largely shaped by the factors of their migration and when they arrive in their host country. In their discussion of Asian Americans and Conservative Religion, Carnes and Yang argue that, “[I]mmigration is disruptive and immigrants seek new order in their lives” (2006: 7) It is important to examine the factors of immigration and figure out where the church fits into these matrices in order to demonstrate its function as a social institution that brings communities of immigrants, and different generations within those communities, together. In this study, two main findings emerge from the research:

a) Regardless of age, conditions of immigration and residential status, Filipinos are familiar with the practices of the Roman Catholic church

and

b) Filipinos create and strengthen their social networks through the church and that pragmatic social assistance is available for the newcomers through the networks that develop within/out of the church.

In support of these arguments, Filipino Canadian scholar Eleanor Laquian contends that, “The Roman Catholic Church serves as the centre of much Filipino social interaction outside the home. Religious holidays are celebrated with traditional rites, featuring native songs and dances, special foods and decorations.” (Laquian, 2008)

2.7 The “Double Marginalization” of the 1.5, and Second Generations and Bridges to Change

In the opening vignette of this chapter, I shared the personal experience of when I attended mass with my mother and it is useful to now explain in more detail some of my personal history as a means of initiating a discussion on the role the Roman Catholic church plays in bridging the gap between generations and fostering a sense of identity and belonging among Filipino Canadians, particularly among the “1.5 generation”. My parents, two older sisters and I immigrated to Canada in 198. We were sponsored by my aunt and qualified for the Family Class division. Although I was born in the Philippines, I have no memories of “the homeland.” I am of the homeland by virtue of the geography of my birth, yet I am a Canadian by virtue of where I grew up. I and others like me, experience difficulty of pledging allegiance to two or more cultures and this is problematic because I cannot reconcile one side or another. One is often plagued by the question, “But where is home?”

Although his original scholarship studies focus on second generation Koreans, Princeton theology professor Sang Hyun Lee’s discussion of “double marginalization” is also pertinent to the realities of Filipino Canadians of the 1.5 generation. According to Lee (1993, who is quoted in Heo, 2005: 33), “double marginalization” occurs when those of the second generation are neither North American by their biological parents or heritage, nor Korean (in this case, Filipino), because of the location of their birth and acculturation to North American culture. For the second generation, the possibility to return to their “Koreanness” (again, for the purposes of this study, replace this with “Filipinoness”) is not an option (in Heo, 200: 33). I argue that for the 1.5 generation that was born in a foreign country yet mostly raised in North American as well as the second generation, there is a possibility to return to their cultural heritage; however, the authen-

ticity of their cultural experience comes into question as well as their degree of willingness to connect with their heritage.

What is interesting is that the church offers a space in which such gaps in culture and psyche can be bridged. Although I demonstrated that religion was used as a tool of colonization in Chapter 1, the church has become a place where both Filipinoness and Canadianness can merge and it is difficult to demarcate where one ends and where one begins. As will be seen in Chapter 4 of this study, a few respondents share the same sentiment in their comments that when they are in church, it is like being “at *home*”. This line of thinking leads one to believe that for religious Filipinos, church becomes what Homi Bhabha calls, “The Third Space.” Although Bhabha’s argument did not develop out of a discussion of religion, it is relevant to the experience of the Filipinos. Instead of following religious practices that simply honor (and perhaps mourn) the past in one’s home country, worshipping and participating in church activities are an acknowledgement that one end (the immigration experience of leaving the country of origin) is the beginning of something else (which is the arrival to the host country). This idea is akin to Janice Kulyk Keefer’s in, “The Sacredness of Bridges” where she argues that, “[y]ou can’t step into the same river twice.”(101) Essentially what is taking place is an “immigrant experience continuum” that bridges the experience of newcomers with that of the homeland. Both Bhabha and Kulyk Keefer express that within the present, there are “worlds lived retroactively” (Bhabha, 1994: 139), removing the boundaries of time and space and enabling more of a constructive dialogue between “here” and “there’ and multiple subjectivities.

CHAPTER 3:

The Role of the Church in the Socialization of Filipinos in the Greater Toronto Area:

Participant Responses

3.1 “Skipping Church? No Way!”: The Researcher’s Personal Reflections

Church has been a fundamental part of life and I have missed it less than a handful of times. I cannot remember exactly why I missed it, yet I knew that it had something to do with being angry at my mother. My absence at mass was a true strike against her and her beliefs. Religion is the one thing that my mother feels very strongly about.

When I was nine years old, my great aunt, Miss Pacita Santos, a Filipina lawyer and philanthropist, visited us in Toronto from the Philippines. Although my family attended mass every Sunday, once Lola⁷ Patsy came, Mom’s church involvement increased tenfold. It was 1989. It is important to note that Lola Patsy was also one of the three founders of the Legion of Mary in the Philippines, a church group that is devoted to the mother of Jesus (Lu, 1989). Not only did my mother become a part of the Legion of Mary at our parish (Annunciation in Don Mills, Ontario), she encouraged my sisters and me to join the junior branch of the Legion. In the Legion, we hosted and attended youth religious gatherings, handed out prayer cards, made rosaries for distribution and collected funds in a “secret bag” for religious supplies and charitable donations. More than half the Junior Legion was Filipino. The same could be said for the adult faction.

⁷ “Lola” means “grandmother” in Tagalog. Although she was my great aunt, she was like a mother to my mother, and it is only fitting for her to have this title.

Last year, most of the Annunciation Parish's "Multicultural Group" was made up of Filipino people, particularly Filipinas, my mother being one of them. She was also a part of the adult Legion of Mary, going into her 18th year. The 7 p.m. "Youth Choir" is also predominately a sea of Filipina faces.

When my MRP supervisor, Dr. Hyacinth Simpson, read over the historical content about Filipinos in Canada, a thread within the work steered me away from the topic of Filipino literature that I had intended to study. Instead, the idea of Filipinos and their involvement in the church stood out of the content. When she suggested this topic, it was a natural fit for me. For example, how could I forget the countless hours I spent perfecting my knot-tying for handmade rosary production? Even to this day, I can recite the Catena, one of the prayers that are unique to the Legion of Mary, and sing the hymns that accompanied certain processions. How much more interesting are these prayers now that I am old enough to understand them, instead of repeating them in rote memorization? I offer these memories to contextualize and validate studying the church's role in the socialization of Filipinos in the GTA.

3.2 Methodology

The qualitative method was chosen for its emphasis on the participant's personal experiences. Because the religious activity of immigrants (especially Filipinos in Canada) is understudied, it is crucial to set up the particular social contexts in order to have a fuller understanding of this research. In his comparison between the differences of qualitative research and quantitative research, Randall Collins highlights the importance of allowing the participants to share their stories:

Words are not only more fundamental intellectually; one may also say that they are necessarily superior to mathematics in a social structure of the discipline. For words are a mode of expression with greater open-endedness, more capacity for connecting various realms of argument and experience, and more capacity for reaching intellectual audiences.

(Collins, 1984 quoted in Neuman, 2006: 459)

Since religion is such a deeply personal choice, it was imperative that I interview participants who were willing to tell their stories.

3.3 Research Rationale and Design

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of the church in the socialization of Filipinos in the GTA. For this project, I sought answers to the following questions through a series of interviews:

- 1) How has the church become a place of refuge for Filipino immigrants?
- 2) Since the church is a site of socialization, in what ways have Filipinos been able to express themselves and are these forms of expression reflective of more Filipino traditions or of Canadian traditions? Is there a sense of shared space in the church or are there clear social demarcations that exist within the houses of worship between Filipinos and Canadians?

The research entails a set of interview questions that were designed to draw out information relevant to my topic⁸. Interviews were 30-40 minutes in length and were taped and transcribed for accuracy and review. Participants were given consent forms with had further details of the study as well as information regarding confidentiality of responses and respondents' identity.

⁸ The questions of this study were based on S.F. Corpus' "An Analysis of the Racial Adjustment Activities and the Problems of Filipino-American Christian Fellowship in Los Angeles (Masters Thesis)" (1938). Although the questions that I have posed are similar in nature and both studies focus on a Filipino religious community in North America, the types of responses produced by Corpus's research are specific to one religious group of Filipinos in the Los Angeles area. However, this study is not limited to a particular group or a certain parish in the GTA. In addition, there are differences as to the social demographic of the GTA as well as differences in nationality of the respondents.

3.4 Sampling

The study focused on members from the Filipino community who fell into one or more of the following categories:

- 1) Those who immigrated to Canada during the early 1960s to the early 1970s. This cohort was dominated by medical professionals such as doctors and nurses and joined by teachers who came as landed immigrants.
- 2) Those who immigrated in the later part of the 1970s. This cohort included professionals as well as skilled workers escaping political strife brought on by the 1973 declaration of martial law in the Philippines.
- 3) Filipino immigrants from the 1980s until the present. This cohort is then separated into two distinct groups:
 - a) Those who are immigrants (permanent residents and citizens)
 - b) Those who are migrants (which includes undocumented persons, students, professional persons and bureaucrats sent to study abroad and government officials as well as temporary workers such as Live-In caregivers)
- 4) 1.5 and second generation Filipinos. 1.5 generation Filipinos are those who were born in the Philippines but raised in Canada while second generation Filipino-Canadians are those who were born in Canada.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Notices were sent via e-mail to various parishes within the GTA9. In addition, I used the snowball sampling method to recruit participants. I met participants in mutually agreed upon areas to conduct the interviews. Face-to-face interviews were taped.

⁹ See Appendix C for the consent form used. Appendix D contains the details of the notices that were a part of the recruitment process. Note that not all parishes in the GTA that are listed in the Archdiocese of Toronto were contacted as they fall out of the range of the GTA (for example, parishes located in Stouffville, Ontario).

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

All comments were printed out, reviewed and color coded in order to organize, synthesize and summarize the material into themes that are to be discussed in subsequent chapters.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

All commentary has been recorded in a manner that is satisfactory to the participants of the study. In addition, any comments that were altered and omitted were done at the behest of participants.

3.8 Limitations to the Study

Time limitations on this study existed as the research for this study was limited to three months, including the period in which the Research Ethics Review took place. Once this study was approved, the actual promotions (i.e. in-church notices and advertising) were released. It should be taken into consideration the amount of time participants needed to decide whether they wanted to participate in the study as well as time they could set aside to answer the interview questions. This was also the case for the principal investigator.

The size of the sample is another limitation of this study. Because of the large number of Filipinos immigrating to Canada, the collected provides only a snapshot of Filipino Canadian life. This research is not meant to be a full account of the views and experience of all Filipino-Canadians, but is rather to provide a glimpse into the role the church plays in the lives of different groups (as previously identified) of Filipino Canadians.

CHAPTER 4:

Results from the Interviews

It is useful to provide some background information on the interviewees. In total, there were 19 respondents from various parishes within the GTA region. The content of the interviews is organized according to the answers of the participants and are in order in which they were asked.

The participants fall within the following cohorts that were outlined earlier in this study. The table below summarizes the participant responses to Question 1:

Table 1¹⁰

Name	Age Information (current/upon arrival to Canada)	Year of Immigration to Canada	Immigration Class Upon Arrival to Canada (occupation prior to their arrival to Canada)	Cohort for this study
Ria	Age 66/Arrived at age 23	1965 (Moved to Toronto in 1975)	Medical Professional - Independent (Nurse)	1) Early 1960s to the early 1970s (Medical staff & professionals who came as landed immigrants)

¹⁰ To maintain the confidentiality of the respondents, all of the names in used are pseudonyms.

Name	Age Information (current/upon arrival to Canada)	Year of Immigration to Canada	Immigration Class Upon Arrival to Canada (occupation prior to their arrival to Canada)	Cohort for this study
Ernie	In his 60s/ Arrived in his early 20s	1974	Family Class - Independent (Educator)	2) Middle to late 1970s (Professionals & Skilled Workers escaping political strife upon the declaration of Martial Law in the Philippines)
Luke	Age 38/Arrived at age 10	1980	Family Class - Sponsored by his father (Student)	4) 1.5 & Second Generation Filipino Canadians
Justin	Age 27/born in Canada	N/A - born in 1981 in Toronto	Parents immigrated to Canada in mid-1960s (mother came independently to Canada)	4) 1.5 & Second Generation Filipino Canadians
Mary Anne	In her 60s/Arrived in her 40s	1985	Family Class - Independent (teacher)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)

Name	Age Information (current/upon arrival to Canada)	Year of Immigration to Canada	Immigration Class Upon Arrival to Canada (occupation prior to their arrival to Canada)	Cohort for this study
Anya	In her 40s/Arrived at age 22	Mid 1980s	Family Class - Sponsored by her father (Student/Recent Graduate)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)
Melanie	Age 50/Arrived at age 31	1989	Family Class - Independent (Administrator)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)
Robert	Age 51/Arrived at age 32	1989	Family Class - Sponsored by his wife (Architect)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)
Evelyn	Age 28/Arrived at age 9	1989	Family Class - Sponsored by her mother (Student)	4) 1.5 & Second Generation Filipino Canadians

Name	Age Information (current/upon arrival to Canada)	Year of Immigration to Canada	Immigration Class Upon Arrival to Canada (occupation prior to their arrival to Canada)	Cohort for this study
Nora	In her 60s/Arrived in her 50's	1996	Family Class - Independent (Chemical Engineer)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)
Joseph	In his 60s/Arrived in his 50's	1996	Family Class - Independent (Engineer)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)
Clara	In her 40's/Arrived in her 30's	1997	Professional - Independent (Accountant)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)
Franco	Immigrated to the US at age 5/Arrived at age 25 (married to a Canadian)	1999	Family Class - Sponsored by his Canadian wife (Administrator)	4) 1.5 & Second Generation Filipino Canadians

Name	Age Information (current/upon arrival to Canada)	Year of Immigration to Canada	Immigration Class Upon Arrival to Canada (occupation prior to their arrival to Canada)	Cohort for this study
Diana	In her 40's/Arrived in her 30's	2001	Migrant Worker - Sponsored by her employer (Live-In Caregiver)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)
Pascal	Age 13/Arrived at age 8	2003	Family Class - Sponsored by his mother (Student)	4) 1.5 & Second Generation Filipino Canadians
Ella	In her 60's/Arrived in her 60's	After 2000	Migrant Worker - Sponsored by her employer (Live-In Caregiver)	3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)
Cely	In her 40's/Arrived in her 40's	2006	Migrant Worker - Sponsored by her employer (Live-In Caregiver)	3) Early 1980s to present (predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation)

Name	Age Information (current/upon arrival to Canada)	Year of Immigration to Canada	Immigration Class Upon Arrival to Canada (occupation prior to their arrival to Canada)	Cohort for this study
Erica	Age 20/Arrived at age 18	2006	Family Class - Sponsored by her mother, who arrived as a Live-In Caregiver (Student)	Can be classified as belonging to the following two cohorts: 3) Early 1980s to present (Predominance of Live-In Caregivers and Philippine migrant workers to Canada: First generation) 4) 1.5 & Second Generation Filipino Canadians
Manny	Age 26/Arrived at 7 months	1982	Family Class - Sponsored by mother (N/A)	4) 1.5 & Second Generation Filipino Canadians

2) *(For those who immigrated) What kinds of expectations did you have before you came to Toronto? How have they changed?*

In response to Question 2, the majority of the replies from those who were already of working age when they immigrated to Canada (older than the age of 18) revolved around having more employment opportunities in Canada. In addition to the concern about employment, other responses involved the expectations of an improved quality of life and the ability to save money

and invest (as opposed to living “pay cheque to pay cheque”). For those with families, the consensus was that the move to Canada was for “*A better future [and] a better life [Robert]*” for themselves and their children.

Specifically for those in the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP) cohort, they were not only expecting more secure employment, but they were also expecting more dignified treatment from their employers. Cely recalls her expectations of Canadian standards for LCP’s:

When I went to Hong Kong in 1991, I really wanted to come to Canada, but I had to go to other countries. When my cousin found my employer in Hong Kong, I went there instead of Taiwan. I wanted to stay there because they were talking about Canada being really cold.

In Hong Kong, mostly... if it is hot, the employer would be using the air con[ditioner]. In Hong Kong, I would work with western employers, so they would have big flats...but sometimes the maids would have to share their rooms with the children. Or they would sleep in the kitchen or the living room. Sometimes in the room, there are upper and lower decks (bunk beds).

Interviewer: *So you expected Canada to be different than that?*

Cely: *Yes. In Canada, you have your own room, [and] your own bathroom.*

Interviewer: *And now you have your own room?*

Cely: *I have my own room and my own bathroom. [Cely]*

In regards to the next interview question about how expectations of Toronto changed after arrival, Cely recalls that the employment standards she was looking forward to deviate slightly than from what she expected:

Usually I have two days off...but we are supposed to be 2 [care-givers] here... because they are elderly, I would do the night shift and she would do the day shift....45 hours in one week we work. When I called Immigration, they said we cannot work more than 45 hours in one week, 8 hours a day. They are not going to pay you for overtime. I am on call for 24 hours but I won't get that extra pay. I know lots of them already... It's up to us if we really want to work it...but we are still [working].

*In Filipino, it's called **pakikisama**¹¹... Why wait until tomorrow what you can do today? When I was in my first employer, I would still work more than 8 hours. [Cely]*

Clara, who describes her immigration experience as “fast-tracked” due to her professional status as an accountant, also demonstrates a discrepancy between what she expected and the reality once she came to Canada:

I expected to find a job in accounting right away because the Canadian consuls who recruited me said there was a great need for accountants. I found that it was very difficult to find a job because of the Canadian experience requirement. I had to find any available job. My first job was for just \$8 per hour in an auction house as its bookkeeper.

¹¹ Billones and Wilson (January, 1990) and Aranas (1983) define “pakikisama” as “[T]he ability to get along with others. When someone of authority confronts the elder, the elder ‘may give in to’ or conform to the will of the leader, even if it is contrary to his/her own feelings. Patience is the virtue that many elders adhere to as they attempt to deal with situations of potential conflict. Pakikisama functions to maintain harmony and to avoid any conflict with others (p. 4). The tendency for Filipinos to do this is inevitably reinforced in care-giving situations, especially in live-in employer/employee arrangements where the home and work divide is slightly blurred. These situations are themes within the work of Stiell and England (1999), Macklin (1994), Parreñas (2005, 2001a and b), and Arat-Koç (2001).

I had the misfortune of not having any relatives or friends or any connections when I came to Toronto in 1997. If I did, I guess I would have had better luck at getting better jobs. As it was, I was alone and found it difficult to make ends meet. [Clara]

Similar to their senior cohort¹², 1.5 and second generation youths who were old enough to understand leaving the Philippines admitted to anxiety about their new surroundings, demonstrating that regardless of age, immigration is a stressful experience. As mentioned in Cely's testimonial about expecting Canada to be of lower temperatures, Luke, aged 38, who arrived as a 10 year old boy, also looked forward to his new country being, "Cold - that was my first thought. But the first day, we came and we played in the snow. It was a very different place from where we came" [Luke]. On the whole, their reactions mirrored concerns that their parents and families had, such as opportunities for a better life. Erica, aged 20, describes her experience with mixed feelings:

I expected to have a much better life here and gain more knowledge while I'm studying and working but feel homesick most of the time. I d[o] have a much better life here and gained much knowledge but [as] for being homesick, it's just sometimes. [Erica]

3) *Why did you come to Parish X? What role has the church and church community played in helping you transition to Canada? To Toronto? (If they say the church played a role, then ask the respondent to specify in what ways being a part of the church made it easier (or more difficult) for them to settle and integrate into Canadian life and city life).*

¹² For the purposes of this essay, those referred to as the "Senior cohort" are those in groups 1-3. Those in the "Junior cohort" are those in group 4 (1.5 and second generation Filipinos).

During the interview process, Question 3 demonstrated a shift towards investigating life in the parish and if it helped to ease or complicate to the respondents' transition and settlement to Canada. Between the respondents, there was a divide between the location of the church as a reason for attending a particular parish and those who were influenced to attend a certain parish due to family and friends. Those who settled independently had a tendency to choose the location of their first parish in Canada because of family and friends, despite their homes being farther away (Cely, Ella, Diana, and Clara). Those in the Family Class had a tendency to choose their parishes by default of their location (Ria, Nora, Joseph, Melanie, Robert, Anya, and Ernie), which was normally tied to the Catholic separate school that their children attend (Erica, Pascal, Manny, Evelyn and Manny). Anya expressed that she became more active in the church *after* enrolling her children in the altar server program at her parish. She is currently a part of several groups in her parish as well as the leader for the Children's Saturday Liturgy.

Church social networks are crucial to the integration of newcomers, especially helpful for those who come independently. Clara gives a poignant description about the way the church helped her to form friendship networks despite her disappointment once she arrived in Canada¹³:

I decided to find some friends and went to my new parish, Our Lady of Lourdes on Sherbourne, and joined the Legion of Mary, where I met some Filipinas who formed my first batch of friends. From this first group I was able to get a sense of belonging and moral support. I wanted my friends to be Catholic knowing that they'd be on the same page as me and be trustworthy because of shared moral principles. This was in 1998 - 2002. These Legion of Mary friends did not provide me with job leads but they

¹³ Please refer to Clara's experience in Question 2 where she shares her difficulties finding work in her intended field of accounting upon her arrival to Canada.

*made my life more bearable with social gatherings and shared prayer times
[Clara].*

In relation to the second part of Question 3, *What role has the church and church community played in helping you transition to Canada? To Toronto?* Most of the respondents mentioned that the church did help because of the social networks that were formed. Church was a way to connect with other Filipinos and to norms and customs established while growing up.

I was brought up Roman Catholic. When I was a kid I was brought up that way, and I am practicing my religion. [The church] did help me...blend in....you feel like you are at home. Nothing has changed. [Robert]

For 1.5 generation Filipina, Evelyn, who arrived at the age of 9, her religious upbringing was more of a factor in helping her settle into Canada: *I guess, more, not so much the church, but my religion. My religion is why I went to the schools that I did, made the friends that I met, so it did help in a way. Like, if I didn't grow up Catholic, I would have had a totally different upbringing [Evelyn].* She does mention that her upbringing was also a factor preventing her from fully integrating into Canadian youth culture: *Because of my parents' struggles and values, they sort of use the [church], there are certain values that they want me to adhere to. They use the, 'Oh, because we are Catholic...' [excuse], so that I can't do some of the things that normal, I guess, Canadian people my age would be doing. [Evelyn]*

4) *Is there anything about your participation in the parish or life in the parish that bothers you or your family and friends? If so, what are they?*

Evelyn's comment about how religion was used as a way to limit her activities growing up is an indication of one of the ways that religion can have a negative effect, especially among the 1.5 and second generation participants. Franco, who is in his 30's and also a recent immigrant to Canada after living in the U.S. since the age of 5, mentioned how some Filipinos (especially Filipinas) can be overly concerned with the mass attendance of others. He went to the extent of using the term, "Psycho-Catholics" to describe this situation.

Being too concerned with other people is negative characteristic of parish life. "Tsismis" (translated in English as "gossip") was prevalent in the responses and provoked the most commentary overall about what was bothersome in parish life:

Ernie: You know, in any parish, there are those who have gossips and things like that.

And those are the things that bother us. You cannot avoid this. In our culture, we have the gossip system. It's sometimes when are not around, they talk about you. Sometimes it is one or two families that somebody's telling this to you... Sometimes you feel insecure as if they are talking about you when you are not around.

Interviewer: So do you think that happens in our culture a lot?

Ernie: Yes, this is a part of the culture. In the Filipino culture, we are so sensitive. But probably, in Canadian culture and other ethnic groups, it is just a topic of conversation and we are so sensitive, we don't want people to be talking behind our back. It makes me feel insecure and when we learn someone is talking behind our back, if we tell them a secret and I hear the secret that I was telling them, I feel betrayed and I don't want to be associated with that person anymore. [Ernie]

The lack of integration that takes place in the church on an intergenerational level is another negative aspect mentioned by the interviewees. Despite the diversity of age within the interviewees, it is apparent that there are not enough sustained intergenerational connections between the groups to demonstrate a united religious front.

Nowadays, you don't see any young ones [at the church]. At the Eucharistic Congress, this minister who is Caucasian, said that, "Church is for the old people". Each parish should bridge the gap, as there is always a generational gap. There should be intergenerational relationships because of the church. The youth don't participate because it is boring. There is no mingling. It has no meaning. It's not reality. Look around us. Do you see only youth there? Church should be a mini society reflective of what is going on. [For example], I am with my son and his friends (who are also in a religious youth group). [Yet] there is too much...division. There are too many social groups...just all seniors or all youth groups. There is a dichotomy because of what we see in mass and the reality. W[hen] we line up together, we separate the youth and the seniors. What we see today in church isn't what is happening. [Mary Anne]

5) *Are you involved in the church in another way in addition to attending services? (If yes, are their culturally specific activities that you or your family and friends take part in at the parish? Can you give me some details?)*

Most of the respondents in this study are active within their church aside from their regular mass attendance. Their involvement in church groups span from participation in the Legion of Mary, Knights of Columbus, Couples for Christ (which was started in the Philippines). The choir attracts the most engagement from both older and younger Filipinos. Other roles that participants

took part in include leadership in the Children's Liturgy, Altar Server Programs and Eucharistic Ministries¹⁴. Interestingly enough, female respondents are more likely to be a part of multiple ministries (as demonstrated by Ria and Ella below):

I go to church everyday practically. I give communion and involved in the Eucharistic ministries. I am the Secretary for the Senior Legion of Mary and President of the Junior Legion.

I also organized the lectors for International night at the church. And I help the seniors with the singing, and lead the [name of community] Senior Citizens, which is connected with the church. We visit them, giving them communion, and read them the gospel and do homilies. I am involved in the Adult Senior Choir and another choir at [Parish A]. I also belong to [Parish B]'s Blue Army, which is like the Legion of Mary on a smaller scale. We do a prayer for an hour after mass on Tuesdays.

Whenever there is a bazaar in the church, I would volunteer at one of the stalls. We have a lot of functions in PB and it's a very diversified church. We get along very well and people become family. Those petty little things, they don't [get] involve[d] with that.

[Ria]

Yes, and not only me as I tried to enlist all those close to me, friends and family to be involved as well. The following are the ministries I am involved currently: Set-Up, Eucharistic Ministry, Lector and I also attend the Prayer meeting and Bible study... my

¹⁴ This service involved assisting priests at the altar who are saying the mass. Ministers of the Eucharist administer the host bread or "Body of Christ" closer to the end of mass. Altar servers are a junior position mostly assigned to youth and have duties such as holding the cross during the church procession which signals the beginning and ending of mass and ringing the bells during prayers.

friends, families and [I] are actively involved with the Augustinian and the Passionist Sisters in the Philippines. We play an important role in helping children get an education by sending them to school, building Learning Centers (we now have 3), help the children's families to help themselves by providing them opportunities through funding and become entrepreneurs. [Ella]

6) *Do you think that the church has a role to play in activities that promote greater understanding between Filipinos and Canadians? Does your parish currently have these types of activities? If not, what kinds of activities would you suggest?*

Respondents from both junior and senior cohorts agree that the church does have a role to play in order to integrate Filipinos into the Canadian social landscape. Because of the high number of Filipinos who serve in the parish, this encourages mingling between the Filipinos and Canadians. The respondents did not feel that racial lines are a part of their church experience: *“Our church does not discriminate between Filipinos and Canadians. It does promote a greater understanding between all people of all races.” [Ella]*

Respondents who felt that their parish did not have many activities that promote integration between Filipinos and Canadians suggested social events such as sporting events open to the community, dances, bazaars as well as hosting English as a Second Language (ESL) classes run by parishioners to *“help new immigrants learn quickly...[That would be] better.” [Luke]* He continues to comment about the importance of extending help to newcomers, especially fellow Filipinos: *I think once Filipinos assimilate into the Canadian lifestyle, it would be nice to return the favor by helping new immigrants...becoming more involved with the greater mainstream community. They should not remain at a distance. [Luke]*

7) *Do you have any final thoughts about the involvement of Filipinos in your parish community?*

Because of the open-ended nature of this question, there were both positive and negative responses given by those interviewed. Positive responses included the following:

Actually, in my opinion, the involvement of Filipinos in the parish as of now is very good. It is as if I'm back home. [Erica]

I am proud to be a Filipino and I am blessed to have Filipino friends whose hearts beat same as mine. We are known for being a religious bunch, but the only way we can show that we really are is through our actions. Our parish is a place where we as Filipinos show that we not only talk the talk but we walk the walk as well. As we do not have a church yet and we hold our masses in the gym of St. X's school in Woodbridge, at the end of the 12:00 o'clock mass is when you'll see how well together we all are because we are the only ones left in the gym putting away all the chairs and all that were used during the mass. We also are able to show that the Filipinos that belong to [Parish D] are one big family. Actually, people thought we are all related and this is because they can see the love we have for each other and I sincerely believe that the church have played a great role in our transformation. [Ella]

Negative responses that were critical of the nature of Filipinos included the following:

Well...we Filipinos are... mixed up race, I think. I think we have the culture of the Spanish people who are very arrogant and think people have passed it down through generations.

We were under the Americans for a while... and Filipinos... they copy everything. They copy things that they should not be copying.

When you go to another country, you should leave the bad things...[Ria]

Ernie shares a similar sentiment that is rooted in the colonial past in the Philippines and how it contributes to certain characteristics in Filipinos.

Ernie: They have these festivities for themselves without any purpose. They will have a big party at a hotel and each ticket is \$50 per person and because of the extravagance, nothing is left as money goes to the food, the DJ, the music, and it was just to join in... The real purpose has been forgotten and no extra money has been sent for the purpose for [those] kind of festivities. That's what I don't like because you are mostly promoting yourself. You want people to see that you are big time or you are a socialite... For me, a simple dance party, simple food, as long as there are proceeds to be given...That's what I don't like.

Sometimes, they have elections in that association in the church and they will have officers in that church and once the election has been done, the officers don't want to give up their position. For the next year, they will have an election and the same officers will be there doing anything for them to have a certain status.

Interviewer: So you are saying that [this behaviour] is culturally specific?

Ernie: We got this kind of attitude from Spain. We have been under Spain for 400 years and it is always... their culture is like, "Señorito, Señorita, Don, Doña". When people call you, "Señorito, Señorita", it means that you are rich. And that's one thing in the

Philippines we have domestic helpers and you are a “Doñ, Doña” and you are not that very rich. They want to be the prime... They want to show that they are rich and although they are not that very rich. Then they mistreating the domestic helpers and I think that the culture which I don’t want...that I don’t like. [Ernie]

CHAPTER 5:

Discussion of the Participant Feedback

5.1 Research Question Review

In order to have a useful discussion about the participant feedback, it is important to reflect on the following questions and recall what brings us here in the first place:

- 1) Why research or investigate the role of the church - particularly the Roman Catholic Church - in the lives of the Filipino Canadian community?
- 2) Why is church important to Filipinos? How does it assist with building community, connections and finding a place in Canada?
- 3) How have Roman Catholic churches in Toronto helped the integration, settlement and community building as well as provided a sense of belonging for all cohorts of Philippine immigrants?¹⁵

5.2 Colonial and historical influences

Because of Philippine history, it is hard to separate the idea of religion from the idea of being colonized. Colonial roots have given way to Roman Catholicism being a major influence in the identity formation of Filipinos. It is valuable to question, “How far has colonial legacy affected Filipinos? Is it still relevant to the Philippine social makeup”? And the answer is a resounding, “Yes”. As established in Chapter 1, it is because of colonization that Roman

¹⁵ These questions were posed by Dr. Hyacinth Simpson upon the review of the MRP content during the initial writing stages of this MRP. I offer them in their original form in order to aid in critical thinking regarding this topic and for future scholarship.

Catholicism made its mark in the Philippines. Now, churches are used as the main social network for Filipinos within Canada as well as abroad. Not only does religion connect Filipinos to each other, it becomes *a connection to the Philippines*. In the example from Section 2.5 of this study, Penfolds Roofing actively seeks new employees through church networks connected to the Philippines. This is an explicit way the church is used to better the lives of Filipinos by providing them employment opportunities as well as creating an actual link between two countries beyond spiritual ties.

The church becomes a home base for Filipinos not only within the Philippines, but within Canada and this connection goes two ways. The first connection is that the Filipinos socialize with people in Canada and begin to integrate of mainstream culture. However, it is not safe to assume anymore that mainstream culture reads as “White, Canadian culture” because of the amount of Filipinos that are in Canada, especially within the GTA. The GTA that Filipinos are exposed to in church is a combination of many cultures, White or otherwise. In the church, because there are many Filipinos to socialize with, the Canada they are exposed to is not simply White.

The second prong of connection to the Philippines involves returning to one’s roots in the church, and that means coming together with other Filipinos. This results in Filipino immigrants being in “the Philippines” and being “home” within a purely Filipino enclave that happens to be situated in Canada. Because of the colonial influences, Western influences are already in abundance and set in place in the Philippines, so being in North America (in this case, Canada) is really not as much of a culture shock as one may assume, depending on the amount of time spent in the Philippines. I argue that because of the amount of Western culture that permeates the Philippine landscape, the culture shock that would occur for Filipinos immigrating to Canada is

more of a socioeconomic one, resulting in lifestyle changes. Because of the professional nature and maturity of Filipinos immigrating to Canada, their personal status decline is more shocking than the influences of mainstream media due to their lack of secure employment and lack of social networks. Hence, the church not only becomes a place to connect to the mainstream and other Filipinos in Canada, but a place to combat these social ills and to deal with the hardships of immigration through the establishment of social networks and access to community support. Ironically, the place that should be a reminder of the colonization that occurred in the Philippines becomes a place where Filipino immigrants improve their lives in Canada.

In Chapter 1, Rodriguez (2006) postulated that Filipinos' own branch of Christianity was a form of resistance against especially being "Hispanized". I argue that for today's Filipinos, the resistance has transitioned from being "Hispanized" to being completely "Anglicized", even though the church is believed to be a site of integration into White society. Historically, religious alignment was the gage of one's mainstream integration as Roman Catholicism was a major standard of how to define Canadian society. To be religious for one's own purposes is one thing, but in the case of Filipinos, because religion has been in place in the culture for so long, it becomes something associated with "being Filipino" itself. In short, because of colonization, Roman Catholicism has become so intrinsically linked with the Philippines to the extent that they cannot be separated. How Filipinos connect with Roman Catholicism is invariably how they connect to their Philippine identity. From the interviews, although there were comments from the senior cohort that mentioned the lack of young people involved with parish life, there were respondents from the junior cohort who were thrilled to be involved and formed their social networks at church. Justin, who is a second generation Filipino born in Toronto, expresses his

enthusiasm for church. He is an active member of the choir and is currently investigating how he can become involved in the children's liturgy.

I like church, its something special to me, I feel that people need to believe in things and I believe in God and I am grateful for all the blessings that I have had thru the years.

Sometimes I need that Sunday to refresh, reevaluate some things in my life and it does the job for me.

I also met my girlfriend in church! I met her at Parish X 3-4 years ago in church and if it wasn't for church, I would not have met her. And now we have been going out for 2 years...[Justin]

It is ironic that during colonial times, the church was used to contain Filipinos and to make them conform to the will of another country (in this case, Spain), and now becomes a way to pay homage to the homeland. To colonize a country is to enslave it to the whims of another, yet after leaving the Philippines (the site of colonization) and coming to Canada, religion is used as an all encompassing force that is being used to form social connections all over the world. These connections allow Filipinos to improve their well-being through the following means; creating and securing employment, housing, friends, and ties with family. Recall when the first cohort of Filipinos came to Canada, although they were independent and without their families, they quickly united through gathering at the church and Filipino immigrants who came after them continue to do the same.

5.3 Culturally Specific Notions about Filipinos (Stigmatas, Stigmas & Stereotypes)

What became apparent in the interviews were the mixed messages about Filipinos regarding other Filipinos and I am compelled to ask, “Religion aside, are we a divided or united people?” There were many comments that are classifiable as stereotypes. However, these stereotypes are created by other Filipinos. For example, the stereotype of Filipinos being music minded and enjoying a flair for the arts¹⁶ often lead to commentary about Filipinos in the church choir. Franco stated that at his parish, “*I notice that the choir is 99% Filipino.*” This statement is not far from the truth as almost half of the study’s respondents were involved with the choir at some point or are currently a member (Pascal, Ernie, Justin, Cely, Nora, Joseph, Erica, Ria, and Diana). Robert expressed that he would like to join but doesn’t think he has the talent for it. However, his comment that, “*I think Filipinos are more into voluntary serving in the church. They sing, they serve, I think that is part of being at home, serving at church and being a part of the community*” demonstrates the idea of the immigrant finding a comfortable home space within the host country and making it a reality for them.

However, becoming too comfortable in one’s personal expression is problematic as the idea of Filipinos who practice their religion to the extreme (or as Franco described it as “Psycho-Catholicism”) ironically demonizes churchgoers. Commentary on Filipino immigrants who attend mass *to be seen* is prevalent in the interview responses. It is one thing for the world to see current footage of Filipinos crucifying themselves to imitate the Passion of Christ every Easter on the news, but within the walls of the church, there is a contempt for fellow Filipinos about how they present themselves *en masse* in mass on a weekly basis (if not daily for those who do

¹⁶ Recall that example in Chapter 1 regarding Filipinos dramatic involvement during the Easter Passion play.

attend mass everyday). The idea of Philippine “religious pageantry” was identified by Rodriguez (2006) as a way to assuage the Spanish colonizers (who learned from their past experiences from the Mexican colonization) that the best way to entice *indios* was through what Prescott (1936) calls “burdensome ceremonial” and “fantastic idols” (7)¹⁷. Although it was the Spanish who introduced Filipinos to religion, now it is the Filipinos to determine how it is done.

Regardless of the Filipino reputation of religious certainty, Ria, who came to Canada in 1965, commented that Filipinos are a “*mixed up people*,” and that this was a learned behaviour from the colonization. She went onto comment that Filipinos are cultural “copycats”. Surprisingly, this sentiment populated the commentary of the older respondents. It is interesting that the idea of “Filipinos as copycats” was mostly from older Filipinos in their 60’s, regardless of when they arrived in Canada. Because the older generation is much more learned of the ways in which the Philippines used to operate during the American colonial period, they understand the changes that took place and notice a difference. To see the culture transition from “400 years in the convent, 50 in Hollywood”¹⁸ (a common phrase used to describe the ways the Philippines has transformed) definitely produces the “mixed up people” that Ria describes.

What is interesting is that Filipinos in this study have described the nature of other Filipinos by two extremes. On one hand, fellow Filipinos are seen as community oriented,

¹⁷ To contextualize this comment further, Rodriguez quotes Agoncillo (1990) to demonstrate further how this “religious pageantry” took place during the time of colonization: “...The Spanish friars utilized the novel sights, sounds, and even smell of the Christian rites and rituals - colourful and pompous processions, songs, candle-lights, saints dressed in elaborate gold and silver costumes during the May festivals of flores de Mayo or the santa Cruzan, the lighting of fire crackers even as the Host was elevated, the *sinakulo* (passion play), and the Christian versus Muslim conflict dream (moromoro) [to] ‘hypnotize...’ the spirit of the indio” (p. 7).

¹⁸ Although I have heard this comment a few times in regards to the Philippine people, the first I encountered it in print came from the 1983 Ontario’s First Filipino Conference Report. The comment was made by Mila Estauquio in her address to participants.

affable, religious and helpful, forming a cohesive unit and making space within the Canadian landscape with their social connections. Contrary to this, Filipinos are said to be divided, selfish, self-serving, and not showing kindnesses to their fellow Filipinos. Surprisingly, these comments are not limited to any of the four generational cohorts, nor the older or younger groups that were established for the purposes of this study. Among the participants, some of the comments pertaining to this subject are:

[Filipinos]... they can be standoffish. [Luke]

Say you are new and you don't care about correcting something that other's are doing or thinking. Fellow Filipinos won't correct you and will [withhold] information from you, not willing to share. Our religious obligation is to share...

You are serving only one God and "The Envy" is really strong in the church and professionally. You are "paddling your own canoe". Instead of acknowledgment, there is competitiveness and complaints and harassment, which is tantamount to selfishness and your own glory. This is why we cannot be one. We [Filipinos] are so divided. Our learning beyond the provincialism and [we have to] learn to be outside of the box. [Mary Anne]

Mary Anne has expressed that her teenaged son has coined the concept of Philippine selfishness as, "Crab Mentality", which translates to hoarding information for one's own purposes. One's unwillingness to unite with others and help one another (in this case, aligning with fellow Filipinos) will result in the inability to prosper socially or financially.

5.4 Families and Intergenerational Relations

Church is usually a family affair. When one immigrates to a new country, their social network is mostly dependent on family. However, with the amount of Filipino immigrants that leave family behind, new family connections are established and this takes place in the church.

With this in mind, I would like to pose the question, “How does church involvement renegotiate the definition of family?” In the information gleaned from the interviews, the church was a place for people to connect with the experience of family, despite whether their family was in Canada or abroad. Social networks formed in the church created the sense of familial connection that is missing:

The members of the church were so cooperative to make our stay more comfortable. We had culture shock, you know, we don't have relatives and friends. But being a member of the church helped us gain friends...and it makes us more comfortable in our new location. ...you are away from your real family, my parents and my sister, but we are here so we have to make new friends...when we came here, we didn't know anybody and but with the new friends, we have learned to cope with the new situation. [Ernie]

It is interesting that some of the respondents became more active in the church due to their children's involvement in parish activities. It is evident that church involvement in the Filipino community in Canada is not limited by age or when one immigrates. Although religion has been used as a reason to limit the activities of younger Filipinos¹⁹, it is not completely rejected

¹⁹ In her response to Question 3 during the interview, Evelyn (who is of the 1.5 generation) expressed that she was often prevented from doing things “normal Canadian kids” would do. The reason that her parents prevented her from participating in mainstream social life was simply, “Because we are Catholic.”

by the younger generation. Religion provides just as much insight to the younger generations' self identification as it does for their senior counterparts.

5.5 Immigration and Settlement issues (Social Issues & Integration)

It has long been established that the church is another form of social assistance as alleviates the strain on government programs and agency work. In this study, it is important to determine how the church became another form of social assistance. As exemplified by St. Patrick's becoming the home to Toronto's early German immigrants, and other places that have followed these practices, the church transitions from a house of worship to a place of social activity, commerce, and hospitality towards those who are less fortunate. Not only does the church provide spiritual nourishment, it also becomes a civic platform on which to stand.

It is important to acknowledge how civic engagement for Filipinos in the church takes on a transnational nature. Within the interviews, the discussion uncovered how churches became a venue for Filipino immigrants to connect to others in order to plan ways in which they could improve the living situation of less fortunate Filipinos back in the Philippines. What is interesting is that although initiatives were largely lead by Filipino parishioners (meaning that church staff took a "hands off" approach), the church was still a place where they could connect with each other, providing meeting space in order to plan such initiatives, such as building homes and sending money to educate impoverished children back "home" in the Philippines.

The idea of feeling "at home" in the church is a crucial point of identification from the interviews yet it is hard to determine the answer to, "Where exactly, is home?" Is home in the Philippines or in Canada? Because the Philippine diaspora situates its people in many different places, it may be useful to embody the "copycat" stereotypes to one's advantage simply because

multiple lives are being negotiated. In the face of immigration stresses, ideally, one strives to land on one's feet. From the interviews, Joseph comments that, "*[Filipinos] can easily assimilate...They look Filipino but their culture is something else,*" which demonstrates the complexity of post-colonial identities combined with the immigrant's need to accommodate for extenuating circumstances that are beyond their control in order to thrive in the host society. Filipinos, with their absorption of other cultures, can integrate more easily within Canada because of the concurrent changes to Canada's demographic makeup.

Since both Filipino and Canadian culture are changing each other simultaneously, looking for one's culture is a task that can take a lifetime to fulfill. For 1.5 and 2nd generation Filipinos, learning about their birthplace may be considered invalid or inauthentic because of the risk of learning about the Philippines with an Edward Said-type of Orientalist lens. Do people, especially those who have roots in colonized places, want to really learn about themselves because they want to fit in with mainstream thinking or because they are feel rejection from the mainstream? It is useful to reflect on cultural theorist Stuart Hall, who writes, "The fully unified, completed, secure, and coherent identity is a fantasy. Instead as the systems of meaning and cultural representation multiply, we are confronted with the bewildering, fleeting multiplicity of possible identities, any one of which we could identify with - at least temporarily" (2006, 251). A large part of the never-ending task to define oneself is the understanding where to locate oneself in society. For the respondents who have indicated that being at church is like being "at home", it is hard to actually define where home is and this in itself is a settlement issue. First generation Filipina - Canadian Melissa Gibson (2006) ponders about her mother's Filipino roots and writes, "...The way the Philippines pushes out its people isn't simply a story of an individual

and their hardship, but about a whole fragmenting culture” (40)²⁰. But not all is lost as Canadian social scholar Geraldine Pratt (2002) argues that 1.5 and second generation Filipinos use what they have learned about their parents and their culture to “forge a new sense of self in the present out of resources of the past” (6). There is no doubt that the role religion plays in one’s life has a lot to do with the paths that lead to self-discovery, and it is proving useful because of its pertinence in the lives of Filipino youth. For Filipino immigrant youth, it is clearly valuable to use religion as a means of reflection because of the large amount of community support and social resources available.

5.6 Conclusion

The ‘Bahala Na’ attitude is based on the belief that time and divine providence will solve all problems. Most Filipinos believe that one should unquestioningly accept what life brings them because they are to believe in destiny being the will of God. This fatalistic attitude helps them persevere in life’s difficulties and reflects an external locus of control. The powerlessness to affect what life brings influences the Filipino attitude of living for today rather than planning for the future.

(Billones and Wilson, 1990: 4)

I decided to call this study, “Bahala Na Ang Dios,” because of the idea of leaving things in God’s hands. The notion that Filipinos cannot control factors in their lives can have both positive and negative implications as well as implications that are heavily influenced by their history of colonization. Positive aspects include having the faith to support one in times of trial and despair. To look for a force greater than themselves to make sense of the things that have gone wrong has become so ingrained in the Filipino lifestyle, that “Bahala Na Ang Dios” becomes a daily maxim.

²⁰ As indicated in the limitations of this study, the experience of biracial Filipino-Canadians is excluded in this study as it warrants its own scholarship.

Arguably, the negative aspects ironically centre on this “external locus”. The idea that “Whatever happens, happens” indicates a tendency for people, especially for Filipinos who take on the negative aspects of this maxim, to resign themselves and lose the motivation to strive for more. If “Whatever happens, happens,” does this not conflict with, “The sky’s the limit?” The shrugging of shoulders and sighs becomes paired with the belief that what happens in life is out of our hands. The focus on an external locus of control is definite effect of colonialization, for control was what was taken away from the Filipino people. What strength do you have left when you are persecuted for your native beliefs and become a stranger in your own land? It is argued that strong religious expression is a way for Filipinos to become post-colonial. However, one must be careful not to run into the situation of what I call “becoming post-colonial colonial”. What I mean by this is that even after the end of formal colonialism, there is still the immigrant ideology to subscribe to the historical norms of “White Male” authority (hypothetically known as “The Man”²¹). Or as writer Zadie Smith (2000) expresses in her novel, *White Teeth*, which examines intergenerational relationships in multicultural Britain, the immigrant runs the risk of becoming more “English than the English”, blindly following and upholding outdated and narrow minded social norms.

Regarding outdated social norms, it is interesting to note that colonialism in the Philippines brought upon heavily undertones of patriarchy. Pre-colonial Philippines was not only animistic, but there was also gender equity. Ironically, Filipino Catholic religious practices an equal amount of praise to Mary, the mother of Jesus, as opposed to simply worshipping Jesus

21 The phrase “The Man” has no formal definition except on Wikipedia where it states that it refers to authority in general such as government, corporations, and the police. For the purposes of this argument, “The Man” represents forms of mainstream society. Because the discussion covers those in the Philippine diaspora, it is hard to pinpoint exactly who is in power in these places yet the idea is that religion is used by Filipinos to integrate within the society that is hosting them.

and God alone. The amount of Marian focus acts as another way that Filipina parishioners have been able to express themselves, using a feminine model in addition to a masculine one, in their worship. However, Marian worship can be argued as a byproduct of patriarchal influence as Mary is normally portrayed as docile, meek, virginal and mild mannered. In addition, the self-sacrificing Maria Clara archetype that was also popular in Filipino literature demonstrates the same Marian qualities. Both Mary and Maria Clara are often portrayed as fair skinned and beautiful, looking very much like the upper class women of the Spanish colonial caste. This is something that may be hard to reconcile with the various looks and identities of Filipinas. How Filipinas connect and self-identify with feminine religious icons poses a question for further study. Until this happens, it can be assumed that Marian worship demonstrates a trend towards feminization of the Roman Catholic religion.

Contrary to this idea of “Bahala Na Ang Dios”, del Rosario and Gonzalez’s 2006 study entitled, “Apathy to Activism through Filipino American churches” demonstrates how religious involvement evolved from worshipping the colonizer’s religion to using the church as a place for social mobilization. del Rosario and Gonzalez’s study demonstrates religion as the lifeblood of the Filipino immigrants in America. Using Antonio Gramsci’s sociological framework as a guide, they argue that, “...it is the conditions [of hegemony] that allow for oppression. Society as a whole is persuaded to agree upon an ideology that is favorable to the dominant class...achieved by the ruling class through a combination of consent and coercion...At times, consent is the primary force at work, but at other times, when consent is not easily won, coercion or force becomes the primary means of maintaining hegemony” (22, quoting Omi and Winant’s Racial Formation in the United States: 67)

In today's Canada, the state of hegemony is also being questioned. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (2005) contend, "We [Canadians] are...neither fully post-colonial nor multicultural, but in important ways we are moving in those directions" ("Toward a New Story about Religion and Ethnicity in Canada": 225). This possibility gives Filipinos/Filipino-Canadians/Canadians (however one decides to self-identify) hope that we are trending towards a peaceful assimilation. There is the idea that Filipinos coming together in Canada is at our own pace, essentially *in our control*. It is not the forced assimilation that takes place during war or times of persecution nor is it a blind faith that comes with abandoning one's roots completely.

Appendix A: Interview Question Script for Filipino Parishioners

- 1) Did you come here as an immigrant or were you born here? If you immigrated here, did you come independently or were you sponsored?
- 2) (For those who immigrated) What kinds of expectations did you have before you came to Toronto? How have they changed?
- 3) Why did you come to Parish X? What role has the church and church community played in helping you transition to Canada? To Toronto? (If they say the church played a role, then ask the respondent to specify in what ways being a part of the church made it easier (or more difficult) for them to settle and integrate into Canadian life and city life).
- 4) Is there anything about your participation in the parish or life in the parish that bothers you or your family and friends? If so, what are they?
- 5) Are you involved in the church in another way in addition to attending services? If yes, “Are their culturally specific activities that you or your family and friends take part in at the parish? Can you give me some details?”
- 6) Do you think that the church has a role to play in activities that promote greater understanding between Filipinos and Canadians? Does your parish currently have these types of activities? If not, what kinds of activities would you suggest?
- 7) Do you have any final thoughts about the involvement of Filipinos in your parish community?

Appendix B: Interview Question Script for Non-Filipino Parishioners

- 1) How long have you attended Parish X? What is your role in Parish X?
- 2) When did you first encounter Filipinos within the GTA? Also, tell me about your experiences with the Filipino community within the parish.
- 3) What have you noticed about the Filipino community in the parish as well as within religious life?
- 4) What sorts of activities do the Filipinos in your community participate in or have they participated in within your parish? What kind of levels of involvement do you see?
- 5) Do you think that Filipinos are separated from your church community or are they integrated? If you think that they are integrated, what do you think helps them to achieve this?
- 6) In what ways has the church (past and present) addressed the specific needs of Filipinos?
- 7) What do you think or anticipate as the biggest challenge for the Filipino community is?
- 8) Do you have any final thoughts about the involvement of Filipinos within your church community or within your religious life?

Appendix C: Consent form for Interviewees

RYERSON UNIVERSITY

School of Graduate Studies

and

Immigration and Settlement Studies at Ryerson

Research Consent Form for Interviewees

Research Details and Purpose of the Study

This study on the church's role in the socialization of Filipinos in the Greater Toronto Area is privately funded by the researcher, Mary Grace T. Betsayda. She is a graduate student in the Immigration and Settlement Studies Program at Ryerson University. Its purpose is to learn more about the religious engagement of Filipinos in the Greater Toronto Area. The study was approved by the Ethics Review Board of Ryerson University. If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board for information:

Research Ethics Board

c/o Office of the Associate Vice President, Academic

Ryerson University

350 Victoria Street

Toronto, ON M5B 2K3

416-979-5042

Participant's Role in the Study and Treatment of Confidential Information

You have been asked to take part in an interview individually to discuss your experiences and knowledge of the Filipino community's involvement within the churches of the Greater Toronto Area. The discussion will be taped to help the interviewer better remember what you have said. It will be written up in English, and the tapes will be kept in a locked file and erased no later than two years from now. All comments will be recorded and confidentiality will be maintained. You will have access to the final report, should you wish it, but because of confidentiality, it will not be possible to identify your contribution to the discussions, and no record will be made or kept that identifies a participant in the research once the study has ended.

You have expressed a willingness to take part in this interview (30-40 minutes in length), and we are very pleased to have you share your thoughts with us. Nevertheless, should you at some time feel that it would be better for you if you were to end the interview you are wholly free to do so. After the interview, you will be asked if there is anything that you have said that you would prefer not to be included in the data analysis and please indicate this at this time.

Benefits of the Study and Usage of the Research Findings

It is the hope of the researcher that your contributions and the contribution of others participating in this study will help gain insight into the Filipino community in the Greater Toronto Area and I am grateful for your help in reaching this goal. Findings from the study will be written up in a report to the School of Graduate Studies at Ryerson University, and may be shared with other not-for-profit groups within the Filipino-Canadian community, conferences, classes and workshops the student is involved in (either mentioned directly or indirectly) and are available via e-mail. The researcher may also use parts of this study for future scholarly work.

Contact Information and Research Consent

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Principal Investigator, Mary Grace T. Betsayda, a student of the School of Graduate Studies in Immigration and Settlement at Ryerson University. She can be reached at (416) XXX-XXXX or at mary.betsayda@ryerson.ca.

I have read the information contained above and hereby give my consent to participate in the study of the church's role in the socialization of Filipinos in the Greater Toronto Area, to which I have been invited, and to have my comments recorded.

Participant's Name (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

I am willing to have my comments audio taped.

Participant's Name (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Principal Investigator's Signature (bearing witness to the signing of this form): _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Notice Detail Advertising the Study

NOTICE: If you are a Filipino parishioner and would like to share your knowledge and experience in a Master's research project regarding your involvement in the church and live in the Greater Toronto Area, please contact Mary Grace Betsayda at "mary.betsayda@ryerson.ca" or at (416) XXX-XXXX.

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