Filipinos in Canada

*Disturbing Invisibility*

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS
Toronto Buffalo London
Chapter 1

Spectres of (In)visibility: Filipina/o Labour, Culture, and Youth in Canada

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Haunted by Hypervisibility and Invisibility

Prevalent conversations in Canadian media, academic, and politicized public spheres tend to represent and account for Filipina/os living in Canada within the tropes of victimized nanny, selfless nurse, and problematic gangster youth. These images render hypervisible in social and academic spaces certain problems facing Filipina/o communities, which are then calcified as Filipina/o stereotypes. These spectral figures on the one hand enable the visibility of Filipina/os lives in Canada within a narrow purview and on the other hand contribute to the misrecognition and alienation of the diverse experiences and histories of Filipina/os in Canada. Filipina/o communities are therefore put into the paradoxical position of being invisible and hypervisible: invisible because numerous kinds of people, problems, and achievements are ignored, and hypervisible because only the stereotypes are deemed relevant and significant for public circulation. In this landmark volume, the first wide-ranging edited collection of academic writings on Filipina/os in Canada, we ask how the contours of Canadian political, academic, and social institutions, both historical and contemporary, shape the politics of Filipina/o invisibility, visibility, and hypervisibility; how Filipina/o spectral figures ‘haunt’ processes, representations, and agentive experiences of being and becoming Filipina/o Canadians, and how we can disrupt and intervene in the prevailing themes of the spectral figures that have come to define the lives of Filipina/os in Canada.

Although the contributors to this volume recognize the productive value of academic and community-based knowledge projects in rendering Filipina/o communities more visible, they nonetheless critically
interrogate the value of ‘visibility’ as a response to invisibility. The phrase ‘spectre of invisibility’ is drawn from Oscar Campomanes (1992), and is central to a recent collection on emerging areas of inquiry for Filipina/o studies in the United States (Tiongson, Gutierrez, and Gutierrez 2006). Campomanes reflects on the ways that the specificities of Filipina/o experiences challenge the boundaries in traditional and emergent disciplines, and asks scholars to consider the particular sets of social relations and historical circumstances that define the terms of their intelligibility (see also Pisares 2006). ‘Visibility’ is not just a metaphor in Canada, however; it is a legal and census category. According to the Canadian Employment Equity Act, ‘visible minorities’ are defined as ‘persons, other than Aboriginal persons, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.’ The language of ‘visibility’ is widely contested by activists and critical theorists for the ways that it naturalizes white hegemony (see, e.g., contributions in Dua and Robertson 1999, especially Das Gupta 1999), as it hypervisibilizes and homogenizes people of colour. Ideologically, ‘visible minority’ status is often collapsed into immigrant status, which renders racialized groups as outside of the nation. Sunera Thobani (2007) argues that ‘the racialized category immigrant paradoxically helps sustain the myth of the nation as homogeneous by constructing as perpetual strangers those to whom the category is assigned, even when they are second and third generation Canadians’ (76).

This has been evident most recently, and chillingly, in the Maclean’s magazine article entitled “Too Asian?” published in November 2010 in its widely read annual issue ranking universities in Canada. The article quoted White students saying that they would not attend the University of Toronto because it was ‘too Asian,’ which in their view meant it was so academically focused that White students could not have fun and might have a difficult time competing. The term ‘Asian’ was used in the article to designate both Asian Canadians and international students from Asia. A related article in the Toronto Star recycled some of the quotations from the Maclean’s article, arguing that ‘the growing profile of students of Asian heritage on many campuses is fuelling resentment among some non-Asian students and even concerns among some university administrators about the demographic make-up of their student bodies.’ Numerous commentators have critiqued these two articles for the role they play in fuelling racist and anti-immigrant sentiments, constructing a normative White standard for citizenship, education, and success, perpetuating stereotypes, and erasing the political and economic challenges that many racialized students face in gaining access to higher education.

These articles flag some of the limitations of the hegemonic notions of multiculturalism, which are also taken up in the first section of this volume. The racialized and cultural classification system of Canadian census data is an institutionalized mode of liberal democratic governmentality, which, in its ideal form, highlights state interest in promoting plurality and tolerance. The census categorization of Canadian ‘ethnic’ groups is oddly parsed and mixed, allocating population differences in terms of ethnic, racial, national, and regional groupings. The Canadian census specifies the following groups as ‘visible minorities’: Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs, West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans, and Pacific Islanders. Some categories lump ‘Blacks’ includes Black Canadians whose families have been in Canada for generations, as well as certain first-generation immigrants from, e.g., Nigeria and some split (note the separation of Filipinos from other Southeast Asians).

Understanding the categories as problematic, we can nonetheless use census statistics carefully and critically to give approximate numbers of some groups as well as a picture of how racialization works in Canada. The numbers are perhaps more useful for Filipina/os than for other groups, given that Filipina/os are designated as a separate category. In 2006, the census found 5,068,100 individuals who identified as visible minorities (Statistics Canada 2006). Visible minorities made up 16.2 per cent of the total population in Canada; however, visible minorities are 22.8 per cent of the provincial population of Ontario (where 54.2 per cent of visible minorities live), and 42.9 per cent of the 5.1 million residents of metropolitan Toronto. The largest visible minority groups in Canada are South Asians (24.9 per cent of visible minorities), Chinese (24.0 per cent of visible minorities), Blacks (15.5 per cent of visible minorities), Filipina/os (8.1 per cent of visible minorities), Latin Americans (6.0 per cent of visible minorities), Arabs (5.2 per cent of visible minorities), Southeast Asians (4.7 per cent of visible minorities), West Asians (3.1 per cent of visible minorities), Koreans (2.8 per cent of visible minorities), and Japanese (1.6 per cent of visible minorities). In Toronto, the four largest visible minority groups are South Asians (684,100), Chinese (486,500), Blacks (352,200), and Filipina/os (172,000). Filipina/os are thus the fourth largest visible minority group in Canada, and in Toronto, the site of many of the studies in this volume. The top three source countries for migration to Canada in recent years are all Asian (China, India,
and the Philippines). In 2010, the Philippines was the largest source of migrants to Canada (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010).

Given the problematic ways that ‘visibility’ is linked to racialization in Canada, the solution to invisibility is probably not helpfully framed as visibility, or even as recognition, which still implies the centrality of White recognition. Following the work of Elizabeth Povinelli (2002) on Australian multiculturalism, the political practice of recognition entails a ‘mégconnaissance’ or misrecognition by which a subject is known through correlations and negations. ‘Visibility’ could also be seen as simply integrating Filipina/o/s into disciplinary and national formations in ways that do not fully question the ways those disciplines and nations are currently defined. Camponanes (1995), paraphrasing Frantz Fanon, notes that recognition can lead to representation, but there can be representation without recognition. In a recent analysis of the way Muslim practices are being adapted to life in France, and French law and practices to Muslims in France, anthropologist John Bowen (2010) notes that the integration of any marginalized or new group into a national political tradition requires the national tradition to come to terms with its own contradictions. One of the Canadian contradictions is a celebration of multiculturalism in a context of continuing privilege for White people. Thobani (2007) notes that the official form of Canadian multiculturalism facilitated both a material inclusion of increased numbers of immigrants within the population and their simultaneous exclusion from the nation, primarily through their reification as cultural outsiders (147). Ultimately, the solution is not fetishizing either difference or similarity in the way that the metaphor of visibility does; instead, the focus should be on substantive equality, not only in formal and legal realms, but also in what Thobani calls the ‘social customs and conventional acts’ of empowered citizenship in daily encounters (79). A review of Filipina/o histories in Canada suggests some of the challenges to be overcome before such equality is achieved as well as some of the ongoing forms of activism addressing those challenges.

The migration of Filipina/o/s to Canada has followed a pattern different from that of other immigrant groups. Filipina/o/s in Canada are predominantly recent immigrants (Kelly 2006). Less than 5 per cent of the population arrived prior to 1970, and in 2001 over half of all Filipina/o/s in Canada had arrived in the previous ten years. Overwhelmingly Filipina/o/s have tended to settle in Canada’s urban centres (Kelly 2006). Toronto and Vancouver, alone, account for nearly two-thirds of all Filipina/o (immigrant and non-immigrant) residents; nearly 80 per cent of those identifying as Filipina/o live in four cities: Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Montreal (see table 1.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>% of Filipina/o/s</th>
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<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Winnipeg</td>
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<td>Montreal</td>
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<td>Calgary</td>
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<td>Edmonton</td>
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Source: adapted from Kelly 2006, 14

Toronto has 133,675 Filipino residents, comprising 43.3 per cent of Filipina/o/s in Canada (Kelly 2006, 13). This volume concentrates largely on Toronto, with a few chapters also addressing Montreal and Vancouver, because Toronto has been such a significant site for Filipina/o migration. We recognize, however, the importance of studies of Filipina/o/s in other locations in Canada, for the ways that this will contribute, as Luisis (n.d.), argues, towards understanding the experiences of migrants and racialized minorities when there may be less extensive community-based resources to draw upon and for a fuller understanding of the relationship between so-called ‘gateway’ cities and others.

The recent increase in Filipina/o migration has three key explanations: (1) changes in Canadian immigration regulations that stressed educational qualifications and skills as the main conditions of admission regardless of country of origin (Arana 1983); (2) conditions of underdevelopment and poverty in the Philippines, which are experienced by worker-citizens as unemployment, underemployment, lack of educational and occupational opportunities, and low standards of living (Briones 1984; Eviota 1992); and (3) the role United States imperialism has played in constructing North America as an attractive destination goal for Filipina/o/s (Choy 2003; Espiritu 2003).

In the 1950s and 1960s, Filipina/o/s who migrated to Canada were mostly professionals, including nurses, doctors, laboratory technicians, and office workers recruited to overcome the labour shortages in those fields (see Arana 1983; Chen 1998; Consing and Bueno 1993; Kelly 2006; Laquian 1973; see also Damasco in this volume). These workers
entered Canada as landed immigrants (i.e., permanent residents); many originally worked in the United States under various exchange programs, and migrated north when their two-year visas expired (Casipag and Buenafe 1993). This first wave of immigrants peaked in 1974.

In the late 1970s, the age, gender, and occupational profile of the Filipina/o community changed. There was a higher proportion of clerical, manufacturing, and service workers, and the number of Filipina/o professionals declined, reaching its lowest point in the mid-1980s (Laquian 1973). With the addition of the family reunification category in 1978, many family members of the first wave of immigrants were sponsored, leading to a dramatic increase in the number of Filipina/o senior citizens (Aranas 1983; Bustamante 1984; Chen 1998). The Philippine government's labour export policy that took effect during the Marcos regime (Bakan and Stastiulis 1997b; Stastiulis and Bakan 2005) and the Canadian government's efforts to recruit Filipina/os to work in Canada through migrant worker schemes like the Foreign Domestic Workers Program, the Live-In Caregiver Program, and the Temporary Foreign Worker Program explain the concentration of Filipina/os in 'non-professional' fields.

During the 1980s, many Filipinas entered Canada through the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM), a program in which domestic workers were eligible to apply for landed immigrant status after two years of live-in service with a designated employer. Programs earlier in the twentieth century had recruited European domestics, but these domestics were given landed immigrant status upon arrival. As recruitment turned to the Caribbean in the mid-1950s and the Philippines in the 1980s, access to citizenship rights was more sharply curtailed. In 1992, the FDM was replaced by the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP), a program in which the eligibility criteria for entry to Canada became more restrictive than in the FDM, partly in the name of improving the quality of childcare in Canada (Bakan and Stastiulis 1997a; Arat-Koç 1999). Close to 12 per cent of all Philippine-born arrivals came under the LCP category between 1980 and 2001, and Filipinas overwhelmingly accounted for those recruited (25,846 out of 32,474 or 79.6 per cent of arrivals) (Kelly 2006). Filipina/o migration to Canada has thus taken on a distinctively gendered skew, with almost 60 per cent of immigrants from the Philippines during this period being women (ibid.). Many professionals - nurses, midwives, graduate students in linguistics, office workers - now come to Canada through the LCP, hoping to find work in their own careers afterward, though these hopes are often dashed (see Harris-Galia 2011 for an account of a Filipina who was hired as a live-in caregiver in the Arctic and then became a nurse). The different political and economic realities and policies shaping Filipina/o migration in different periods have also created socio-economic class distinctions and bifurcations among Filipina/os in Canada, with earlier migrants in predominantly white-collar employment and middle-class positions, and later migrants in primarily working-class jobs (see Eric in this volume).

Despite the differences in employment patterns among earlier and later waves of Filipina/o immigrants, what has always remained constant is the dominance of women in Filipina/o migration flows (see Chen 1998). In 2006, 57.5 per cent of all Filipina/os in Canada were women (Statistics Canada 2006). Hence, for the Filipina/o community, immigration and migration inevitably bring to the fore gender concerns, specifically those of women. Gender concerns are linked to the forms that youth concerns take as well; for example, youth problems stemming from family separation and family reunification when women act as the primary wage earners but are kept apart and then reunited with their families (Praat with UKPC 2003; Praat with PWC 2009; Praat 2012; de Leon 2009). Several rich documentary films exist on those topics (Ami 2002; Bautista and Boti 1999; Boti 1997; Boti and Bautista 1992). For these reasons, this volume has two sections focusing on gender and labour as well as youth issues.

Whereas Filipina/o Canadian studies participates in and engages with critical race studies in Canada, it also extends diaspora studies in relation to Philippine studies. The transnational experiences of Filipina/os in Canada cannot be completely divorced from the politics and economy of the Philippines. The vast majority of Filipina/os in Canada were born in the Philippines, although the numbers of those who are second- and third-generation Filipina/o Canadians are growing. Therefore, the beliefs and outlook in life for most Filipina/os in Canada are both derived from Canada and the Philippines. It is not just to the various Filipina/o Canadian newspaper publications or listen to different conversations in Filipina/o Canadian homes, businesses, and gatherings, one could see and hear ardent interest in what is taking place in both nations. For instance, community events feature services and discussions on the Live-In Caregiver Program, fundraising efforts for the Mayon Volcano eruption in 2006 and for Typhoon Ondoy in 2009, and report backs on the Philippine national elections in 2010. Meanwhile, the Internet blogs talk about the victories of boxer Marlay
Genealogies of Filipina/o Canadian Scholarship

The analytic dilemmas of developing Filipina/o Canadian studies are like and unlike those faced by Filipina/o American studies. Compared to the literature on Filipina/o American studies, scholarship on Filipina/os in the Canadian context is decidedly more recent and more limited in scope. A shorter immigration history has meant a shorter incubation period for both cultural and academic production. There is also a generational difference between Filipina/o American studies and Filipina/o Canadian studies. In Canada, it is possible to see a rather bimodal distribution of Filipina/o academic labour that reflects the two generations of migration that are flagged elsewhere in this volume (see chapters by Damasco and Eric; see also Chen 1998), in that early professionals worked in their fields, while later arrivals were de-skilled. A very small number of full professors, many now emeritus and Philippine-born, came at the time when a larger number of professionally trained Filipina/os were being hired as professionals; however, the largest number of Filipina/o scholars are much younger (graduate students and assistant or junior associate professors), and many are Canadian-born (see Coloma in this volume). By contrast, a number of distinguished Filipina/o scholars in the United States (e.g., Rick Bonon, Catherine Coniza Choy, Martin Manalansan, Rhacel Salazar Parrañas, Vicente Rafael, Dylan Rodriguez, Sarita See, and Neferti Tadiar) have become important figures not only in Filipina/o American studies, but also in the broader fields of anthropology, ethnic studies, Asian American studies, women's studies, history, cultural studies, and sociology.

Moreover, the geopolitical relationship between the Philippines and the United States has conditioned the contours of Filipina/o American studies. Spanish colonial interests in the Philippines began in 1521, with the arrival of Ferdinand Magellan. In 1898, while the United States was at war with Spain over Cuba, Filipina/o revolutionaries renewed an armed campaign against the Spanish colonizers that had begun some years earlier, and with help from Americans whom they understood as allies, declared independence from Spain, and established the first Republic of the Philippines. However, Spain, rather than surrendering to Filipina/o revolutionaries, ceded the Philippines to the United States for twenty million dollars. The United States retained formal sovereignty until the end of the Second World War. U.S. colonization led to an extensive and intertwined, but not necessarily mutually beneficial, network of trade interests, labour migration, cultural and educational exchanges, and military experiences and structures. The spectre of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines continues to haunt Filipina/os' lives and livelihoods in the United States as well as the diaspora's relationship to the Philippines itself. Because of the historical and contemporary U.S. imperial interest in the Philippines, Orientalist research on Filipina/os has been ongoing since (and perhaps even before) Frederick Jackson Turner declared the U.S. frontier to be abroad. Anthropologists, for example, displayed Filipina/os to Americans in Chicago and St Louis during their respective World's Fairs (1893 and 1904) (see McElhinny in this volume), and the National Geographic has had a sustained history of publishing about the Philippines and Filipina/os since 1898 (Tusson 1999). As a consequence, much of the work on the Philippines or Filipina/o American issues from the United States, the central and most extended disciplinary approach has, arguably, been history which fosters continuing discussions about the impact of U.S. imperialism on the Philippines and on the metropolitan United States (Anderson 2006; Go 2006; Hoganson 1998; Kramer 2006; Rafael 1995, 2000; Solman 2001).

The respective research of this volume's editorial team members Roland Sintos Coloma, as a U.S.-trained scholar, and Bonnie McElhinny, as an American and now also Canadian scholar, both working in Canada, also contributes to these historical perspectives (Coloma 2012, 2011, 2009, 2006; McElhinny 2009, 2007a, 2007b, 2005). Canadian scholarship on Filipina/os and the Philippines has not been as sustained, in large part because the imperialist drive to 'know' the Filipina/o 'Other' at home and abroad has not existed quite as formally as it has in the U.S. context. Moreover, compared to Canada, the U.S. socio-political climate of civil rights and Third World activism that gave rise to the institutionalization of 'ethnic studies' did not exist in quite the same way in Canada. One can argue that the governmental construction
of a benevolent Canadian multiculturalism, a federal policy and national ‘brand’ (Mackey 2002; Thobani 2007), has contributed to the de-fanging of an agonistic racial politics that names government-sanctioned social exclusion of certain ethnic groups, including Filipina/os (Goonewardena and Kipfer 2005). Given that one major raison d’être for ethnic studies is precisely an anti-racist politics that names state violence, the absence of such a scholarly field in Canada (though see the work of Researchers and Academics of Colour for Equality/Equity [RACE] in elaborating a network of scholars engaged in critical studies of race in Canada) – which might include Filipina/o Canadian studies – has meant that such academic engagement has not occurred in quite the same way in the Canadian academy. To date, no institutionalized national academic network of scholars of Filipina/o Canadian issues exists, and when national gatherings on such issues do occur, they tend to be organized by community groups that focus on particular themes. In contrast, the U.S. academy boasts regular meetings of scholars of Filipina/o American issues, as well as Asian American studies more broadly. Asian American studies has two journals, Amerasia and the Journal of Asian American Studies, and faculty at the University of the Illinois at Urbana-Champaign organized a ‘state of the field’ national conference on Filipino Studies in March 2008. The rich possibilities of Filipina/o Canadian studies are hence yet to be fully realized.

This is not to say that there hasn’t been knowledge production on Filipina/o lives in Canada. In 1989, Anita Beltran Chen, the founding chair of the department of sociology and anthropology at Lakehead University, published a review article on information available on Filipina/o Canadians to date in Canadian Ethnic Studies (later reprinted in Chen 1998). She reported forty-three publications (books, conference proceedings, pamphlets, articles, MA theses, and government publications). Many of these, however, were not devoted exclusively or even largely to Filipina/os; some focused on immigrants or on Asian Canadians. Indeed, Chen serves as one of the earliest analysts of Asian Canadian experience, as she advocates for the distinction of Filipina/o Canadian experiences from others. (Documents which included information on Filipina/os were, for instance, documents produced by the Canadian Department of Manpower and Immigration and by the Canadian Department of State, Multicultural Directorate, or Nagata’s (1987) article on Southeast Asian Christians in Toronto. The overwhelming majority of the publications were, Chen (1998) notes, ‘descriptive and exploratory in nature, if not purely impressionistic’ (59). Many, like Chen, drew on data from government publications to offer demographic descriptions of Filipina/os in Canada: sex ratios, age profiles, work profiles, province of residence, etc. Others focused on the question of Filipina/o ‘adjustment’ in Canada. Chen concluded that these early studies on ‘adaptation and adjustment of Filipino Canadians provide evidence that they do not seem to have encountered serious difficulties in integrating themselves into the mainstream of Canadian society’ (53). It is difficult to assess the nature of this claim. It could be that the early immigration policies which recruited professionals and permitted Filipina/os to work in jobs reasonably similar to those for which they were trained meant that many reported more positive experiences compared to those in more recent studies. It could also, however, be that studies tended to survey precisely those most likely to report satisfactory experiences. Or, it could be that the analysts or respondents themselves under-emphasized reports of discrimination, in an attempt to stress what Filipina/os could contribute to Canadian society. Studies on adjustment often focus on ‘integration’ into society and whether new immigrants ‘fit’ into Canada, in ways that lead to an emphasis on Western cultural influences in the Philippines and fluent command of English, rather than instances of racism.

Looking closely at Lacquin (1973), the earliest extended study done on Filipina/os, allows us to illuminate these points in more detail. Lacquin’s meticulous account is based on a survey of Filipina/os whose names were generated with the help of the Filipina/o labour attaché and taken from rosters of Filipina/o associations. Although Lacquin’s study is often cited as a demographic portrait of the Filipina/o community in the early 1970s, it is important to flag the ways in which her methodological approach would have been skewed towards reaching professionals. As she notes, surveys tend to be returned generally by respondents with higher levels of education. Furthermore, Filipina/o associations of the time tended to be civic and social, and thus also likely to be the domain of professional participants (see also the critiques offered by the working-class respondents in Budhan’s (1972) study in Winnipeg, who noted the ways in which putatively social and civic organizations tended to work for the benefit of professionals). Finally, and most crucially, marital law was declared in the Philippines on September 22, 1972. Lacquin had intended to administer her survey in October 1972 and waited until January 1973, because of concerns that people would be wary or fearful of responding to the survey. It is difficult to believe that this brief wait would have made much of
a difference; in addition, the survey was accompanied by a letter of endorsement from the Office of the Labour Attaché, Embassy of the Philippines, so there was an explicit link to the government. The document was published by the United Council of Filipino Associations in Canada, an organization that Cuisipag and Buenafe (1993, 33) argue had, until the mid-1980s at least, a relatively conservative profile in the community in no small part because it sanctioned the imposition of martial law. Laquian’s respondents were mostly middle-level professionals (e.g., nurses, teachers, medical technologists, and clerks) who were highly mobile (22 per cent had resided in the United States before residing in Canada, many likely as part of the exchange visitor program which had a two-year limit on stay). Most reported that their initial adjustment was easy and that they were not pushed from the Philippines, but pulled to Canada. Once again, it is difficult to assess the nature of this claim, one which seems to avoid direct critique of the political or economic challenges in the Philippines, since 65 per cent of the respondents also noted that they felt they would have better opportunities in Canada. Strikingly, the problem most commonly reported in adjusting to Canada was climate, followed by the non-recognition of work experience and education in the Philippines and the employers’ requirement of Canadian experience. Nonetheless, and somewhat oddly, the majority report no experiences with discrimination. This suggests that further probing is necessary to understand what respondents meant by the notion of ‘discrimination’. Another striking point of concern was the critique of a recent tax system implemented by the Philippine government, which many experienced as onerous and unfair, leading them to consider abandoning their Philippine citizenship for Canadian citizenship. Laquian produced a list of recommendations at the end of the document, all of which were focused on what ‘Philippine authorities’ could do better to manage these transnational flows. She did not advise restricting or harshly controlling emigration, noting that ‘it may become a source of unrest and discontent if potential migrants are denied the right to seek “better opportunities”’. Instead, her recommendations would serve to draw nets of governmentality more closely around Filipinos/so abroad, in ways that would be inattentive to the concerns that Filipinos/so were likely to have about government surveillance after the declaration of martial law. The call for increased data-gathering and monitoring anticipates, and may even have shaped, policies later implemented in the Philippines (e.g., the monitoring of overseas Filipinos/so and their income by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration). Her recommended policies include maintaining closer liaisons with the Canadian government and closer ties to individuals and organizations, expanding consular assistance, re-examining existing taxation laws, arranging accreditation agreements, and regulating recruiters, travel agents, and fly-now-pay-later promotions. The report does not focus on changes that Canadian government or organizations need to undertake, unlike many later studies which focus on what Canadian institutions need to do to change policy in order to redress racist assumptions and practices.

Cuisipag and Buenafe (1993) display more attentiveness to the political conditions of knowledge production and to a wider range of political and economic activities in Windsor, Ottawa, and Toronto. Their account, drawing significantly on community newspapers, offers a rich set of chapters on topics such as the histories of various civic and social organizations, the rise and fall of various newspapers, radio programs, and television shows, the role of churches in community-building and politics, the significance of sports and dance, and participation in formal politics and labour activism. It contains the longest history of anti-Marcos activism by Filipina/o Canadians (Cuisipag is a former Manila newspaperman jailed by Marcos in the first months of the dictatorship) (see also Ordonez and Suyo 1989). It also contains glimpses of the ways activists involved in the anti-martial law movement later moved on to other causes which now feature centrally in Filipina/o and other social justice circles (for instance, Fely Villanen later played a prominent role in Intercede, an organization which advocates on behalf of domestic workers). This engagingly written account still tends to highlight professional experiences and activism rather than working-class ones; however, it flags a number of topics which deserve extensive further research. Indeed, the breadth of topics addressed is in contrast with a deeper, but more narrow, focus over the past twenty years, a focus provoked by the increasing centrality of Filipinas who work as live-in caregivers to community dynamics.

Over the past two decades, the overwhelming focus in Filipina/o Canadian studies has been an issue which is treated briefly at the end of Cuisipag and Buenafe’s (1993) narrative of the 1960s to the 1990s, and that is the issue of live-in caregivers. This research has documented the abysmal conditions for Filipina/o caregivers, citing deplorable labour conditions, the constraints of the live-in requirement, and the de facto lack of legal protections (Arat-Koc 2001; Bakken and Stasiulis 1997a; Elvir 1997; England and Stiell 1997; Macklin 1994; Pratt 1999; Stasiulis and
Bakan 2005; Velasco 1997; see chapters in part 2 of this volume). Similarly, many scholars have critiqued the policy contexts that enable the entry of live-in caregivers in Canada. Geraldine Pratt (1999), for example, has critiqued the racialization of gendered care work in Canada, as well as the Philippine state’s labour export policy and the Canadian state’s prioritization of this form of social reproduction. In so doing, scholars have made more visible the injustices perpetrated by labour migration policies. Whether or not this work has led to the reconsideration of Canadian state benevolence is, of course, another issue; indeed, Roland Sintos Coloma (in this volume) suggests that Canadian national pedagogy has learned precious little from this literature.

Much of this recent work has been conducted by academics, often in collaboration with community organizations. In Canada, the sites from which most work on Filipina/o Canadian issues have been generated are anthropology, geography, political science, and women’s studies because of the ways that these disciplines are often closely articulated with policy discussions and grassroots political discussions. In some cases, White anthropologists and geographers based in Canada whose research careers began with work in the Philippines find themselves compelled to follow migratory trajectories, commodity chains, development practices, or corporate investments, which lead back to Canada (Barber 2000, 2008; Kelly 2006; Kelly, Astorga-Garcia, Esquerra, and CASJ 2009). The significant impact of the Live-In Caregiver Program on the form of Filipina/o migration explains the centrality of these issues to the discipline of women’s studies; indeed, an overwhelming proportion of the academic scholars working on Filipina/o Canadian issues have accomplishments or cross-appointments in women’s studies, which itself has, not without controversy or discussion, taken on a social scientific shape in many universities. At the University of Toronto, documentary films, such as Brown Women, Blonde Babies (Boti and Bautista 1992), are widely used in undergraduate classes; two of the winners of the University of Toronto undergraduate paper prize in women’s studies in the past five years have written about the Live-In Caregiver Program. In all these disciplines, transnational analytics have been mobilized which question the ways concepts such as migration and racialization are bounded by a national rubric when the focus is on settlement and assimilation.

Filipina/o Canadian studies has a strong community-based focus: community organizations in general conduct research on the communities they serve in order to document the challenges that their target communities face and to support their advocacy efforts in the areas of policymaking and social service provision. Filipina/o community organizations are no different in this regard. In addition, rather than recreating the wheel, early and recent academic scholarship on Filipina/os has strategically tapped into this community-based expertise to benefit from the sophisticated scholarly labour that community organizations already have as well as the established history of scholarship that already exists through these organizations. This is particularly true of scholars who are not of the community, whose access to the community might not be as easy, and who, for ethical and political reasons, require community buy-in to make their research feasible. An early example of an organization drawing on community expertise was Bustamente’s work with the Multicultural Historical Society, which employed members of various communities to do oral histories with community members; some findings from this research were published in a popular history magazine (e.g., Bustamente 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986). Other books have been self-published or published in small local presses by indefatigable researchers and journalists involved in community organizations (cf. Cusipag and Buenaate 1993). Pratt’s work with the Philippine Women’s Centre (PWC) and other Filipina/o migrant groups in Vancouver and elsewhere has been going on since the mid-1990s (Pratt in collaboration with PWC and UKPC/FCYA 2007; Pratt 2012). Habiba Zaman has also closely worked with the PWC (Zaman 2003; Zaman with Diocen and Scott 2007). Similarly, Philip Kelly’s work with Toronto’s Community Alliance for Social Justice (CASJ) has been going on for a few years (Kelly, Astorga-Garcia, Esquerra and CASJ 2010), while Sedef Arat-Koc (2001) engaged in a participatory action research project under the auspices of Intercede with live-in caregivers to produce Caregivers Break the Silence.

Given the centrality of community organizations in knowledge production about Filipina/os in Canada, it is perhaps not surprising that the political priorities of community-based organizations are mirrored in the focus on labour, political economy, gender equality, and, increasingly, police violence and racial profiling also evident in this volume. Collaborative work with community organizations also occurs not just to facilitate academic access to communities or to tap into the relatively recent acceptance of community-based work as valid academic work. Benefits also accrue to community organizations. This can happen in several ways. Collaboration can serve to strengthen relationships between academics and the communities they study. Collaboration can also enable the application and use of academic research in community-based
political advocacy, and can strategically tap into the social capital of 'academic expertise.' Scholars of Filipina/o Canadian lives sometimes act as advocates, speaking to governments and the media about their work in order to rally public and government support towards policy changes.

This notion of scholars as 'advocates for' suggests scholars are outside the communities they represent, and in recent years, researching as an 'outsider' or 'ally' is a common scenario in Filipina/o Canadian studies, with several White scholars successfully forming long-term research relationships with Filipina/o community organizations (see Pratt in collaboration with PWC and UKPC/FCA 2007 for a description of certain kinds of research rejected by Filipina/o activists in Vancouver). This is evidence, in part, of the process of racialization and de-skilling evident elsewhere; those with scholarly expertise are working in other areas. Increasingly, however, as is evident in this edited collection, there are scholars of Filipino descent who do research in the broad field of Filipina/o Canadian studies. Being an insider poses its own set of restrictions. As Chen (2010) notes, 'those who live and work "in the local" are often mined in complex networks of relations that erode critical distance' (227). In addition, given the diversity of both political opinions around solutions to issues facing Filipina/os and the very definition of what it means to be Filipina/o, one potential issue is whether access to Filipina/o community organizations will get policed along notions of 'fit,' both in terms of normative political ideas and definitions of identity. Simply put, if scholars of Filipina/o descent refuse to frame their work and politics around an already calcified political project and understanding of Filipina/o-ness, is there room for critique elsewhere? And should these problems arise and Filipina/o Canadian scholars choose to work independently instead of forcing 'fit,' critiques might be leveled at scholars for separating themselves from 'community' in its singularized iteration. Striking a fine balance between these two scenarios is a difficult task indeed, and the question of what it means to do 'insider' research itself calls up what being an 'insider' really means. In this case, identifying as Filipina/o Canadian might not be enough to claim a place in community-based research. Filipina/o Canadian scholars may be required to prove their adherence to an "authentic" Filipina/o-ness through their familiarity with cultural norms, their political beliefs and political actions, and their willingness to promote certain defined Filipino community interests. As members of the so-called academic elite, Filipina/o Canadian scholars may be placed under an obligation not to let community organizations down by doing research that enhances the well being of Filipinos in Canada. The problem, of course, is that there is no consensus on how this can be done.

How scholarship on Filipina/o Canadians is to take place is, therefore, an important terrain for potential conflict and contestation. Like other forms of academic knowledge production, this scholarship is beset with issues that have been and continue to be discussed internally. One particularly salient issue for the project of Filipina/o Canadian studies is the usefulness of imagining a singular, unitary "Filipina/o" as an object of scholarly inquiry and political advocacy. Forming political and academic identities around the category 'Filipina/o' can be limiting insofar as it calcifies a unitary object that, in reality, is differentiated by regional, linguistic, cultural, political, and religious affiliations. It takes for granted Canadian census practices of constructing singularized communities around ethno-racial categories. The federal policy of multiculturalism, with its cultural mosaic approach, treats the census category 'Filipino' as a single tile that contributes to this mosaic, thereby enabling the lumping of Filipina/o bodies into a complex category that naturalizes sameness along particular ethno-national logics (compare Thobani 2007 on the communalizing logic of multiculturalism and the challenges it poses for certain forms of alliance and activism).

Perhaps for strategic reasons, some community organizations have also taken up the nation-state's practice of classifying Filipina/os into one unitary whole. It is not surprising that community organizations and scholars who take the nation-state as the target of political advocacy might need to strategically use the bio-political discourse of ethno-racial classification to further their aims. However, one of the dangers of this practice of lumping is that it could potentially become a way to hail not just a unitary whole, but a normative form of Filipina/o-ness. This is problematic insofar as it replaces one set of ethno-racial norms and forms of knowledge with other problematic forms of identity. Such practice poses an epistemological problem for scholars of Filipina/o Canadian studies. How can one study issues of relevance to Filipina/o Canadians without necessarily calcifying a normative Filipina/o identity? To this, there may be three potential solutions. The first is to refuse the naturalness of an imagined 'Filipina/o' subject by emphasizing social construction as the beginning of analysis (see Aguinaldo in this volume). On this, one might seek to understand how Filipina/o identities are constructed through legal/policy mechanisms, cultural production, and
popular discourse. One might investigate the conditions of possibility through which the figure of the Filipina nanny emerged through the complex collision of racialization, gendering, and political economy. Implicit in this attention to the genealogy of Filipina/o issues is a refusal to take as given common understandings of Filipina/o.

A second approach is to frame politics around issues as opposed to identities. Along with refusing the identitarian commitment to a structuralist idea of identity, a focus on the politics of issues enables the formation of alliances across different identifications in multiple locations. For Filipina/o Canadians, for example, advocacy and research around Filipina live-in caregivers has called up transnational, national, and regional alliances with diverse women’s, ethno-racial, migrant, and labour groups around the issue of gendered and racialized labour. Intercode, an organization supporting domestic workers based in Toronto, linked the concerns of women workers from the Philippines and the Caribbean (Arat-Köç 2003), while Stasiulis and Bakan (2005) compare the challenges faced by Filipina and Caribbean nurses in addressing racism in Canadian medical institutions. Moreover, organizations such as Gabriela in Toronto and Pinay in Montreal are part of national and transnational grassroots networks like Women United against Imperialism and the International Women’s Alliance in order to establish joint campaigns on migration reform, trafficking, domestic work, and other issues with national and community women’s organizations. Similarly, in developing strategies for addressing police violence and racial profiling, the Filipina/o community has collaborated with Black activists with long histories of addressing such concerns (Astorga-García 2007). There are also political linkages between various groups of migrant workers. Domestic workers, seasonal agricultural workers, and temporary labour migrants under the Temporary Foreign Workers Program from the Philippines and from other countries face adverse living and working conditions, with some being denied access to permanent Canadian residency (see master’s research undertaken by Rorina Fobria). Such commonalities lead to the formation of grassroots alliances between migrant workers to combat common problems (see PhD research being undertaken by Ethel Tungohan). Churches in Canada shape a multi-ethnic, faith-based approach to multiculturalism (see PhD research currently being undertaken by Lina Davidson). In the case of Filipina/o Canadian studies, locating this nascent field of study within broader scholarly communities and networks (e.g., ethnic studies and women’s studies) might also facilitate political alliances around issues of common importance.

A final approach is to emphasize how transnational and postcolonial politics and theories complicate how we might understand ‘Filipina/o’ which is no longer legible only in the context of a sovereign Philippine state. Spanish and U.S. colonialism in the Philippines as well as the movements of Filipina/o populations all over the world render a simplistic understanding of Filipina/o-ness obsolete. For scholars of Filipina/o Canadian studies, it is difficult – and indeed irresponsible – to create a normative Filipina/o identity that neglects on-the-ground contestations of what it means to identify and be identified as part of Filipina/o Canadian studies.

Cultural Interventions: Academic, Artistic, and Other Workplaces

Anthropologist and playwright Dorinne Kondo (1995) argues that like many marginalized people, Asian Americans are often erased from, or stereotyped in, realms of cultural representation. The significance of cultural production, then, “for those of us ‘on the margins’ is a process of representing our emergent, always historically mediated identities, creating a space for us to ‘write our faces,’ to paraphrase the playwright/performance artist/novelist Han Ong” (49). In many emergent fields of inquiry, a variety of forms of cultural production (essays, poems, novels, paintings, songs, etc.) become the first articulation of key social, political, and cultural themes, perhaps in part because they may require less capital or formal training than academic scholarship often does. A longer history of presence, including settlement, has meant that Filipina/o in the U.S. context have had much more time to cultivate a cultural, particularly artistic, presence that lends itself to humanistic analysis (de Jesus 2005). In the Canadian case, cultural production by Filipina/o has a much shorter history. Where present, their impact has not been documented robustly by academic analysis (though see Ty in this volume). The archival of cultural products and the opportunity to engage these in cultural analyses are also expanding. Our volume thus includes a selection of cultural works presented at the national symposium from which this volume is derived – a poem by Carlo Sayo and Joan Marc Daga, and images by Celia Correa, Eric Tigley, Reuben Sarumugam, and Bryan Taguba. Other presenters at the conference have made comparable contributions – Jo Simalay Akampa (an interdisciplinary
artist born in Manila and raised in the eastern suburbs of Toronto) and R. Patrick Alcedo (a specialist in Southeast Asian dance). As an important first step, Ty (in this volume) sets an example for future cultural analytical work by engaging with community-based theoretical productions and what they say about gender, belonging, immigration, and nation. Groups such as the Toronto-based Asian Arts Freedom School offer opportunities for intercultural programming with other Asian groups, and the Kapisanan Arts and Cultural Centre, also in Toronto, offers a space for empowering artists and entrepreneurs through positive and critical cultural identification (also see chapters by Balmes, Largo, and Pratt in this volume). The Magkaisa Centre organized the Maleta (Suitcase) project in 2010 in Toronto, an art exhibit focused on portraying Filipina/o Canadian women's resilience and on enhancing women's equality and human rights.

Critical and Comparative Studies of Race and Ethnicity in Canada

An academic volume on Filipina/o Canadian studies throws into sharp relief the state of 'minority studies' in multicultural Canada. Filipina/o Canadian studies is by no means minor in Canadian academic studies if the term denotes an inferior or inconsequential position. Although a nascent academic field, its status as part of minority studies, in actuality, reveals more about the rationalities, operations, and effects of mainstream intellectual and institutional discourses and structures in Canada. It also illuminates the possibilities and limits of various ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies that are utilized and available for empirical work. Consequently, it shares a similar position with other interdisciplinary fields like women's studies, area studies programs like Caribbean studies and Middle Eastern studies, as well as race/ethnic studies programs like Black Canadian studies and Asian Canadian studies, whose intellectual currency, symbolic standing, and material allocation in scholarly and institutional venues continue to remain disputed and uncertain.

Admittedly, Filipina/o Canadian studies as a formal institutional enterprise does not exist in any Canadian institution of higher education. Research institutes, programmatic centres, and undergraduate and graduate courses that focus on Asia are numerous and well supported in the universities. For instance, University of Toronto has the Asian Institute at the Munk School for Global Affairs, and the Asian Institute houses the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies where two of this book's co-editors, Bonnie McElhinny and Roland Sintos Coloma, are affiliated as faculty specialists on the Philippines. Even Southeast Asian studies, however, is a relatively marginalized area for study (Rafael 1995), and the extent to which Southeast Asian studies programs articulate with Southeast Asian Canadians remains uneven. The biennial conference of the Canadian Council of Southeast Asian Studies has not featured a scholar of Philippine and Filipina/Diaspora studies as a keynote speaker. Tellingly, at one colloquium planning session for Southeast Asian studies at the University of Toronto when Catherine Ceniza Choy was suggested as a possible speaker, one interlocutor suggested that the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies was a more appropriate site for such a talk. Choy is author of Empire of Care (2003), a book on U.S. colonial influences on nursing education, programs for fostering Filipina/o nurses' employment in the United States, and the kinds of structural inequity and racism such nurses experienced. Moreover, no Canadian university yet offers, to our knowledge, regular instruction of any Filipina/o language. York University teaches regularly a studio course on Philippine dance cultures, and University of Winnipeg offered a summer institute on 'Migration and Development in the Philippines, 1960-2010.' Much less attention and resources, however, have been provided to the development and teaching related to Asians and particularly Filipina/os in Canada. Faculty members with scholarly and teaching interests in Filipina/o Canadian studies either include relevant readings in their general courses or, in very rare cases, offer specialized courses on Filipina/o Canadian studies. Bonnie McElhinny taught in 2006 what was probably one of the earliest university courses in Canada that exclusively focused on Filipina/os in Canada; she taught 'Gender and the Filipina/o Diaspora' in Women and Gender Studies. The students in that class undertook a life history assignment as a way of contributing to the growing body of research on Filipina/os in Canada, and then continued to conduct and analyse life histories for several years after (McElhinny, Young, Damasco, DeOcampo, Febria, Salonga 2009; McElhinny, Collantes, Yeung, Febria, Damasco, Salonga, DeOcampo ms). A number of these students are now undertaking their own research on Filipina/o issues as graduate students in U.S. and Canadian universities. Consequently, since Canada's academic gaze has been primarily directed externally to the west across the Pacific, this edited volume aims to shift the gaze and focus internally in order to enact a key objective of Filipina/o Canadian studies: to document
and analyse the lived experiences and representations of Filipina/os in Canada.

The lack of formal institutional structures for Filipina/o Canadian studies has by no means limited its development as a scholarly endeavour. This volume grew from conversations between and among Canadian academics concerned with the intellectual enterprise of developing and introducing Filipina/o Canadian studies as a scholarly, political, and pedagogical project. As evident in the bibliographies of the various chapters in this book, numerous journal articles, government and community reports, books, and graduate theses address the experiences and representations of Filipina/os in Canada. ‘Spectres of Invisibility: Filipina/o Lives in Canada’, the first national symposium on Filipina/o Canadian studies, held in October 2009 at University of Toronto, served as the foundation for this book. The symposium featured a keynote address by Eleanor Ty and three panels, which became the organizing framework for this book. Attended by more than 130 people, the symposium was organized by Kritikal Kolektibo, a group of professors and students mostly from University of Toronto who are interested in Filipina/o studies, and supported generously by internal funding from various faculties, institutes, departments, and programs at University of Toronto as well as a workshop grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. The Kolektibo was organized by Roland Sintos Coloma and began meeting in September 2008. Despite having only six members in its first meeting, the Kolektibo expanded gradually through word of mouth and today has over thirty regular members. The Kolektibo did this by disseminating news and advertising events that were relevant to the membership’s interests through an internal listerv, by advertising lectures by visiting academics who have done work on Filipina/o issues (in recent years, this has included Yen Le Espiritu, Martin Manalansan, Rhalce Salazar Parreñas, Geraldine Pratt, Vicente Rafael, and Neferti Tadiar), and by holding monthly meetings where Kolektibo members discussed articles and book chapters that allowed the group to better understand Critical Filipina/o studies. The decision to convene Kritikal Kolektibo at the University of Toronto was no accident: not only are there more Filipina/os in Toronto than in any other part of Canada, but also the significant bulge in Filipina/o migration in the last two decades means that there is now a sizeable number of second-generation graduate and undergraduate students and a few faculty members interested in Filipina/o Canadian issues. This will be important to consider in the future how the Great Lakes focus in Filipina/o Canadian scholarship might throw up questions and perspectives that are different from the West Coast–centred perspective evident in Filipina/o American studies.

Discussions at the ‘Spectres of Invisibility’ national symposium were often spirited and occasionally difficult, highlighting some key questions for continued academic and activist work as well as alliance construction. After the screening of SCRAP, a documentary film produced by Reuben Sarumugam and Bryan Taguba arguing for the elimination of the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP), some audience members called instead for the review and reform of the LCP, arguing that even though many program participants see the program as flawed, they nonetheless also view it as an important gateway for immigration which, if closed, might make it more difficult to migrate to Canada. Others argued that no reform was possible for a form of labour that is best understood, in their view, as modern-day slavery. According to them, the LCP not only ‘enslaves’ live-in caregivers by making them live and work under oppressive conditions but also ‘enslaves’ poor countries like the Philippines by forcing them to continually export labour to rich countries like Canada, leading to their continued dependency. The conference was widely covered in community- and university-based newspapers. The Kolektibo’s hope for what the conference might do was eloquently captured in commentary on the conference reported in the McGill Daily, Reporter Braden Goyette (2009) quoted Alex Felipe, who works with the Kapisanan Centre for Philippine Arts and Culture, as well as Migrante and Migrante Youth. Felipe lauded the conference, as he called for continuing work on the involvement of the community: ‘Academia, when it’s done well, speaks for the people. It compiles the voices of the people in a manner that’s suitable for academics and scholars, but it’s still the voice of the people’.

This volume thus arises out of, and contributes to, diasporic Philippine studies, Canadian studies, critical studies of race and multiculturalism in Canada, a nascent Asian Canadian studies, and transnational feminist studies. As editors and contributors, we pursue our inquiries from the academic vantage points of the social sciences, the humanities, and the arts, including anthropology, cultural studies, education, geography, history, information science, literature, political science, sociology, and women’s studies. We attend to the historical and contemporary conditions that shape and impact the experiences and representations of Filipinos/as in Canada.

In this book, various iterations of identity terms are used, signalling diverse and differently political ways of (self-) identifying with or against categorizations. For example, the title of the volume refers to ‘Filipinos in Canada’, reproducing the most common way of
designating people of Philippine ancestry in Canada. This designation mirrors governmental understandings of the population as seen in the Statistics Canada publication 'The Filipino Community in Canada' and other similar demographic profiles (Lindsay 2007). For the purpose of the book title, the term 'Filipino' was chosen at the strong suggestion of the University of Toronto Press, our publisher, because it is less clunky and more searchable in online and library databases.

The marketing logic of this choice, of course, has its limits, and we remain quite uneasy and ambivalent about it. As editors, we are actually more partial to 'Filipino/o,' the term that we proposed at the beginning of the publication process. It is also the term that we use in the title of this introduction, and the term of choice for some chapters in this volume. To us, 'Filipino/o' is an important political term because its dually gendered morphology signals the centrality of gender for Filipino/o lives in the Canadian context, a theme that is central to the theoretical contributions of several subsequent chapters and indeed to Filipino/o community organizing and activism in Canada. Moreover, following de Jesus (2008), we believe that the erasure of women in the term 'Filipino' maintains the invisibility of women's lives in academic analysis, rendering a nascent field constituted as simply 'Filipino studies' really androcentric. We also use the term in keeping with the political spirit of ensuring the importance of gender and its intersectionalities for Chican@/a/o (Eleneis 1997) and Latina/o studies (Hernandez-Trujillo 1997), fields that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in the context of Third World and civil rights activism in the United States.

As editors, we encouraged contributors to think about the feasibility of the term 'Filipino/o' for their own chapters. Some in fact did adopt this term, but not everyone did. The volume retains the diversity of terms out of respect for different people's political orientations and choices. It also does so to signal that there is no consensus among scholars of this nascent field about which term is best, or indeed among Filipino/o activists themselves.

The four sections in the book address the central themes that are germane to our inquiries: 'Difference and Recognition', 'Gender, Migration, and Labour', 'Representation and Its Discontents', and 'Youth Spaces and Subjectivities'. The final chapters in the second, third, and fourth sections provide detailed responses to the chapters in that section. Two scholars from critical social sciences and public health, Nora Angeles and Jeffrey Aguinido, who served as discussants at the symposium on panels on labour and youth, have contributed revised versions of their comments to this volume, in ways which further describe, and much more extensively contextualize, each of these chapters. Geographer Geraldine Pratt comments on the politics of cultural representation of Filipina/o/s, as she adds insights from her collaborative work with the Philippine Women's Centre in Vancouver on Nanay, a documentary play (Pratt and Johnson 2009).

The first section, 'Difference and Recognition,' considers how racial differentiation is — or is not — recognized in Canada, a country whose official state ideology is multiculturalism and which relies significantly upon immigration to sustain economic growth. In addition to the editorial team's introduction, this section includes chapters by literary scholar Eleanor By and by geographer Philip Kelly with the collaboration of activists Mila Astorga-Garcia and Enrico Esquerra from the Community Alliance for Social Justice. Ty's chapter engages critically with Charles Taylor's thoughts on multiculturalism as a solution to the problem and politics of recognition by looking at how negative and positive stereotypes of Filipina/o/s have been produced within unequal political and economic conditions in Canada and globally. She pays particular attention to the growing market for affect in which Filipino/o/s, especially in the roles of nurse and domestic worker, are imbricated, in ways which shape individual interactions, interactions within states, interactions between individuals and states, and of course academic research. She turns to the role that cultural production can play in challenging certain problematic forms of recognition by analysing Miss Orient, a play about three young women who are contestants in the 'Miss Pearl of the Orient' beauty pageant which highlights and satirizes some of the idealizations, misconceptions, and stereotypes of being a Filipina in Canada. Kelly, Astorga-Garcia, and Esquerra take up the questions of recognition using a different theoretical and methodological approach. They are interested in the question of why and how Filipinos are deprofessionalized and de-skilled in the Canadian labour market; overrepresented in some jobs and underrepresented in others. Using quantitative and survey data, they consider the impact of the Philippines as the sending country, of the relatively high use of family reunification and the Live-In Caregiver Program for migration, of the ways that Philippine credentials and education are understood, and the impact of culture and racialization. The issues of differentiation, recognition, and erasure also become the themes around which the remaining sections pivot.

The second section focuses on the intertwined realities of 'Gender, Migration, and Labour,' which have been central since the 1960s in
shaping the conditions of Filipina/o Canadian lives and livelihood. Four chapters continue to focus significant attention on nurses and live-in caregivers, but from different angles than previous scholarship, while a fifth chapter investigates entrepreneurs, a topic which has received little attention from researchers thus far. Valérie Damasco, drawing on the experience of her aunt and other nurses, tells the little-told story of the recruitment of Filipinas to serve as healthcare professionals in Canada in the early 1960s, before the wide-scale liberalization of the Canadian immigration system removed national and racial quotas. Josephine Eric, a former live-in caregiver who is now a community activist and researcher with two graduate degrees, notes that she has been told by some Filipina/os that to mention her work as a nanny is an embarrassment, to herself and the community. To try to understand this sentiment, she compares the experiences of early cohorts of Filipinas in Canada (like those described by Damasco) with later cohorts, as a way of examining the import of different forms of Canadian immigration policy for Filipina/os and their families in a variety of domains for career trajectories, for a sense of belonging, for social relations and class sentiment within the community, and for perceptions of Filipina/os by others. Lisa Davidson notes that many activists and analysts have challenged the notion that live-in caregivers are "just like one of the family" for the paid labour and the sexual and economic exploitation that this metaphor obscures. She notes that live-in caregivers are, however, sometimes actual family members; she investigates the hopes and experiences of Filipinas who have worked for other family members as caregivers. She notes that, though some are using the LCP as a creative way to effect family reunification and challenge the notion of family embodied in Canadian immigration policy, many women find themselves subject to the same exploitative practices familiar to domestic workers in non-Filipina/o families. She parses how these women explain these challenges by seeing their family members as relating to them as domestic helpers, with practices appropriate in the Philippines, but inappropriate in Canada where they are domestic workers, with different rights, duties, and privileges. Ethel Tungohan, noting that many discussions of live-in caregivers focus on economic arguments, considers how to use receiving states' rhetoric about what a liberal democracy means to build an argument for political integration. She extends her theoretical account by examining the forms of political agency and engagement manifested by and on behalf of Filipinas working as live-in caregivers in a range of political organizations with different, and sometimes opposed, strategies for effecting change. Noting that most of the work on labour and Filipina/os in Canada has focused on nurses and live-in caregivers, Cesar Polvorosa investigates the role of entrepreneurs in Toronto, considering the kinds of workplaces, sites of consumption, and projects of Filipino-place-making that small businesses constitute.

The third section, 'Representation and Its Discontents,' showcases the ways in which Filipina/os and the Filipinos are represented and imagined both by mainstream technologies, such as museums, textbooks, and public libraries, and by Filipina/o artists themselves. Chapters in this section build on Ty's insight that the labour conditions in which Filipina/os regularly find themselves create certain stereotypes of Filipina/os, as they look at other sites where forms of hypervisibility, erasure, and misrepresentation are circulated. Chapters in this section also consider how representations function not only as a way to construct and circulate certain ideas and identities, but also as a source of advocacy and empowerment. Bonnie McElhinney's chapter examines the cultural politics of the re-exhibition of colonial artifacts, by looking at a recent exhibit mounted at the Royal Ontario Museum in Ontario which recirculates Filipina/o artifacts originally displayed at the 1904 St Louis World's Fair, a fair meant to celebrate the benevolence of U.S. empire. She scrutinizes when exhibitions on colonial history serve to challenge racialized hierarchies and when and how they might ratify them. Marissa Largo describes a collaborative art project she undertook with Kabataang Montreal, an organization for Filipina/o youth in that city. She analyses the ways that two different projects, the development of a mural project which helped youth name problems in the community and hopes for the future, and a video on the project, represent different ways for a community artist to work in collaboration with others. She considers the kinds of social and political consciousness that participants developed while working on the project, and thus what such projects can contribute to community organizing. Vernon Totanes examines the kinds of Tagalog materials available in public libraries in Toronto, the second busiest public library system in the world, and documents the ways these materials are underrepresented in comparison with collections that serve other ethno-linguistic communities. He also considers the spatial politics of the distribution of the materials, noting that concentrations of Tagalog materials and Tagalog speakers are oddly mismatched, and offers some recommendations for transformations in library policy. Situating his work within critical studies of race in Canada, Roland Sintos Coloma examines the politics of
representation in another key site, books and textbooks which offer general accounts of Canadian history to secondary school students, university students, and general audiences. He notes the significant erasure of Filipina/o, and other Asian Canadian, histories in Canada from these accounts, and offers three recommendations for redressing invisibility in historical narrations.

The fourth section, 'Youth Spaces and Subjectivities,' highlights the experiences of Filipina/o and Filipina/o Canadian youth. Virtually all of the scholarship on Filipina/os in Canada has focused on adults – their labour conditions, their community organizations, their activism, their experiences of racism. However, the long periods of separation enforced upon Filipina/os working as live-in caregivers and their families has drawn attention to what happens when families reunify. A number of activist organizations in Canada are youth-run, and have begun to draw attention to the ways racism affects youth in schools, peer groups, and elsewhere. John Paul Catungal analyses public discourses on the murders of four Filipino youth, in part for what they reveal about discourses of race, violence, and immigration. In particular he attends to how the idea of 'inter-ethnic violence' circulated to describe some of these murders and to construct youth of colour as threats to, and outliers in, successful multicultural cities. Challenging media representations which individualize crime and downplay institutional and political contexts, Catungal examines these representations for what they reveal about how discussions of individual bodies, and policies that address them, also construct ideologies and practices of exclusion and inclusion in families, communities, and Canada.

Christine Balmes, drawing on her participation in an artistic collective at the Kapisanan Philippine Centre for Arts and Culture in Toronto, documents the emergence of a Filipina/o Canadian cultural movement, and how artworks, music, and performance contribute towards the decolonization of Filipina/o youth (see also Largo above). Maureen Mendoza adopts a case study approach to investigate the experiences of eleven Filipina/o students, half Canadian-born and half Philippine-born, at the University of British Columbia. While she finds that these students are relatively privileged in terms of economic position and educational background when compared with many other Filipina/o students, she also documents the forms of isolation they experience, in part because of the significant underrepresentation of Filipina/o students at UBC and their underrepresentation in the curriculum (see also Coloma above). Significantly, this lack of visibility is assessed with respect to both White Canadian and other Asian Canadian students. She documents a largely incipient attempt to understand their own experiences within the context of class stratification in the Filipina/o community, and racial and class stratification in Canada, and considers the economic and political explanations for why these students remain rather inarticulate about these questions. Conuely de Leon also explores differentiation within the Filipina/o community, in this case linked to self- and other-identification as dark-skinned or lighter-skinned. She considers how these attributions of skin colour are linked to spatial politics in the western and eastern suburbs of Toronto, which are also often ideologically understood as distinguished by class (middle-class vs working class) and degree of racialization (largely White vs largely racialized groups). She embeds discussions of intraracial colourism within a thoughtful history of colonialism and the bodily hierarchies it has established, their continuing meaning, and what it might take to transcend these forms of differentiation.

Future Directions of Filipina/o Canadian Studies

At the conclusion of Cheril's (1999) survey article, she suggests a number of directions for future research on Filipina/o Canadians. In addition to the need to focus on Filipina/o Canadians as a distinct ethno-cultural group (a goal on which there has been considerable progress), she calls for attention to specific topics that she, as a sociologist, thinks deserve more attention. These topics include attention to diversity among Filipina/os, the rise of new institutions, internal migration within Canada, family dynamics and marriage (including 'mixed' marriages, intergenerational relationships, forms of contact with family in the Philippines), and retirement plans. Although this volume engages with some central themes pertinent to Filipina/o Canadian studies, the editors are keenly aware that there are further areas that are undeveloped. We have flagged some of these above. In this final section, we also point to the role of religion, regional identity, and Canadian intervention projects as research sites requiring further consideration. One key theme that continues to be omitted in Asian Canadian studies, as in Asian American studies, is the intersection of religion and ethnic identity (Bramadat and Seljak 2008: Yoo 1999, 11). Indeed, the contributors to this volume acknowledge the reproduction of the invisibility of religious and Filipina/o identity, we remain conscious that contemporary academic and community-based research does not fully
address the link between Filipino/a religious affiliation, community socialization, and political networking. Religious-based participation and para-church organizations are central venues for newly arrived Filipina/os to access broader and established Filipina/o Canadian publics, specifically Filipina/o communities oriented towards issues on family, generation, class, gender, and sexuality (Busto 1999; San Buenaventura 1999). We suggest that further work is required in considering how Filipina/os experience and make sense of migration and settlement into Canada given their participation in religious networks (though see Eric 2011). Through church organizations, we can consider the strategies of Filipina/os in acquiring social and legal-oriented service networks and in gaining necessary information to navigate the structures of various Canadian institutions, such as hospitals and schools, and the processes of Canadian policies, such as labour, immigration, and citizenship. Work on religion also provides fertile ground for investigating inter-ethnic relations between Filipina/os and other ‘visible minority’ Christian groups, such as Chinese Canadians, Korean Canadians, Tamil Canadians, and Vietnamese Canadians, in ways which allow us to consider what a faith-based perspective on Canadian multiculturalism and social practices might be. Following this, we point to the flows of Catholic charismatic movements developed in the Philippines and disseminated in Canada, such as Cursillo, Marriage and Engaged Encounter, Singles for Christ, Couples for Christ, Families for Christ, The Christian Life Program, and El Shaddai (McGowan 2008; Wiegele 2007), as vehicles in which Filipina/o identity is socially reproduced.

Another research direction to explore is the influence and significance of Filipina/o regional identities from the Philippines within the contours of Filipina/o communities in Canada. Often, after two Filipina/os meet for the first time, the question that follows is tage samu ka atin? (where are you from in the Philippines?), a query that cues the interlocutors towards the determination of familial, national, and class identification. In understanding and making sense of the intricacies of community-building efforts among Filipina/os, we require further consideration of the relationship between region, nation, family, and class in the formation of social and political alliances among Filipina/os in Canada. How have divergent regional and national histories and class formations in the Philippines been transplanted, cultivated, challenged, or reaffirmed within the terrain of Filipina/o Canadian communities? Why are some regions in the Philippines more politically active than others, and how does this play out within the multiple practices of Filipina/o activism in Canada? How do indigenous Filipina/os in Canada affirm their communities’ struggles for self-determination in the Philippines while also supporting Aboriginal people’s struggles in Canada (see Mahtani and Roberts in this volume)? How do they foster transnational linkages that would simultaneously allow them to bolster indigenous nationalist efforts in the Philippines and to fight against the activities of the Canadian state and Canadian mining companies in their communities? We are thus conscious of the ways in which an overarching Filipina/o identity obscures a regional and national identity, one that tells a more nuanced story of the micropolitics of belonging, unity, and diversity vis-à-vis family, ethnicity, nation, and class.

In the dialogical and dialectical spirit of the conference from which this volume was derived, Parts II, III, and IV have comments from the original discussants which, as they contextualize the papers in the section within ongoing research in Philippine studies, Canadian studies, feminist studies, and transnational studies, offer some directions for future research on each of the key topics flagged in these sections. Much as they did for the panels in the Specters of Invisibility symposium, these discussant responses provide a crucial framework from which to analyse each section. Along with showing the connections between the various chapters in each section, the discussants critically reflect on each theme from their vantage points as scholars with a long history of engagement with the Filipina/o community in Canada. By including Angeles', Aquaindio's, and Pratt's thought-provoking pieces, we endeavour to show the divergent ways in which senior scholars have responded to the issues raised by the contributors, thus showing the diverse directions the nascent field of Filipina/o Canadian studies can take. Finally, this volume also features an afterword by scholars well-versed in the field of Canadian Studies, Minelle Mahtani and David Roberts, whose comments help contextualize these papers over against, and place them in dialogue with, this wider field of inquiry. With the introductory chapter by the editors and Ty foregrounding transnational approaches, the book is thus bracketed by two intertwined approaches to the future development of Filipina/o studies in Canada.

As much as we have highlighted the significance and role of Filipina/os in Canada, it is crucial to continue to investigate the role of Canadians and Canadian government and non-governmental organizations in the Philippines. McCoy (1991), for instance, describes the complicity of the Canadian International Development Agency in indirectly funding Filipina/o militia groups with resources distributed for
the implementation of democracy and fair election practices during the political transition period from Marcos to Aquino (127). Framed as 'good intentions' and humanitarian aid, Canadian interventions in the Philippines have consequences for the social, political, and economic mobility, both local and transnational, of various indigenous groups (see Angeles 2003). How has the implementation of humanitarian-based projects and dispersal of small grants shaped class and gendered politics? It is important to consider how Canadian projects, agencies, and personnel contribute to the politics of Filipina/os in Canada. This rapid overview, however, provides only a sampling of the exciting and timely forms of research we hope this volume provokes, as it showcases some of the most important research initiatives that are currently underway.

NOTES

1 Maclean's has since changed the title of the online article to read 'The Enrollment Controversy: Worries That Efforts in the US to Limit Enrollment of Asian Students in Top Universities May Migrate to Canada.' See http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/11/10/fox-asian/, accessed December 2, 2010.
2 See Rinaldo Walcott (2003) for a critique of essentialist understandings of Black Canadian identity and a set of questions about whether 'African Canadian' can have the same utility or resonance in Canada as 'African American' does in the United States.
4 The history in the preceding four paragraphs is adapted from McElhinny, Yeung, Damaseo, DeOcampo, Febriz, Collantes, and Salonga (2009, 96–97).
5 One might contrast this with the critical role that male agricultural labourers play in Filipino/American studies.
7 These scholars include Eusebio Koh, Professor Emeritus (Mathematics, University of Regina), Romulo Magsino, Dean and Professor Emeritus (Education, University of Manitoba), and Aprodicio Laguina, Professor Emeritus (Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia). Our thanks to a helpful and knowledgeable reviewer for this list.

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Chapter 3

Filipino Immigrants in the Toronto Labour Market: Towards an Understanding of Deprofessionalization

PHILIP F. KELLY, MILA ASTORGA-GARCIA, ENRICO F. ESQUIERRA, AND THE COMMUNITY ALLIANCE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, TORONTO

Introduction

Deprofessionalization, credential non-recognition, and concentration in certain kinds of jobs are all experiences that Filipinos share with many other immigrants to Canada. They are also processes that have received a great deal of popular and policy attention in recent years. In much of the discussion of these issues, however, labour market marginalization has been assumed to be a generic ‘immigrant’ issue, with newcomers finding difficulty breaking into Canadian professions because of regulatory barriers, differences in the cultures of professional practices, and employers’ demands for ‘Canadian experience.’ These are all important and widely applicable issues, but assuming a universalized immigrant experience also masks a great deal that is specific to particular groups.

In this chapter, we argue first that there is a specific set of factors that shape the Filipino experience of integration into the Toronto labour market. While acknowledging that these factors taken in isolation are replicated in the experiences of other immigrant groups, and that there exists a great deal of diversity of experiences among the Filipino community, we believe that together they represent a distinctive set of circumstances that help us to understand the experiences of many Filipinos.

The first factor concerns the Philippines as a country of origin. Given the class structure of Philippine society, the class origins of most Filipino immigrants, and the place of the Philippines in the global economic order, Filipinos generally arrive in Canada with relatively modest financial assets, and this situation affects their integration into the labour market. The second factor concerns the distinctive profile of immigration programs used by Filipino immigrants, and particularly the implications of high usage of caregiver and family reunification categories. The third factor concerns credential assessment and access to professions. The final factor concerns the ways in which culturally ‘being Filipino’ is interpreted in Canadian workplaces and broader society. This relates to a certain culture of work brought to Canada from the Philippines, and the ways in which that is interpreted and valorized in Canadian workplaces. It also relates to how Filipino-ness is culturally ‘read,’ and often stereotyped, in Canadian society.

Understanding Filipino immigrant experiences in the labour market as shaped distinctively by these factors takes us beyond existing studies that have tended to focus on the conditions of work and citizenship imposed by the Live-In Caregiver Program (Bakan and Statius 1997; McKay 2002; Pratt 2004; Spitzer and Torres 2008), or have provided more general accounts of the history of settlement (Laquian 1973; Cuisipag and Buenafe 1993; Chen 1998; Laquian and Laquian 2008). Relatively few studies have examined the broader issue of labour market integration among Filipinos (although see Kelly 2006; Kelly and D’Addario 2008).

While establishing the context of Filipino settlement and labour market integration using quantitative data, this chapter develops its argument about the processes behind such patterns using qualitative material. This is an analytically important combination of methods and data types. While quantitative data provide important indications of aggregate patterns, and possibly some significant correlations, it is only through qualitative data that the social processes behind those patterns can be understood. It is also important to note that although we attempt to develop a picture of the distinctiveness of the Filipino experience, we do not engage in an explicit comparison with other immigrant groups. While this would be a fruitful avenue for inquiry, it was beyond the scope of the research described here.

This chapter is based upon a collaboration between university- and community-based researchers associated with the Community Alliance for Social Justice (CASJ), a Filipino advocacy organization in Toronto engaged in research, education, and community mobilization. In the first stage of the collaboration, in 2005–6, a survey of Philippine-educated immigrants in Toronto was undertaken, eliciting information on their immigration history, their educational and professional training, their experiences in the Canadian labour market, and their
reflections on the barriers that prevent them from achieving their full potential. The survey was distributed by CAS; 421 completed surveys were returned.

The survey was followed by two sets of focus groups. The first set was conducted in 2006-7 with groups of Filipino professionals (some were practising their professions, but most were unable to do so) engineers, accountants, physiotherapists, and nurses. These focus groups were designed to address the barriers that exist for Filipino professionals seeking access to specific licensed professions (selected to reflect the largest groups of professionals represented in Filipino immigration flows). The second set was conducted in 2007-8, and involved individuals working in occupations for which professional licensing is not a necessary pre-condition for upward mobility in the workplace: these participants worked in hotels, retail, manufacturing, clerical positions, and ancillary jobs in the healthcare system.

Filipino Immigration and Labour Market Integration

In recent years, the number of Filipino immigrant landings in Canada has grown dramatically. Between the late 1990s and 2010, Filipino landings almost quadrupled from 9,528 in 1999 to 36,578 in 2010. In 2010 the Philippines was Canada's largest single source country for new immigrants, constituting 13 per cent of all new arrivals. At the time of the May 2006 census, one-quarter of Filipino immigrants had arrived within the last five years. Almost two-thirds had arrived since the early 1990s. Thus although Filipino immigration began in significant numbers in the 1960s, the growing numbers arriving since the 1990s mean that the community as a whole is weighted towards recent immigrants. A second distinctive feature of the migration stream from the Philippines has been the importance of special immigration categories for domestic workers. In the 1990s, the Live-In Caregiver Program accounted for about one-quarter of all Filipinos who gained immigrant status in Canada (Kelly et al. 2009). By the late 2000s, this proportion was approaching 40 per cent. This program has had a major influence on the experiences of Filipinos in the Canadian labour market and on the gender composition of the Filipino community - overall, women composed 59 per cent of immigrants from the Philippines between 1980 and 2005. In 2006, 41.3 per cent of all Filipino immigrants residing in Toronto aged twenty-five years and over had a university qualification at the bachelor's level or above, compared with 28.8 per cent for all immigrant groups, and 31.9 per cent for non-immigrant residents of the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area in the same age group. This relatively high level of education among Filipino immigrants is all the more striking given the high numbers arriving as sponsored family members or live-in caregivers - immigration programs that are not driven primarily by human capital considerations.

High levels of human capital have not, however, translated into an overall picture of labour market success for Filipino immigrants. Table 3.1 shows selected occupations where Filipinos are under- or overrepresented in the Toronto labour market. A striking overrepresentation in healthcare, clerical work, and manufacturing is evident, and a notable underrepresentation in managerial and supervisory roles as well as education and government. Within sectors, Filipinos are notably overconcentrated in lower-paid jobs, and underrepresented in better-paid, more secure positions.

This pattern of occupational segmentation translates into lower average wage levels overall (see table 3.2). Census figures show Filipino men in particular earning significantly less than the average for immigrants or for the population in general. A similar, although less pronounced disparity also exists for Filipina women. Clearly, however, Filipina women, and women in general, are disadvantaged in the labour market relative to their male counterparts - indeed gender accounts for a far greater degree of differentiation than immigrant status. Table 3.2 also shows the particular disadvantages faced by more recent immigrants.

We used our survey data to classify respondents into three groups: 'perfectly matched' implies that occupations before immigration, and currently, are roughly equivalent. That is, the individual is working in his or her professional field. The second category is 'different/flexible,' which implies that although the present job does not match previous experience in the Philippines, it did not necessarily represent a downward movement. Finally, the 'downward' category includes all of those cases where an individual has clearly been depprofessionalized.

Table 3.3 provides labour market outcome data broken down by gender, immigration category, and period of immigration. Overall, 53.9 per cent of respondents had experienced downward mobility, although it is notable that the incidence of downward mobility was substantially higher among men than women, and among live-in caregivers and recent immigrants.

A striking feature of table 3.4 is that the incidence of downward mobility was actually higher for those entering through the skilled worker
Table 3.1. Distribution across selected occupation of working population (by Filipino visible minority, and general population), Toronto Census Metropolitan Area, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Filipino working population</th>
<th>Total working population</th>
<th>Over- or under-representation of Filipinos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>35,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist managers</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>65,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers in retail, food, and hotels</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>45,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals in business and finance</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>1,880</td>
<td>59,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and insurance administration</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>1,055</td>
<td>11,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretaries</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>1,395</td>
<td>40,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and regulatory</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>1,095</td>
<td>18,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical supervisors</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>9,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>4,735</td>
<td>10,455</td>
<td>111,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals in natural and applied sciences</td>
<td>2,080</td>
<td>1,690</td>
<td>115,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical jobs in natural and applied sciences</td>
<td>2,445</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>69,465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals in health</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>17,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse supervisors and registered nurses</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>3,670</td>
<td>2,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical and related occupations in health</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>1,585</td>
<td>7,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisting jobs in support of health services</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>2,980</td>
<td>4,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges, lawyers, psychologists, social workers, ministers of religion, and policy/program officers</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>33,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers and professors</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>37,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and service supervisors</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>10,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale, technical, insurance, real estate sales specialists, and retail, wholesale, and grain buyers</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>48,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail salespersons and sales clerks</td>
<td>1,025</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>59,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashiers</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1,880</td>
<td>10,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chefs and cooks</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>24,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations in food and beverage service</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>12,470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This refers to individuals who recorded their visible minority status as ‘Filipino’ in the 2006 Census. It therefore includes both immigrants and non-immigrants.

** The measure of over- or under-representation is calculated based on the proportion of Filipino men or women in an occupation relative to the proportion all men and women in an occupation. If Filipinos were found in a given job in exactly the same proportion as the general population, then the index would be 1.0. Lesser than 1.0 indicates an under-representation. Hence 0.9 would imply that there are half as many Filipinos in a job as there should be. An index of 2.0 implies that there are twice as many Filipinos as would be expected.

This program (three-quarters of whom were the principal applicants) than the family reunification category. The more stringent selection criteria relating to human capital endowments associated with the skilled worker category would appear not to result in better labour market outcomes. This may reflect the fact that an overwhelming majority of our respondents were highly educated, regardless of the immigration category they used. Clearly, the discounting of this human capital is common across all immigrant categories. This section has highlighted a general pattern of labour market integration for the Filipino community. High levels of human capital are clearly prevalent, leading to distinctive patterns of occupational segmentation and a concentration in low-wage, non-professional
Table 3.2. Average employment income for those with full year, full-time employment, by gender, period of immigration, and selected places of birth, Toronto Census Metropolitan Area, 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average employment income (CS) for population aged 15 years and over with full-time, full-year employment income</th>
<th>Period of immigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Female – born in Philippines: 39,315
- ALL female immigrants: 42,630
- ALL female non-immigrants: 55,302
- Total female population: 48,881
- Male – born in Philippines: 45,632
- ALL male immigrants: 58,318
- ALL male non-immigrants: 81,606
- Total male population: 69,912

Source: Calculated from Statistics Canada 2008

In the next four sections of this chapter, we address issues that arose in our qualitative research as we attempted to identify the processes behind these aggregate patterns.

**Being from the Philippines: Financial Obligations and the 'Survival Job'**

Immigrants are not simply newcomers to Canada, they are also arriving from somewhere. The features of the place of origin matter not only in terms of how racialized identities are ascribed (as we will discuss later), but also in terms of the types of individuals and families that migrate and the assets (both human capital and financial capital) that they bring with them.

Assets, relative wealth, and exchange rates matter because immigration is an expensive process. At the very least, immigration to Canada requires about $1,500 for immigration and landing fees, perhaps the same amount again for a single air ticket, and other expenses such as medical examinations, notarizing documents, obtaining passports, and so on. For many, the costs are further inflated by payments to immigration consultants and recruiters. In our survey, 25 per cent of respondents (n = 96) reported having used an immigration consultant or recruiter when they immigrated (two-thirds of that number had entered under the caregiver program). Costs vary, but one focus group participant estimated that consultants generally charged about $6,000 for a complete package of services.

Table 3.3. Occupational mobility between the Philippines and Canada for survey respondents, by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Perfectly matched</th>
<th>Different / flexible</th>
<th>Downward</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration category</td>
<td>LCP / domestic</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family / reunification</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skilled worker</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of immigration</td>
<td>Immigrated before 1991</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrated 1991 to 1995</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrated 1996 to 2000</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrated 2001 to 2005</td>
<td>Count%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>77.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CASU Survey, 2005
Table 3.4. Levels of savings on arrival in Canada, and average months to find first job for immigrants from major source countries, by gender (in arrivals in 2000-1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top countries of origin</th>
<th>Total N (weighted)</th>
<th>Average savings on landing (in $2005)</th>
<th>Average months to 1st job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>20,980</td>
<td>$20,300</td>
<td>$28,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>25,040</td>
<td>$31,800</td>
<td>$43,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>11,040</td>
<td>$17,900</td>
<td>$18,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>6,170</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>3,620</td>
<td>$44,400</td>
<td>$48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>3,040</td>
<td>$16,400</td>
<td>$21,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada

Filipino immigrants finance their immigration in various ways. Some sell or mortgage assets such as homes, businesses, or land. Others borrow from extended family networks in the Philippines, or from relatives working elsewhere overseas. Many immigrants have themselves worked overseas (for example in Singapore, Hong Kong, or the Middle East) before arriving in Canada. In our survey, almost one-third (130) of our respondents had worked in other countries before arriving in Canada.

For the most part, then, immigrants have access to financial resources to fund their applications, but these seldom provide sufficient capital to invest in property or to tide them over a period of job hunting, retraining, or educational upgrading. Upon arrival, they must pay for initial living expenses for food, accommodation, and transport. Even a family that has property to sell in the Philippines would be in a weak position to invest in Canada's expensive housing markets or to survive while a breadwinner undergoes retraining or credential evaluation. This situation represents an important difference between an immigrant arriving from a country such as the Philippines, and one arriving from a country such as Singapore, Japan, the United Kingdom, or the United States, where property prices and exchange rates allow for a soft landing in Canada.

The data in table 3.4 provide some striking indications of the savings that different groups of immigrants bring to Canada, and how these differences might be correlated with labour market outcomes. The data are derived from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, which surveyed new immigrants who landed in 2000-1.

The data show that among the largest groups of immigrants (by country of origin) Filipinos arrive, on average, with the smallest amounts of savings. Not surprisingly, they are then among the quickest to find work, suggesting that having limited financial resources necessitates a rapid entry into the labour market. In some cases, the money that immigrants bring with them is a loan that must be repaid. The repayment of these debts incurred in the immigration process and the shortage of funds to support retraining or extended job hunting have important consequences for labour market integration, to which we will return shortly. Such financial imperatives are, however, exacerbated by the family circumstances of many Filipino immigrants.

Among Filipino immigrants, almost two-thirds arrive under the family reunification and caregiver categories, implying that the majority have experienced some form of separation from their immediate nuclear family— a period of separation that might include several years in a third country before arriving in Canada. In most cases, such individuals are trying to support family members back home, while saving to fund their immigration applications and travel expenses, so that the family can be reunited in Canada. The pressure to support family members in the Philippines creates a further strain on the personal finances of new immigrants.

In short, whether it is to pay off their own immigration and initial settlement costs, support family members back in the Philippines, or finance the reunification of their family in Canada, Filipino immigrants face an immediate need for income and for ongoing and stable employment. The fact that family separation is particularly common among Filipino immigrants, in combination with the class origins of Filipino immigrants, makes this an acute issue.

This finding has several consequences in the labour market. First, it means that immigrants must seek and accept survival jobs rather than waiting for an appropriate opening to come along. A participant in our focus group with Filipinos working in the manufacturing sector explained this process:

"I came to Canada only last year, in September. Still fresh. My work in the Philippines was quite different from my work now. In the Philippines I worked for five years in an insurance company, so it was the typical office in Makati (Manila's financial district). When I came to Canada, after a month, I was hired in my current workplace, first as a general labourer. So all this factories, the machines,
it was quite shocking to me. But because of the urge of finding a job, for immediate survival in Canada, because I have a wife, I immediately grabbed it. (Male respondent, authors’ focus group with manufacturing workers, 2007)

Second, financial distress means that the expense of studying or training to upgrade qualifications is often impossible to cover. In a focus group with hotel workers, a nurse trained in the Philippines noted this issue:

You have to upgrade. Even if you are a registered nurse back home or pharmacist you cannot practise here without a licence. You have to take the course. You go all over again. You have to spend a lot of money. When I took that nursing aide course, one course is . . . very expensive. Books. Not easy. When you are just earning a few dollars an hour . . . these are the things that look you into this kind of job. And sometimes, even though you have the money, after working, if you are doing hard physical work, you can't study anymore. (Female respondent, authors’ focus group with Filipino hotel workers, 2007)

Third, there is evidence that once in a workplace, Filipino immigrants may hold back from seeking advancement into higher-paid positions with supervisory or managerial responsibilities because of the requirement for a steady and secure income. In some sectors, higher-paid jobs require employees to leave the safety of a unionized job for one from which they can be fired at any time. In focus groups, hotel cleaners and clerical workers described avoiding better-paid jobs, for example as front desk workers or clerical supervisors, because they were outside the union and had no job security.

Some do not apply for higher positions especially, because they perceive these as lacking in security. These positions are not unionized. So if one gets into a higher position that soon becomes redundant, or management decides to cut back and lay him off, that person will have no other options. (Male respondents, authors’ focus group with clerical workers, 2007)

The combination of financial vulnerability, obligations to family back home, the need for a ‘survival job,’ the lack of time or money to undergo retraining or upgrading, and a desire to stay in secure unionized jobs rather than seek advancement might all be common to many immigrant groups as they integrate into the Toronto labour market. Two features, however, accentuate these processes in the Filipino community. The first is the class profile of immigrants coming from the Philippines and the wider question of the place of the Filipinos in the global economic order, both of which mean that immigrants usually arrive with relatively few financial resources. The second is the widespread phenomenon of family separation which, in the case of the Live-In Caregiver Program, is actually enforced through conditions imposed by Canadian immigration regulations. Such separation means that Filipino immigrants, more than most, are working in Toronto with extensive obligations to support immediate family members back home.

Immigration Programs

All immigrant groups use a distinctive combination of immigration programs for their entry to Canada, although the majority of new immigrants still enter Canada as independent skilled migrants, with relatively fewer immigrants entering under the family reunification program. In 2010, 172,973 immigrants entered Canada as independent skilled migrants, whereas only 60,207 immigrants entered under the family reunification program (Statistics Canada 2011). Among Filipino immigrants, the especially high usage of family reunification and live-in caregiver categories implies that many migrations follow extended periods of family separation, with implications for the labour market integration of those seeking to support distant families and for family members after they reunite.

Of particular note in the Filipino case is the high number of arrivals under the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP) and the specific rules and conditions that apply to this immigration category. In our survey, 133 respondents (125 females, 8 males) had entered Canada under the LCP. Of those, 73 had passed through the program requirements and acquired permanent resident status. No one in this group had less than a high school education, while 79 per cent had a college degree at the bachelor’s level or higher. Despite this level of human capital, the survey revealed that two-thirds of caregivers for whom a companion was possible had experienced downward mobility (see table 3.3). Most were either still working as caregivers, housekeepers, or personal support workers, or in clerical or customer-service roles, manufacturing employment, or aide/assistant positions in the healthcare sector. In only 5 out of 73 cases (11 per cent) were individuals employed in occupations that approximated their original occupational category in the Philippines – all had undergone further training in Canada.
This pattern of downward mobility is largely attributable to the regulatory requirements of the Live-In Caregiver Program. The program requires that the individual completes two years of work in the home of an employer within three years. Only then is the caregiver eligible to apply for permanent residency. The corollary of this requirement is that 'graduates' from the program have been removed from a professional working environment for at least two years. Since many arrive after completing contracts as domestic workers in Asia or the Middle East, the actual separation from professional employment is in fact much longer.

The institutionalized form of deprofessionalization imposed by the LCP clearly affects those enrolled in the program directly. The implications of the program are, however, felt more widely for two reasons. The first is that job search networks tend to operate through personal referrals and social networks. Thus, a large segment of the Filipino community is consigned to precarious and low-paid care work, since those who arrive under other immigration programs, but rely on relatives and friends who are already in Canada to find work, tend to be channeled into similarly precarious work. The prevalence of personal social networks in job search processes was also evident in survey data. Upon arrival, more than 44 per cent of our survey respondents were aided by friends or relatives in the process of finding work. Similarly, 47 per cent of all responses to the question indicated that Filipino family, friends, and networks had led individuals to their current job.

These figures are significant not because they are higher than in other groups (evidence suggests that a similar proportion of both immigrants and Canadian-born employees find work through family/friend networks — see Fang et al. 2010) but because the process of social network-based job searching can clearly lead to a self-perpetuating occupational segmentation. If Filipinos are relying heavily upon other Filipinos in their job searches, there will inevitably be a reproduction of existing occupational niches. An example of this process was provided by our focus group with hotel employees. For many, the hotel sector represented employment easily obtained through personal networks, but it seldom provided time or money to attend upgrading classes.

**Philip:** So there are certain jobs in the hotel sector that are dominated by Filipinos. Why is that, do you think? Why are there so many Filipinos working as room attendants?

**Respondent:** Maybe it’s the only job for them. I don’t know. Because you know, we just came here, it’s like, I don’t know, so where am I gonna go. And they (foreign Filipinos) said, ‘Come, I’m going to help you apply in the hotel.’

**Philip:** So you found it through a Filipino friend?

**Respondent:** Yes, my brother. He was working in the hotel and he said, ‘If you want to work right away, I’m going to help you.’ I go to school also before, but I cannot handle that I… because I still don’t have money. So in that time, I go to that hotel.

(Female respondent, authors’ focus group with Filipino hotel workers, 2007)

The importance of the caregiver program thus extends not just to those who are enrolled in it, but also to larger numbers of new arrivals, whether or not they come under the LCP, who depend on their compatriots to find work. While the LCP directly accounts for just one-fifth of Filipino immigrant arrivals, it has multiplier effects on the wider Filipino immigrant community. Entry into ‘survival jobs’ is, so to speak, contagious.

The second implication of the caregiver program concerns the ways in which Filipinos are racialized and culturally represented in the labour market. A clear stereotype exists of what Filipinos do and where their aptitudes lie. It is not uncommon to find that non-Filipinos believe that all Filipinos arrive in Canada as caregivers. Thus the types of work for which they are seen as culturally suited is highly circumscribed.

**Regulatory Barriers: Credential Assessment and Cultures of Practice**

The role of professional regulatory bodies as gatekeepers to licensed professions has been closely examined in the literature on immigrant integration (Boyd 2002; Girard and Bauder 2007; Turecman 2008). Upon arrival in Canada, licensed professionals are required to have their educational backgrounds assessed by provincially mandated professional bodies, which oversee the accreditation process. Successful completion of this process does not, of course, guarantee employment, but is the first step towards finding a job in a regulated profession.

In focus groups with Filipino professionals, specific problems were identified concerning the ways in which Philippine qualifications, in particular, were evaluated. The first was an ignorance on the part of evaluation bodies regarding the quality of specific Philippine educational
institutions, the quality of their (North American–designed) curricula, and the rigour of the professional regulatory system in the Philippines. Focus group participants were especially critical of the ways in which Philippine institutions were judged. One noted that graduates of the Mapua Institute of Technology, the Philippines' foremost engineering college, would not fare well, as assessors tend to look down on "institutes," or anything not clearly identified as a university:

I would say that they (assessors) have little or no knowledge of what is happening. For example, the Institute of Technology . . . it doesn't say college; it doesn't say university. They would, say, take about a four- or six-month course. And they see University of Philippines; they see 'Philippines.' They would say 'Oh, that is nothing.' But one person came from National University (a minor university in the Philippines). It's not 'Philippine,' it's 'National.' They gave him four subjects. But the same university, other curriculum, but same university, given eight subjects. So they are very inconsistent. (Male respondent, authors' focus group with Philippine-educated engineers, 2006)

Another Philippine-trained accountant described the ignorance he felt existed among those assessing his education, training, and experience:

What I am saying here is that it's the level of knowledge of these people who evaluate the graduates and that's what causes the problem. I guess it is important for these people to be also educated to the kind of . . . They ask like, 'Do you read English there?' Our books are American books, but they don't know that. (Male respondent, authors' focus group with Philippine-trained accountants, 2006)

A second dimension of the accreditation process raised by focus group participants in certain professions was the role of the practical examination. For physiotherapists, for example, licensing in Ontario requires a "hands-on" test of practical skills that includes communications with the patient. The Filipino physiotherapists in our focus group felt that assessing such practices was culturally specific and favoured candidates who conformed to the cultural expectations of the examiners.

RESPONDENT 1: It is always an issue of subjectivity, because it is a person that is going to look at you, and I don't know if it is relevant to say that, but I've heard . . . because one of my colleagues, always working as a physical therapy assistant, he overheard a physical therapist here being an examiner and telling a colleague of his

that as soon as the examinee comes to the station, he already has the notion of what to give.

RESPONDENT 2: I mean not only that, but how many stereotypes enter into that? It becomes quite subjective. (Male respondents, authors' focus group with Philippine-educated physiotherapists, 2006)

**Being Filipino: Cultures of Work and Racialization**

More insidious ways in which being Filipino presents disadvantages in the labour market derive from how Filipino-ness is represented, marked, and understood. There are two ways in which being Filipino might be construed as a disadvantage. The first concerns the cultural practices of work that Filipino immigrants bring with them from their work experiences and socialization in the Philippines. Practices that in one cultural context might be viewed as meritorious and virtuous may, in another, hold an employee back from workplace advancement and upward mobility. The second concerns discrimination and the racialization of Filipinos, which involves the ascription of particular characteristics and aptitudes on the basis of ethno-racial labelling. Racialization represents a useful framework for understanding these processes as it implies the insidious process of viewing groups as different and unequal through a culturally invented racial framework (Galabuzi 2001).

**Filipino Work Cultures and 'Promotability'**

Focus group respondents repeatedly noted what they perceived to be a specifically Filipino culture of work that they brought with them from the Philippines. This set of cultural practices includes taking on all tasks required of them, regardless of their job description, not being assertive in relation to authority figures, and not being boastful of their achievements and abilities. In focus group discussions, these cultural traits were repeatedly identified, usually in comparison with white colleagues or other visible minorities.

In the Philippines, managerial hierarchies are more rigid than in Canada, and superiors are addressed as 'Sir' or 'Ma'am.' Many respondents felt employers took advantage of this different, and deferential, work culture. In some cases, focus group participants felt that employers had a clear interest in keeping capable and co-operative employees in certain kinds of subordinate positions.
Racialization of Filipinos

The second dimension of ‘being Filipino’ in a cultural sense in the labour market relates to racialization and stereotyping by broader Canadian society. In many instances, our respondents felt they were expected, in a sense, to occupy certain sorts of jobs in certain sectors. A respondent in our focus group with Philippine-educated manufacturing employees noted the specific assumptions he had observed being made about Filipino immigrants, even during a casual encounter in a bank:

> It happened not directly to me in my job, but it was typical stereotyping of Filipino women. When I applied at a bank to open an account, the account manager talked to me about my stay here. She asked, ‘How come you come to Canada?’ I said, ‘My wife petitioned me.’ The second question was, ‘Are you a nursing?’ And I said, ‘Yes, she was.’ And the third question was, ‘Who is now your employer?’ I said, ‘Oh, now I am working in a manufacturing company.’ For her, it was nothing. For me, stereotyping is degrading. (Male respondent, authors’ focus group with manufacturing workers, 2007)

Several respondents in different sectors noted that there was a racialized hierarchy in their workplaces, with lower-level jobs almost exclusively occupied by visible minorities, and managerial or supervisory jobs taken by white employees. This created a tendency for those in lower positions to perceive higher positions as being the preserve of white employees – thus in some cases, when promotions were available, Filipino employees did not apply, seeing higher positions as unattainable. In one focus group, a clerical employee of a large accounting firm in downtown Toronto described how the floors of an office tower occupied by the company got increasingly white with each additional storey. She described feeling out of place when having to visit the upper floors.

These examples suggest that it is not simply discrimination against visible minorities that Filipino immigrants experience. It is also a specific conception of the types of work in which Filipinos can (and should) ‘naturally’ be found.

RESPONDENT: No matter how hard your job is, how good you do your job or how fast you do it, they don’t put you in higher positions. Only in the second level but not in the highest level.

RESPONDENT: What is your explanation for that?

RESPONDENT: Discrimination.

(Male respondent, authors’ focus group with Filipino retail workers, 2007)

Although we have addressed it explicitly in this section, it is also important to note that the racialization of Filipinos intersects with the other processes described in this chapter. The demand for Filipino caregivers, the treatment of Philippine credentials in assessment processes, and the practical assessment of job skills and ‘promotability’ are all clearly linked to the construction of a racialized Filipino identity.

Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest several conclusions. First, much analysis (both academic and policy-oriented) about immigrant labour market experiences tends to aggregate different groups into the category ‘immigrant’. Our findings suggest that while there are certainly generic processes experienced by all immigrants, and by visible minority immigrants in particular, there is also a more nuanced account of labour market processes possible when specific groups are examined. The specificity of racialized identities, workplace cultures, and immigration programs that define the Filipino settlement process mean that there is a particular experience that needs to be understood. (Notwithstanding the fact that there are also, of course, important differences within the
Filipino community, according to gender and time of arrival for example, that further complicate the picture.)

Second, the policy debate on immigrant labour market integration has been concerned almost exclusively with foreign credential recognition. But many immigrant workers are in employment situations in which upward mobility and access to more secure or more favourable terms of employment are not necessarily impeded by formal professional licensing issues. Instead, it is everyday workplace ‘micro-politics’ that determine upward mobility and these often relate to systemic processes of racialization and cultural practices specific to particular ethno-linguistic groups.

Third, immigrant economic integration is often treated as a process that occurs within the bounded space of the labour market in which it happens. However, the lives of immigrants themselves— their obligations, commitments, calculations, etc.—are not bounded in this way, but made in a transnational space. The need to financially support family members in the Philippines is a responsibility felt by many respondents. While by no means a uniquely Filipino characteristic, the nature of Filipino migration (involving, for example, women arriving alone under the Live-In Caregiver Program) means that separation from immediate family members left behind is common, thereby intensifying such financial obligations. This situation translates into a need for job security that might make higher-level positions less appealing, especially if they are not unionized and are therefore more precarious.

NOTES

1 The research presented in this chapter would not have been possible without the participation of several individuals and groups. We would like to thank Rowena Jane Esquerra for co-ordinating the focus groups and reviewing the focus group transcriptions; Hermie García for reviewing the manuscript and providing critical and insightful feedback; Mithi Esquerra for assisting in mobilizing participants for the survey and focus groups; the members of the CASI Board, and the organizational and individual members of CASI, who have provided various forms of support throughout this research project; and the professional associations, particularly the Association of Filipino Canadian Accountants and the Ontario Association of Filipino Engineers, that formally participated in the study. Finally, we would like to thank the hundreds of survey and focus group participants, without whom this study would not have been possible. We also thank our university-based research assistants, Nel Coloma-Moya and Cesar Polvorosa at York University. Further research assistance was provided at various times by Sadanishana Bordinco, Anne-Marie Debbe, Alex Lovell, Maryse Lemoine, and Junjia Ye. Funding was provided by SSHRC and by CERIS - The Ontario Metropolis Centre. An extended report on this research project is provided in Kelly et al. (2009).

REFERENCES


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**MY FOLKS**

Carlo Suyu and Jean Marc Dagna

My folks are 7,000 islands strong
Survivors of colonizers who defied white invaders
Haters who still claim they did no wrong
But they love to see us stack in a state of war
Leaving my folks to wonder the why's and what for's
So my folks got no other options anymore
But to pack their bags and leave for foreign shores
See, my folks are in the ball courts
In the mall and corner stores
As you exiting the doors
They enter and begin their chores
On all fours scrubbing floors
Each night as daunting as before
Because that other job they got
It just ain’t cutting it no more
Behind the counter, behind the scenes
Behind garbage carts cleaning latrines
Muffled pillow screams
Asking what it really means to be …

The most educated
But the least compensated
Disempowered and jaded
You hate it when they say it …

‘Be grateful for your wages
Be happy that you made it to a country that’s so gracious’
But that statement holds no basis
When you’re a servant on a slave ship
Labour feminization watching our women be degraded
My folks are the live-in caregivers
Night time janitors, taxi drivers and fast food workers
My folks are the service sector
And these days even though we are dealt like commodities sold
My folks got high hopes of staying aloft
Working slave wages trying to earn them c-notes
While being held captive by bills and bank loans
My folks are living hand to mouth, check to rent
My folks are the brown skinned immigrants
The working proletariat
The silent opposition
Not because they can’t speak
But because they been broken
They been made tokens of government policies
That silence the majority of visible minorities
My folks are the high school drop-outs
Bored and mis-educated
So, a myth was created to lead us to believe that my folks don’t care
But that racism is systemic
See, educators just don’t get it
And now it’s a burden that my folks have to bear
My folks are the boys that are 17 years old
You’ve seen them on TV and news articles
Victims of beatings that got out of control
Shot in the back by a cop’s pistol
What the folk, man
Meanwhile, I got folks with megaphones
Rocking the streets placards in hand
I’m one of those folks that rallies and chants
Out at the protest my folks got sore throats
We screaming and chanting and trying to invoke …
The spirit of our martyrs that gave us hope
We screaming and chanting while politicians groat
Because Jason Kenney’s recent changes to the LCP
They were all a hoax.
So they ask why we militant
It’s “cause we provoked

My folks, stand up, take back what they stole
We’ve inherited an honorable struggle we hold
Close to our hearts is the culture of the brave and the bold
My folks ain’t afraid to fight for rights that they know
That are owed to every human on the face of the globe
My folks are radicals and renegades
Heretics and hand grenades
On blocks we congregate
Sipping lemonade on better days
My folks communicate about finding a better way
That’s why we organize, mobilize and educate
I learn from my folks
In turn, they learn from me
And we be causing a buzz like a bumble bee
We be ready to roll like a tumble weed
I never fought for a cause until they humbled me
Whatever obstacles we handle it
See, there ain’t no handbook or manuscript
To tell us how to live in this labyrinth
So we take it as it come, and we manage it
See, god gave us the tools to be original
She gave us heart and mind to guide our principles
So keep the hating a minimal
In times of crisis our unity is pivotal
C’mon ya’ll, let’s ride with the masses
We shaking our asses
To dance is miraculous
We fogging up glasses
It’s hard to imagine
we rose from the ashes
Colonized but survived centuries of blasting
So when bullshit happens
It’s time for the rapping, it’s time for action
Live life with a passion
There’s time for relaxing, there’s time for laughing
PART TWO

Gender, Migration, and Labour

Artist Statement

Carlo Sayo and Jean Marc Daga

My Filiis is a poem about the Filipino Canadian community. It encapsulates the struggles of Filipino youth, women, and workers, as they contend with racist and sexist Canadian institutions and policies. The poem is a call for Filipino Canadians to recognize their common struggles and collectively fight for their rights towards full entitlement and participation in Canadian society.
Chapter 7

Debunking Notions of Migrant ‘Victimhood’: A Critical Assessment of Temporary Labour Migration Programs and Filipina Migrant Activism in Canada

ETHEL TUNGOHAN

Introduction

Temporary labour migration is increasing globally. Statistics from the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) indicate that 2.5 million legal temporary labour migrants resided in developed countries in 2006, three times the number of permanent migrants residing in these states (Abella 2006). The same numbers also show that temporary labour migrants’ entry into developed countries has increased by 4 to 5 per cent annually since 2000.

Migration trends in Canada follow this pattern. There were 79,509 temporary labour migrants entering the country in 2008, a significant increase from 2007 and 2006, when 74,038 and 71,786 temporary labour migrants arrived in Canada respectively (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009). In total, there were 363,494 temporary labour migrants residing in Canada in 2008, an increase of 62,998 from 2007 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009).

Based on these figures, it is clear that temporary labour migration has become a permanent part of today’s labour landscape. Indeed, it is telling that a substantial number of temporary labour migrants are ‘temporary’ in name only; whereas some migrants work only for a few months, most stay longer by either renewing their work contracts indefinitely or by applying for landed immigrant status. Despite temporary labour migrants’ ‘permanent’ presence, however, very little academic and policy work has been undertaken to understand the political situation of temporary labour migrants in receiving states; the bulk of academic and policy theorizing, in fact, has focused on the economic benefits temporary labour migrants bring to both sending and
receiving countries (Stahl 1982; De Haas 2005). With the exception of legal and political theorists such as Joseph Carens (1996, 2008) and Linda Bosniak (2006), receiving states’ political responsibility towards temporary labour migrants has not been discussed. A rhetoric of gratefulness prevails among policymakers in receiving states, whereby the assumption that migrants should be thankful for the opportunity to work abroad overshadows recognition of the tangible contributions migrants make and thus prevents any discussions on whether temporary labour migration programs are politically tenable.

This is especially true for migrant caregivers, specifically live-in caregivers in Canada. In spite of the benefits Canada derives from the labour of live-in caregivers, the belief that they should be indebted to Canada prevails. Although the image of the Filipina live-in caregiver is deeply ingrained in the popular imagination – as evidenced by frequent references to Filipina ‘nannies,’ ‘maids,’ and ‘servants’ in the news media and in movies, film, and television – scant attention has been paid to the structure of the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP) itself. For instance, news articles that emerged following the Ruby Dhalla scandal, whereby a Liberal Party member of Parliament was accused of mistreating two Filipina live-in caregivers, focused on the racial attributes of all parties rather than on the restrictions imposed by the LCP. Reactionary headlines dominated the airwaves; the focus was primarily on how the two Filipinas were ‘modern day slaves’ acting without agency (Cieroux 2005), with little consideration for the structural elements of the LCP that make migrant workers vulnerable to abuse. All of these news reports implied that the abysmal labour conditions faced during this incident were isolated incidents. More significantly, analysis of the important labour contributions live-in caregivers make to Canada or of deficiencies in the welfare state and in the labour market that have increasingly made foreign workers responsible for care work was minimal.

Seeing that the live-in caregivers conveniently disappear from popular consciousness in the absence of sensationalistic scandals, the efforts undertaken by some live-in caregivers to change deleterious work conditions are ignored. Despite being non-citizens, live-in caregivers have the political agency to change the policies of the LCP. This chapter uses the case study of Filipina migrant workers entering the country through the Live-In Caregiver Program as a springboard from which to explore notions of temporary labour migrants’ political engagement in Canada. I argue that temporary labour migrants such as Filipina live-in caregivers, far from being the compliant ‘slaves,’ are full political agents who do not allow non-citizenship status to hinder their political participation in Canada.

This chapter is accordingly structured in three sections. The first section explores the history of migrant care work in Canada, highlighting the way racial bias motivated the establishment of temporary migrant care work programs in Canada. These biases negatively affected the experiences of live-in caregivers from the Caribbean, who dominated the industry in the earlier part of the twentieth century, and now affect Filipina caregivers, who make up 95 per cent of all live-in caregivers in the country (OCAP 2005). The second section discusses why and how live-in caregivers are political agents. I provide a theoretical assessment of why temporary labour migrants – specifically live-in caregivers – should be politically integrated in receiving states. Then, in the third section, I look at the ways Filipina live-in caregivers have fought against these restrictions and discuss the way they have carved a political space in Canada despite lacking formal citizenship status.

Migrant Care Giving in Canada

In Canada, foreign domestic workers have historically been relied upon to provide care work. A racial hierarchy ranking domestic workers from most to least desirable existed, with Europeans on top and Asian and Caribbean women at the bottom. Academic work on the experiences of the latter is minimal. While there have been numerous accounts of how European women – primarily from Ireland and Finland – came to Canada as ‘nannies,’ ‘nursemaids,’ and ‘governesses’ from the eighteenth to the early twentieth century (Macklin 1992; Sharpe 2001), much less is known about Chinese and Japanese men working as ‘domestic servants’ and as ‘cooks’ (Ty 2004, 21–2) or about the Caribbean women who worked as ‘servants’ but were later sent back to their countries (Calliste 1999) during the same time period. The only information that is really known about Chinese and Japanese ‘cooks’ can be derived from historical records showing that these men originally came to Canada to work as labourers for the Canadian Pacific railway and for the agricultural industry but later sought work in domestic service, probably as a result of endemic discrimination preventing them from working in other professions.

On the other hand, there have been comparatively more academic studies on Caribbean domestics during this time period, with most
studies concluding that domestic service was one of the few industries open to Caribbean women (Calliste 1989; Henry 1998). Since Afro-Caribbean people were considered 'reserve labour,' Canadian immigration authorities loosened immigration criteria for them during the two world wars, when Canada was facing labour shortages, and preferred to allow these groups entry on a temporary 'trial' basis during regular time periods (Henry 1998, 71).

It is clear from such analysis that arguments pertaining to individuals’ ability to assimilate into Canadian society affect the perceptions of care workers. While the argument has been made that ‘race has been crucially important to the nature and the status of the work’ only in the twentieth century (Miranda 2007), historical records seem to show that this was the case even before that. Migrants’ racial attributes and countries of origin determine the type of work they are seen as doing, subsequently explaining why European women were more likely to be seen as ‘nursemaids’ and why people of colour were seen as ‘servants.’

These perceptions affected migrants’ access to permanent settlement. For instance, in the middle of the twentieth century, European women seeking employment as care workers were given permanent resident status automatically, whereas Caribbean domestic workers allowed into Canada under the Caribbean Domestics Scheme – which was established in 1955 as a bilateral trade agreement between Canada, Barbados, and Jamaica – were only allowed to apply for permanent residency after a year working in domestic service (Daemzer 1997). Under this scheme, Caribbean women were monitored regularly, were subjected to regular pregnancy tests, and were also paid less compared to their European counterparts. This scheme asked prospective applicants to fulfill criteria that European domestics were not asked to meet; to be more specific, women were required to be between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five and were asked not to have any dependents because immigration officials were concerned that these women were from the ‘lower classes’ and would therefore sponsor the entry of relatives of similarly ‘dubious’ qualities (Henry 1998, 74).

There were attempts in the 1960s and 1970s to eliminate such racial and cultural criteria. Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson abolished Canada’s White Settlement Policy and invoking the vision of a ‘multicultural’ Canada where cultural diversity reigned. His White Paper on Immigration, published in 1966, indicted racial and cultural discrimination and endorsed an immigration system that allowed individuals from ‘all corners of the globe to come to Canada’ (Canada Manpower and Immigration 1966). At the same time, however, Pearson also saw immigration as a way to bolster the Canadian economy, whereby ‘skilled’ migrants were preferred to ‘unskilled’ migrants because the latter were seen as being more likely to be poor and thus a drain on the welfare system (Canada Manpower and Immigration 1966). Canadian immigration policy has since been structured according to the twin goals of attracting a diverse populace and improving Canada’s economic standing, though it is clear, based on the way migrants are classified on the basis of ‘skill,’ that the latter is prioritized. In short, economics, reinforced by pervasive racial and cultural preferences, are more important than multiculturalism.

Because immigration criteria were couched using the language of economics, it is initially difficult to understand how racial bias continues. The points system, established in 1967 and formally enshrined into law in 1976, ranked migrants using ‘objective’ criteria that prioritized migrants who were deemed to have high potential in bolstering the Canadian economy. While permitting the entry of multitudes of skilled migrants, the points system was unable to meet Canada’s caregiving needs. Rather than considering potential migrants’ care work contributions as fulfilling a permanent and ongoing need, Canadian officials deemed such labour ‘unskilled’ not only because of the low status care work had socially but also because the majority of applicants were from developing countries such as the Philippines. The fact that British and European ‘nannies and nursemaids’ are consistently seen as fulfilling enough criteria under the points system and are therefore quickly eligible for citizenship, whereas Caribbean and Asian ‘servants and domestics’ are not given enough points to qualify for entry under the points system and have to enter through temporary migration schemes, shows that despite both groups being employed in the same profession, Canadian policy still prioritizes the inclusion of ‘assimilable’ groups (Arat-Koc 2003). Hence, the objective nature of immigration policy is in question. Immigration criteria have to be modified and new reasons have to be given to limit the entry of individuals from ‘other’ countries. A discursive shift thereby transpires when considering the potential migration of individuals whose cultural and racial backgrounds are deemed at odds with Canadian norms. Rather than viewing the entry of these individuals as an opportunity to enhance Canadian multicultural nation-building imperatives, Canadian immigration officials see their entry as evidence of Canadian benevolence; their migration into Canada is constructed as a ‘favour’ to
'poor' individuals, subsequently masking the benefits Canada derives from their arrival (Sharma 2006).

The Temporary Employment Authorization Scheme in 1973, which issued temporary labour visas for care work (Daenzer 1997), consequently established a way for the Canadian state to limit the entry of undesirable groups. While immigration criteria still technically allowed women coming under this scheme to apply for permanent residence, they were 'effectively barred' from gaining permanent residence because the low wages they were given as domestic workers made it difficult for them to meet immigration criteria of 'economic self-sufficiency' (Khan 2009). Far from meeting Canada's multicultural ideal, Canadian immigration law at this time merely consolidated pre-existing racial hierarchies, spuriously adding 'economic' criteria as a way to justify its decision to classify migrants as 'permanent' and as 'temporary.' As Nandita Sharma (2006, 147) argues,

It was in the nexus of the simultaneous production of Canada as a tolerant [multicultural] society and the representation of non-Whites as a foreign threat that legitimacy for categorizing people as migrant workers was organized. By problematizing the permanence of 'too many' non-Whites while shifting Canadian immigration policy away from admitting the majority of people as immigrants towards one that admitted people as migrant workers, the Canadian state was able to assert that it was simply protecting the integrity of the nation and the state. The making of migrant workers and the discrimination against them that resulted was effectively depoliticized... Indeed, discrimination was most often presented as part of the state's duty to its citizens.

Unsurprisingly, there is a lack of oversight on the Temporary Employment Authorization Scheme by the federal and provincial governments. Such disregard, which likely stems from the presumption that 'temporary' workers are disposable commodities who do not merit integration into Canada, has led to numerous documented cases of abuse. Since Filipinas dominated migrant care work in Canada during this period as a result of the Philippine government's vigorous endorsement of its labour export policy, Filipinas were especially vulnerable to racial and gender discrimination. Documented cases of abuse under this program, as articulated by Filipina caregivers, compelled a policy shift (Bakan and Stasiulis 1997). The 1981 report written by the Task Force on Immigration Practices highlighted the concerns of Filipino caregivers. The results of these reports, as well as the efforts undertaken by Filipina caregivers and other concerned civil society groups, led to the institutionalization of the Foreign Domestic Workers Movement (FDM) in 1981 (Daenzer 1997). This means that Canada's temporary foreign worker program continued unabated. In fact, blatant racial preferences formed the heart of Canada's temporary foreign worker policy. For instance, migrants of European descent are issued open temporary work permits giving them the right to choose in which province, in which occupation and for which employer they want to work (Depatie-Pelletier 2009), in contrast to live-in caregivers, who are placed in a special migrant worker category subjected to more strenuous restrictions.

The FDM was conceived by the Task Force on Immigration Practices and was deemed a suitable compromise between the Canadian government's interests in maintaining control over the entry of 'suitable' groups and its recognition that migrant workers were made vulnerable by existing arrangements. Thus, the FDM stipulated that migrant workers could apply for permanent residency after twenty-four months of continuous live-in employment in the same household following a 'post-entry' evaluation that evaluated the migrants' 'suitability' to Canada. This evaluation gave immigration authorities the right to act as gatekeepers and to use arbitrary criteria judging migrants' suitability, alternately judging migrants on their assimilation into Canadian culture, on their economic performance, etc. (Daenzer 1997). More significantly, immigration authorities are able to judge migrants on these criteria on the basis of the evaluations given by migrants' employers, who are deemed to be reliable, trustworthy, and unbiased enough to indicate whether the migrants they have employed are 'good workers.' This stipulation then magnifies the power held by migrants' employers, making migrants depend on their employers for access to good labour and living conditions and, crucially, also for access to permanent settlement. It is clear that the Canadian government then instituted a policy that admitted migrants into Canada partially on the basis of the length of time they had stayed in Canada but mostly on the basis of their assimilability. The FDM showed that the Canadian government was not interested in the 'question of how policies should change to affect greater fairness and justice for immigrant non-citizen servants' but was rather invested in 'how Canada can continue to serve the interests of influential Canadians while purporting to redress domestic exploitation' (Daenzer 1997, 91).
The LCP, founded in 1992, attempted to redress some of the shortcomings of the FDM, again primarily as a result of the activism of various civil society actors (Khan 2009). The biggest change pertained to more stringent training requirements, which mandated that potential applicants should show that they are qualified to undertake care work (Bakan and Stasiulis 1997, 9); this emphasis on 'better' training was seen by most as a way to limit the entry of 'undesirable' nationals. The terms used to describe migrant care workers also shifted in order to 'professionalize' the program. Rather than calling migrant care workers foreign domestic workers, which was the case under the FDM, the government made clear that the LCP recruited caregivers.

Such a change in terminology theoretically ensures that live-in caregivers are employed specifically to provide unsupervised 'care work,' a category that encompasses a broad range of activities like childcare, elderly care, and care for people with disabilities. As such, more systematic checks were implemented to allow for the entry of 'qualified' migrants: migrants are now required to be high school graduates and to be fluent in either English or French and are also supposed to show that they have received sufficient training as caregivers, either through a six-month intensive education course or through prior work experience (Macklin 1992).

Nonetheless, efforts to professionalize the program failed. Though caregivers are 'professionals' and are not supposed to perform menial household tasks, they are oftentimes asked to do so by their employers (England and Stiell 1997), thereby calling into question the effectiveness of the shift from 'domestic worker' to 'caregiver.' Moreover, while the LCP promised more thorough governmental interventions in the event of migrant abuse and eliminated the requirement that caregivers needed to upgrade their educational credentials and do volunteer work in order to be eligible for permanent residency (England and Stiell 1997), the live-in requirement and twenty-four-month 'temporary' status remained mandatory.

While one could make the point that the FDM, and later the LCP, at least allow live-in caregivers to apply for permanent residency and eventually become Canadian citizens—a significant improvement from previous schemes—the program locks workers into potentially deleterious working conditions with little opportunity to mitigate harms. The desire to achieve permanent status irrevocably places live-in caregivers in a position of extreme duress, particularly in cases where their employers are abusive. In these circumstances, the decision to leave one’s employer is tempered by the reality that doing so may jeopardize one’s permanent residency application not only because finding new employment is onerous but also because the clock is reset when one changes households. These conditions therefore make it difficult for caregivers to consider political action. Indeed, if live-in caregivers seek citizenship status, the desire to be politically active may seem at first glance to be at the bottom of their priorities.

The LCP therefore continues to be a target of criticism and controversy, particularly among live-in caregivers themselves. The next section discusses the political advocacy of live-in caregivers, assessing both the ways in which their political activism expands notions of political participation and also the differences in strategy adopted by live-in caregiver advocates.

The Political Integration of Live-In Caregivers

To see live-in caregivers as political actors at first appears counterintuitive. After all, the structural restrictions posed by the LCP increase the isolation live-in caregivers face, making political activity difficult. From the perspective of the Canadian state, the question of why live-in caregivers merit political inclusion arises; since the right to participate in formal politics (i.e., voting) is reserved for citizens, making allowances for the needs of live-in caregivers with temporary status seems preposterous. In this section, I first discuss normative reasons why live-in caregivers deserve inclusion into the Canadian political sphere. Then, I discuss the ways in which Filipina live-in caregivers are already involved in political processes, a trend which belies the stereotype of Filipina caregivers as lacking agency. While it is not my intention to romanticize these activist pursuits, I hope to show that political action should not be – and is not – the purview of citizens alone.

Justifying the Political Inclusion of Live-In Caregivers

Conventional analysis of political participation is limited to the political activities of citizens. Live-in caregivers, like other temporary migrants, are seen as outsiders whose capacity to influence policies within the receiving state is limited because their national allegiances purportedly lie in another state. Nonetheless, Filipina live-in caregivers – again like other migrants – inhabit a grey area, where they are members of both Philippine and Canadian society. Ignoring their presence in Canada and
maintaining that their allegiance remains solely with the Philippines is therefore misguided.

Equally misguided are attempts to ignore the relevance of the national-state. Live-in caregivers find that international human rights legislation is supportive of their claims for recognition, which may eventually lead to a form of ‘post-national citizenship,’ where national governments have become obsolete (Sassen 2006, 311). The reality remains, however, that live-in caregivers are still reliant on receiving states like Canada; even if shifts are gradually dismantling the power held by the state in determining the treatment of individuals within their borders, receiving states still wield tremendous power in determining migrants’ experiences. Even transnational social movements, whose campaigns span national borders, find that their campaigns are still reliant on the state: ‘the structures of the international system oblige movements to pursue their social and political goals through the different organs of the sovereign state’ (Colas 2002, 80). Ergo, while it is tempting to endorse the eradication of inequalities between migrants and non-migrants and between sending and receiving states through the establishment of open borders, such a cosmopolitan ideal will not be realized any time soon.

A more productive way of assessing why live-in caregivers deserve to be politically integrated is to use the terms set by the receiving state to one’s advantage. In this particular case, justifying live-in caregivers’ political inclusion requires a thorough reconsideration of Canada’s political commitments to ‘liberal democracy.’ Canada’s live-in caregiver policy was clearly an economic imperative, with little to no thought to whether the LCP lives up to the ‘liberal democratic’ values that the Canadian state claims to uphold. While Canada’s immigration policy more generally and the LCP specifically are largely informed by the state’s economic needs, Canada cannot ignore its political commitments within its borders. Pearson’s White Paper, as mentioned, may have stressed how immigration should be economically motivated, but it also emphasized how racial and cultural discrimination should be abolished. Paying equal attention to the latter, instead of only prioritizing economic needs, becomes important.

Thus, live-in caregivers can tactically claim political space in Canada because Canada abides by liberal values. Such liberal values are an integral part of Canada’s national identity, as numerous scholars have asserted (see, e.g., Lipset 1996; Wiseman 2007). After all, even if liberal doctrines have entrenched the values of national self-determination and hold that Canada has the national autonomy to place immigration restrictions, the same liberal doctrines also espouse ‘legal and constitutional protections’ for all members of society regardless of identity. Since temporary labor migration programs promote citizenship as a ‘strategically produced form of capital’ (Bauder 2008), with formal and informal processes being used to promote the exclusion of economically ‘undesirable’ migrant workers, they directly contravene Canadian liberal values. Citizenship therefore does not concern ‘the right to have rights,’ as is popularly believed in Canada. In this case, ‘personhood’—one’s status as an autonomous moral agent whose equality is not predicated on citizenship status—should be sufficient for the provision of rights (Bosniak 2006, 117), since Canada’s commitments to liberal doctrines bind it to doctrines of equal treatment and non-discrimination. The discrepancy between Canada’s support of liberal doctrines and its concurrent violation of such doctrines through its temporary migration programs highlights the contradictions that exist between its economic agendas and its political values. In short, live-in caregivers may not be citizens but are entitled to make claims for just treatment, as guaranteed by liberal provisions. Using the terms set by Canadian liberal discourse exposes the contradictions inherent in the LCP.

Live-in caregivers who are part of civil society groups that criticize the LCP draw attention to these liberal contradictions through their political activism. In doing so, live-in caregivers bypass conventional means of political participation such as voting, which are ‘passive’ ways to instigate change. Instead, they are active in civil society groups, thereby ‘transcending politics “as usual”’ (Bauböck 2003) by showing that political involvement is not limited to passive actions like voting and does not only involve citizens. A full range of political activities accompanies live-in caregiver activism. This includes—but is not limited to—lobbying political officials to change the terms set by the LCP, marching in demonstrations to express solidarity with live-in caregivers who have been abused by the system, creating support networks for live-in caregivers, providing counselling services and advice, and spreading awareness through information campaigns. All of these activities show that it is erroneous to assume that temporary labor migration policies produce static outcomes whereby the affected stakeholders blindly accept existing legislation. Live-in caregivers show that the absence of citizenship does not lead to an absence in activism.

Disaggregating rights from citizenship status opens the possibility of considering the divergent ways in which the LCP breeds inequality. If one agrees that citizenship is not a prerequisite to the right to
participate politically or the right to live with one’s family, for example, then it becomes easier to accept the changes demanded by live-in caregivers because one is not hindered by the belief that live-in caregivers belong to a ‘special’ category exempt from liberal democratic protections. To maintain that only citizens deserve fair treatment becomes fallacious, for doing so would counter the requirements of equality enshrined in Canadian law. In a way, the political activism of live-in caregivers reverses Marshall’s (1950) account of the evolution of citizenship. While Marshall contends that citizenship developed through the gradual expansion of civil, political, and social rights, live-in caregivers exercise these rights despite lacking citizenship status. Unlike Marshall’s belief that full citizenship coincides with full access to civil, political, and social rights, live-in caregivers show that personhood and not citizenship is relevant.

Filipina Live-In Caregivers’ Political Actions

The pervasiveness of Filipina live-in caregiver advocacy shows that live-in caregivers do not need to be citizens to be politically involved. Despite the fact that their lack of citizenship limits the types of political actions they can legally pursue, Filipina live-in caregivers’ activism is exceedingly varied. Indeed, their advocacy work expands the definition of the ‘political’, since such activism has to take place outside formal political arenas. Because they are restricted from accessing formal methods of political participation such as voting and running for public office, Filipina caregiving advocacy – like other forms of migrant activism (Bonniak 2008, 117) – takes the form of civic activity. It occurs in multiple scales and engages a variety of actors, from other social movements like the feminist and labour movements to different non-state and state actors such as international, federal, provincial, and municipal bodies. Such activism spans different movements because the experiences of Filipina live-in caregivers resonate with demands for gender justice and workers’ rights, though it remains to be seen whether some alliances are more fruitful than others. Furthermore, Filipina live-in caregiver activism transpires in different sites because different government actors are involved; though the LCP is administered federally by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), the promotion of temporary foreign workers’ well-being is a provincial mandate, with municipal governments becoming increasingly involved with ensuring that live-in caregivers are protected from abuse. The fact that such activism is so multi-varied corroborates the reality that civil society campaigns in support of related causes like the movement to combat violence against the children of caregivers (Catugnal in this volume) need to occur in multiple sites and to use diverse tactics in order to be effective.

Needless to say, Filipina live-in caregiver activism cannot be easily characterized. The only similarities these groups have are in the high level of involvement of Filipina live-in caregivers in all cases. In most organizations, not only are they the ones to establish these organizations, they are also the ones to determine the types of campaigns these groups engage in and to represent the demands of these groups in national forums such as Canadian parliamentary gatherings and in international forums such as the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. Nevertheless, there is no cohesion or ‘unity’ to such activism, nor is there consensus on goals, agendas, or strategies. Different types of activism take place simultaneously, with hardly any interactions between organizations that are not part of the same network. The organizations representing Filipina live-in caregivers in Canada differ in size and scope. Organizations have their own histories, priorities, and tactics. Some organizations such as the National Alliance of Philippine Women have co-ordinated national, regional, and provincial campaigns and have centres in British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. Other organizations like the Caregivers’ Action Centre in Toronto, and the Migrant Workers Family Resource Centre in Hamilton have a smaller membership base, are more grassroots, and focus on the needs of live-in caregivers in their specific areas, although some of these smaller groups are currently attempting to work together to achieve common goals and to jointly administer programs, such as ‘skills-sharing’ initiatives that will allow Filipina live-in caregivers to get together to share their advocacy tactics. Yet other organizations, such as Migrante Canada, have a broad network of affiliated organizations in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec. Yet this organization also partakes in transnational activist work because it is part of Migrante International. To be specific, Migrante Canada has provincial, regional, national, and international campaigns, all of which are closely co-ordinated to advance Migrante International’s goals of improving the situations of migrant workers, including live-in caregivers, and eventually curbing sending countries’ reliance on migrant labour. Thus, different organizations may choose to be politically engaged in different scales, or they may choose to concentrate their efforts only on one or two sites.
Organizations also differ in the ways they choose to be political. All Filipina live-in caregiver organizations inevitably have to engage with the state. Since state policies like the FDM and the LCP create identities and produce grievances (Pierson 1993), civil society groups that emerge to redress these grievances have to make tactical decisions on the best way to deal with the state. Civil society activity, in turn, affects state policy. State and society are therefore locked into a symbiotic relationship, whereby the actions of one invariably determine the actions of the other, although ruptures, contradictions, and inconsistencies are found within this relationship. As such, Filipina live-in caregiver organizations alternate between co-operating with the state and protesting state activity, with most organizations straddling the fine line between collaboration and dissent. Of course, some organizations are more likely to work with – rather than against – the state. Specifically, some groups may choose to work directly with state officials to induce policy changes. For example, Intercede’s campaigns in 1980 led Canada to accede to live-in caregivers’ demands that they be given the right to apply for permanent residency (Bakan and Stasiulis 1997, 38). A more recent example can be found through the Caregiver Action Centre, which worked closely with Ontario Labour Minister Peter Fonseca to implement provincial protections on behalf of live-in caregivers and other migrant workers (Brazao 2009). In contrast, other groups have opted to work against the state. They are more vigilant in exposing the detrimental effects of state activity by organizing ongoing protests against state policy; these protests take the form of media campaigns, marches, awareness-raising workshops, and alliance-building with local organizations that also have an interest in exposing state atrocity. Of these groups, the National Alliance of Philippine Women is the most prolific and the most vocal in protesting the LCP. Their campaign to ‘scrap the LCP’ seeks the abolition of migrant care work in Canada. Though their demands to curb migrant care worker abuse through the elimination of the live-in requirement and the availability of landed immigrant status for live-in caregivers upon arrival coincide with those of other organizations, their espousal of the establishment of a national child care policy in Canada and their desire to end the LCP are distinct demands (National Alliance of Philippine Women in Canada 2009).

These variations in political tactics expose long-standing debates among Filipina live-in caregiver organizations on the necessity of reforming or abolishing the LCP. While addressing this debate is not the purpose of this chapter, suffice it to say that these divisions highlight long-standing ruptures on political strategies. The decision to advocate one political stance over another, however, should not make it appear as though these decisions occur in a vacuum. All organizations consider context, and assess the needs and interests of their members. The decision to endorse reform or abolition illustrates organizations’ determination to promote the interests of Filipina live-in caregivers, albeit from opposing perspectives. If anything, these divisions highlight the diverse ways in which Filipina live-in caregivers act politically.

On that note, it becomes imperative to point out that Filipina live-in caregiver organizations may also choose to be political by choosing to engage in activities away from state purview. Some groups like Pinay in Montreal, the Caregiver Support Services, Intercede, and Migrante in Toronto, the Migrant Workers Family Resource Centre in Hamilton, and the West Coast Domestic Workers Association in Vancouver provide services for live-in caregivers. They give live-in caregivers psychological counselling, legal aid, and immigration advice. In some cases, they provide live-in caregivers with a ‘safe space’ in Canada by facilitating networking opportunities with other community members and helping live-in caregivers form social networks. While the provision of social services and the creation of safe social spaces may not necessarily lead to concrete policy changes and may not be construed as ‘political’ in the formal sense, the act of ‘being there’ for live-in caregivers is transgressive in that it promotes a form of activism outside the state (Brown 1997), thereby leading to the promotion of a modified form of ‘citizenship’ that binds individuals together on the basis of empathy, affect, and shared goals. It rejects the bifurcation of individuals into citizens/non-citizens, non-migrants/migrants, desirable/undesirable that is promoted by the Canadian state, instead showing that citizenship and membership can be re-imagined outside the state.

Filipina live-in caregiver organizations engage with the state and outside the state, thereby showing that they wage campaigns on different scales. Filipina live-in caregiver activism takes numerous forms and exists on multiple levels because of the need to promote different agendas, from policy change/policy abolition to awareness-raising to service provision. Creating a ‘typology’ of Filipina live-in caregiver activism therefore becomes an exercise in futility because of its diverse nature. Despite these differences, Filipina live-in caregiver activism exemplifies Filipina live-in caregivers’ resilience; their involvement in civic activity – both through formal and informal politics – underscores
their resilience in combating the deleterious circumstances caused by the LCP and their ability to transcend the limitations posed by their ‘temporary’ migrant status. They show that rights need not only come with citizenship; rather, fair and equal treatment should be granted to everyone regardless of migration status.

Conclusion

I had two goals in writing this chapter. First, I highlighted how the LCP is a ‘natural’ successor to racially discriminatory temporary labour migration programs that have been in existence in Canada for the last century. The same patterns of racialized and gendered exclusions can be found at the LCP, thereby showing how Canadian immigration policy – then and now – relies on classifying individuals according to their perceived desirability and compatibility with Canadian ‘norms.’ That live-in caregivers are subjected to numerous restrictions before acquiring citizenship shows that they have to ‘prove’ that they are worthy of Canadian permanent residency and later, Canadian citizenship. The LCP, as a result, leads to numerous harms. Live-in caregivers are more inclined to withstand abusive labour conditions in order to avail themselves of permanent residency and citizenship. As such, the LCP goes against liberal standards of just treatment by normalizing oppressive treatment.

Second, I showed how live-in caregivers’ political activism criticizes prevailing notions of political participation. Their activism highlights how political activity is not restricted to citizens, thereby disrupting the association made between ‘rights’ and ‘citizenship’; instead, Filipina live-in caregivers show that ‘personhood’ – i.e., the fact that they are human – matters. I also discussed how their activism expanded notions of the political; not only did they interact with the state to press for reform or for abolition, they also participated in informal politics through the creation of safe spaces for live-in caregivers.

Has Filipina live-in caregiver activism therefore led to improvements in the labour and living conditions of live-in caregivers? The preceding examples of activism clearly show that Filipina live-in caregiver organizations force the Canadian government to be accountable to their demands. Even if the activities of different organizations do not result in concrete political changes, their very presence denotes a constant ‘opposition’ presence to state policy and, more crucially, signals to live-in caregivers and other migrant workers that there are groups that are actively promoting their interests. Nevertheless, challenges persist. Romanticizing Filipina live-in caregiver activism would ultimately be harmful, for doing so masks the current struggles these caregivers face. In fact, the need for civil society actors to form coalitions and to wage effective campaigns has never been stronger. The Dhalla case cited earlier is not anomalous. There are still numerous cases of live-in caregivers facing maltreatment at the hands of their employers, recruitment officers, and immigration officials. Moreover, a decreasing number of live-in caregivers are being given permanent residency status (Valiani 2009), which inevitably prolongs their temporary – and thus, their precarious – status; while live-in caregiver activism may show that citizenship status does not determine political activism, citizenship status is still needed in order to avail oneself of rights such as the ability to choose one’s profession or to live with one’s family. Even more insidiously, the Canadian government has expanded temporary foreign worker programs to encompass other professions, with the Philippines remaining its preferred source of workers. Unlike the LCP, however, these new temporary foreign worker programs do not provide the option of applying for citizenship after a period of employment, instead mandating that migrant workers be repatriated to their home countries at the conclusion of their work contracts.

The continued existence of Filipina live-in caregiver activism becomes especially important in light of these harms. Perhaps at this stage, different organizations need to consider forming coalitions despite opposing agendas. Exploring alliances with other groups also becomes crucial. After all, the evolution of migrant care worker policy in Canada shows that civil society organizations need to be persistent as well as creative in their responses to state abuse. The formation of partnerships at this stage may create the impetus to create stronger measures against migrant worker abuse and to provide live-in caregivers and other migrant workers access to citizenship.

NOTES

1 It should be noted that live-in caregiver activism has existed for as long as migrant domestic worker programs have been in place in Canada, with Caribbean women active in political organizing in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when they dominated domestic worker programs. While little is known about Caribbean live-in caregivers’ political activism, suffice it to say
that much like Filipina live-in caregivers’ activism today, Caribbean women’s organizing was crucial in providing an ongoing response to migrant domestic worker policies, forcing the Canadian government and Canadian employers to be accountable for their policies and their actions. Filipina women took over from Caribbean women and became active in organizing on behalf of live-in caregivers once the Philippines became the most popular source country for these workers.

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Chapter 8

**Toronto Filipino Businesses, Ethnic Identity, and Place Making in the Diaspora**

**CESAR POLVOROSA, JR**

At one Filipino remittance company, it is customary for the staff and the manager to start the workday by gathering around the altar and saying a short prayer for guidance and blessings. The staff then chat in Tagalog about their families and about Philippine politics and show-business personalities while having a hurried breakfast of coffee and *pan de sal* (Filipino bread) before their first clients come in. While such practices are replicated in many companies in the Philippines, this particular company is on St Clair West near downtown Toronto. This early morning office ritual is an example of the spread of Filipino workplace practices to distant shores, a phenomenon increasingly made common by the migration of Filipinos all over the world.

As of December 2009, overseas Filipinos are estimated to total 8.62 million (Commission on Filipino Overseas 2010) or roughly 9.3 per cent of the Philippine population. Located in different host countries, these overseas Filipinos have highly diverse experiences and impacts on the Philippines. Research on overseas Filipinos deals mostly with Filipino Americans, who are large in numbers (about 2.9 million) and have a long history in the United States (Aguilar 2002; Bonus 2000; Estirn 2003; Tiongson 2006). Given this, there is still a need to consider other major destination societies, such as Canada. Where Filipino migration to Canada has been investigated, the focus has largely been on labour migration, especially of live-in caregivers (further explication of the centrality of live-in caregivers to Filipino Canadians can be found in Kelly et al., Pratt, Davidson, Tungohan, and Angeles in this volume). The major objective of this chapter is to examine another critical aspect of the economic and cultural life of Filipinos in Canada by investigating the role of Filipino entrepreneurial activities and spaces in Toronto.
Scales of Violence from the Body to the Globe: Slain Filipino Youth in Canadian Cities

JOHN PAUL C. CATUNGAL

Introduction: Filipino Youth Bodies, Violence, and Politics

In the five-year span between 2003 and 2008, Filipino communities in Canada witnessed four high-profile cases of deadly violence against four Filipino youth. Far from a homogeneous set of events, the deaths of Mao Jomar Lanot (in 2003), Jeffrey Reodica (2004), Charlie Dalde (2005), and Deward Ponte (2008) were born out of different circumstances, each with its own cast of characters, histories, and legal complexities (see table 15.1). Taken together, these incidents speak to a broad set of themes around the links between immigration, nation-building, violence, and politics. They include racial violence in public spaces, narrations of grief through immigrant stories, activist responses from community organizations, and a public amplification of often private anxieties about racialized bodies, local tensions, multicultural urbanisms, national policies, and transnational processes.

This chapter provides some reflections on the linkages between these themes, approaching them through an analysis of public discourses around the cases of the four slain Filipino youth as detailed in table 15.1. The public discourses I reflect on in this chapter are drawn from various sources, including mainstream and community news media and legal coverage and published academic analyses. Taken together, these public discourses provide a glimpse into the messy politics of difference in the Canadian context, showing the decidedly contested nature of belonging to various scales and forms of political community.

In this chapter, I am principally concerned with the way these public discourses talk about slain Filipino youth in relation to broader issues of violence and immigration in Canadian cities. I argue that in order for
Table 15.1: Background information on slain Filipino youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year of death</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Case details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mao Jomar</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Vancouver, BC</td>
<td>Landot, 17, was chased and beaten to death by a group of youths outside of Sir Charles Tupper Secondary School, where he was playing tennis with friends. One man, who cannot be identified as he was charged as a young offender, was sentenced to seven years in prison for manslaughter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Toronto, ON</td>
<td>Reddick, 17, was shot to death three times by Detective Constable Dan Belsinger, who, with partner Detective Constable Allen Lave, responded to calls of a fight between two groups of youths in a Plaza clothing store. The findings included non-binding recommendations for Toronto Police Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Richmond, BC</td>
<td>Daido, 24, was killed in an altercation while on his way home. Police investigators charged UniAni with second-degree murder, but the presiding judge ruled, after psychological evaluations, that he was unfit to stand trial, and he was committed to a psychiatric facility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dewant</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Vancouver, BC</td>
<td>Ponte, 15, was stabbed to death in an alley after an altercation between two groups of teenagers. Dillon Anthony Butler was originally charged with second-degree murder, but was subsequently charged with the attempted murder of another teenager who was with Ponte at the time. Roseller Salvador, 19, was ultimately charged with second-degree murder in Ponte’s death.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: Various news sources

us to make sense of the violence that gives rise to the killing of Filipino youth in Canadian cities, we must view bodies – in this case, violated immigrant bodies – as sites in and through which we come to see the relationships between personal experiences, local processes, national policies, and transnationalities. In other words, my argument is rooted in a politics of scale or, to be more specific, in the notion that ‘social relations are played out across scales rather than confined in them’ (Kelly 1999, 381, emphasis in original).

This chapter begins with perhaps a simple premise: that the slayings of Filipino youth in Canadian urban spaces are political moments that reveal much about the taken for granted reproduction and politics of difference. This is not to say that they are just that ‘moments’. Such a view might come close to saying that bodies do not have their own value, that they are immaterial on their own. This is not what I mean by my argument, and I want to be clear that the killing of Filipino bodies that I analyse in this chapter clearly shows us precisely that the materiality and life of bodies do matter. Foucault’s (1979) theorization of bodies as sites in and through which power operates is instructive here, since it reveals how corporeal spaces are, de facto, social spaces, as it is through bodily experiences that we intimate experience inequality and violence. Moreover, bodies matter for political institutions like the state, since, in the Foucauldian sense of the ‘biopolitical’, lives and deaths of populations are an important political concern for the state and its legal and juridical institutions (see Lemke 2001). Extending this Foucauldian notion, grounded as it is on a particular political geography of the state, it is crucial to note that the infliction of deadly violence against particular bodies produces what Nembir (2003) calls necropolitical relations, or a mode of politics whereby certain people are rendered without value and whose bodies can therefore be abandoned and disposed of. From this standpoint, the deaths of Filipino youth could be treated as starting points for investigating how Filipino lives and deaths are organized by the state through legal and policy discourses and practices.

But beyond the state, this chapter is also concerned with other political geographies. The deaths I discuss here matter not only to the state, but also to other forms of political membership – the family, the community, for example. Like the state, these political spaces are also produced through discourses and practices; they do not have pre-figured or universal characteristics. In a sense then, much like the state, the calling up of these political categories within public discourses about slain Filipino youth reveals much about the social construction of particular kinds of family and community. Hence, when I argue that the slayings of Filipino youth bodies are political moments, I aim to shed light on how these episodes of violence reveal that individual lives and deaths are not ‘individual’ in a strict sense, since they exist in relation...
to broader conducts of power and politics. Indeed, for one, the stories of the deaths reveal the violated body's affective and co-constitutive relationships to multiple socio-spatial units (family, community, and nation, among others). Such an approach hopefully lets us get past the liberal/libertarian argument that the body is a unit unto itself and instead proffer an alternative that pinpoints the body's entanglements with other bodies, spaces, and scales.

Before I proceed, I'd like to offer a word on the ethical difficulties of writing about violence. It is with much unease that I write this chapter, for I do not wish to turn the unjust and untimely deaths of Filipino youths into a purely intellectual exercise. The loss and the pain that family and community members experience and continue to experience cannot — and perhaps should not — be reduced to words on pages. Any attempt to render stories visible and knowable carries with it significant ethical and political responsibility. Indeed, in their own respective reflections on the ethics of telling sad and painful stories of social injustice, Pratt (2009) and Razack (2007) warn us not to reproduce privilege by simply consuming — and therefore profiting from — stories of anguish, a process which Razack notes is tantamount to 'stealing the pain of others' (276). A genuine and responsible act of witnessing that goes beyond consuming pain is one that demands ethical accountability and critical analysis (Pratt 2009). In engaging with these stories, I aim to reflect on what these episodes of violence can tell us about the multiple and contested locations of Filipino bodies in urban, national, and transnational spaces. The ways that diverse groups reacted, in visible ways, to the killings of these youths mean that these episodes of violence struck a chord for multiple publics and therefore produced public discourses that, I think, are worth examining, if only because they speak to the contingent and contested nature of claims to belonging. In mapping the discursive reactions to these episodes of violence, I follow Pratt (2009) in hoping to channel my own encounters with these stories towards a critical politics of social change.

The chapter is organized using scalar keywords as guide-posts. I begin with the body and pay close attention to the discursive constructions of corporeal violations. Following spatial theorists of 'the body' as a space marked with difference (Razack 2002), I build in this section on the notion that the Filipino body, killed by violence, is produced by multiple socio-spatial relations. I move from the body to community to explore how and why these Filipino bodies are often talked about in relation to schools, playgrounds, neighbourhoods, and other local political geographies. In this section, I ground the violated Filipino body in broader public anxieties about the perils of multiculturalism in the public spaces of Canada's dangerous 'marginal cities' (Sundercliff 2003). I follow this section with a discussion of nations and borders. In this section, I consider public discussions around state policies, especially focusing on the Live-In Caregiver program and the federal multicultural policy. I also look beyond Canada towards the globe, and focus on the construction and politics of transnational relations. I discuss how specific discourses about migrant mobilities and border politics enable and are enabled by geographical imaginations of global relations. I end by going back to the Filipino body in order to reflect on its locations and dislocations, sometimes but not always violent, in the Canadian context.

Damaged Bodies: Slain Youth and the Mediated Production of Spectacle

Media coverage of murder cases is, perhaps not surprisingly, awash with very visual descriptions of the killing of bodies and, notwithstanding journalistic claims to supposed objectivity, is filled with discourses of pathos and drama. Accounts of circumstances before, during, and after the acts of killing often rely on the vivid, sometimes sensationalistic, discussions about the body and its limits. In the case of articles about murdered Filipino youth, journalists generously pepper their writings with descriptions of the comportments and positions of the killed body and the breakages and damages done to it. In these media accounts, the violated Filipino body is produced in representation both as a spectacle to be consumed and as an event where we come to see violence as — ultimately — a corporeal experience.

In one account, for instance, Fong (2005a) writes about the limits of Jomar Lanot's body: 'Being the slowest boy in a group of terrified fleeing teenagers cost Jomar Lanot his life.' She then goes on to describe how Jomar and his group were pursued by a group of young attackers, armed with weapons, who were 'set on revenge for a broken window.' Despite the fact that Jomar and his friends were not the group's original objects of pursuit, they nevertheless became available victims of violence as the angry group came upon them on a playground and instigated a confrontation through the hurling of insulting slurs (Fong
2005a). In the end, the attackers caught up with Jomar, and on 'the last glimpse one of Mr. Lanot's friends had of him, [Jomar] was on the ground and being kicked.' Fong continues:

By the time the police and ambulance arrived, Mr. Lanot was beside a chain-link fence, his arm extended at such an odd angle that the first people on the scene knew automatically it was broken. His face was on the ground. Even in the dark, the large pool of blood around his head was unmistakable.

The vividness of this description calls on the reader to bear witness, by consuming textual reconstruction, the severity of the violence visited upon Jomar's body. In such an account, the excesses of corporeal trauma - broken limbs, pools of blood - clearly describe a body beaten with force and malice. Jomar's final location too is telling - beside a chain-link fence - suggesting that his entrapment, along with his slowness, contributed to his body becoming the violated body in this attack.

In another article, Fong (2005b) extends this journalistic representation of Jomar's body using witness accounts of the killing in court proceedings. Here, we learn further that a bat was used as a weapon, resulting in multiple blows to the head, and that, soon after arriving at the hospital, Jomar would succumb to the severe trauma visited upon his body.

In this and other cases of violence against Filipino youth, media representations of the violated body are not absolute truths relaying irrevocable facts about often developing criminal cases. In many instances, they contain accounts of profound uncertainty and often controversial views about violence and its causes. In some instances, it is not difficult to suspect sensationalism. In the case of Jomar, for example, the media was quick to present the story as an instance of conflict between Filipinos and South Asians in Greater Vancouver, a sensational framing that plays up long-standing conservative anxieties about immigrant groups in the Canadian context (Pratt 2009, 17).

Similarly, media coverage of the case of seventeen-year-old Jeffrey Reodica, who was shot to death in a police confrontation, was peppered with profound uncertainty. In most of the media coverage, the slain body is once again vividly portrayed through the strategic use of accounts from anguished family members. For example, Gray (2004) recounts the reaction of family members upon learning that Jeffrey's body was left to die without help. He quotes Flora Reodica, Jeffrey's mother, as saying: 'When my son was lying there already, they flipped him over ... like a piece of meat. But before that ... they left my son there bleeding with no medical help.'

In their discussion of 'the news media's devotion to drama' in the context of the homophbic slaying of Matthew Shepard, communications scholars Brian Ott and Eric Aoki (2002) note that media accounts of murders are typically told using particular scripts or story forms. They note the propensity, in the Matthew Shepard case, of news media accounts to rely on 'individual actors and human-interest angles' in a way that individuates crime and that '[downplays] institutional and political considerations that establish the social context for those events' (488). I would argue that the same is true for reports of slain Filipino youth. Through their focus on the gruesome details of bodily position and trauma, the media has a general tendency to render violated Filipino youth bodies as individual spectacles to be consumed. In this sense, representations of the slain body constitute an important component in the production of the news.

Shaken (Imagined) Communityless: Slain Youth in Socio-Spatial Context

The human-interest angle is further achieved through the strategic use of a balancing discourse of the slain youth's moral and social life. Indeed, in many cases, media accounts included pleas by family members, peers, and others for the public to consider these Filipino youth as more than 'bodies.' For, while media accounts are heavy in their portrayal of the killed body, they also contain within them accounts that seek to humanize representations of slain Filipino youth. For instance, Heath/Rowlings (2004) write how Jeffrey Reodica's family and friends sought to honor him by invoking his vibrant personality - 'the happiest guy in the world' - and sense of friendship and loyalty - 'he loves his friends. [Jeff] was my boy.' In these accounts, we also learn that Jeffrey was an altar boy at St Rose of Lima Catholic Church and was still in high school at the time of his death (Ketung 2004a). These strategies act as counter-representations of Filipino youth and are political insofar as they produce public discourses about lost lives and broken social relations. Therefore, they extend the scope of representation from the spectacular individualization of the material body violated and broken to one that pays much more attention to bodies as lived in relation to often ideologically constructed notions of family and imagined (ethnic) community.
Such pleas to refuse the individualization of slain Filipino youth and to render them part of community and family are a powerful way for family and friends to map the lives and deaths of Filipino youth in a wider social context. In this spirit, the affective invocation of lives lived-in-relation during public moments of grieving and commemoration is simultaneous to an attempt to reconsider violence as occurring to more than just the individual body and as having impacts that cascade to other scales. Indeed, attempts to locate Jeffrey in the community spaces of his church and school can be viewed as ways to map the effects of violence against Filipino bodies onto Filipino and other communities more broadly. In media accounts of the killing of youth, for example, the re-scaling of violence from the individual to the collective is obvious in the active and deliberate invocation of a particularly idealized and singularized – and arguably, strategically essentialized – discourse of ‘community’ by community groups, kin relations, and also legal agents. This is particularly clear in the case of Jomar Lanot, wherein legal agents recognize how the impact of violence goes beyond individual bodies and extends into immigrant communities more broadly. In his sentencing of Muzil Abdullah, BC Supreme Court Justice Lance Bernard notes that the fatal beating of Jomar ‘was the sort of crime that shakes a community to its core’ (quoted in Bellett and Travis 2006).

Indeed, the notion that violence goes beyond the slain individual body does not necessarily deny the corporeal materiality of such killings. On the contrary, the very absence of the material body is unavoidably felt and grieved; called up by friends and family through rituals of memorialization; and sometimes even literally made concrete through the creation of commemorative landscapes that mark loss in space. These strategies of marking the materiality of the Filipino youth body lost through violence rely on, and indeed affirm, the fact that these bodies are situated in socio-spatial relations. In the case of Jomar Lanot’s slaying, these relations are invoked as ‘community’: as exemplified in Supreme Court Justice Lance Bernard’s pronouncement above – community not just in the sense of an imagined ethnic community (‘Filipino community’), although this is common, but also more broadly. For example, in the case of Jomar, classmates, teachers, and community members of Sir Charles Tupper High School, where Jomar was a student, formed the ‘Hope into Action’ committee, which sought to respond to the violent incident in ways that both grieve the loss and violence and also provide something of material benefit to the school community (Hansen 2006). This committee was instrumental in ensuring that the loss of Jomar is remembered in and through a ‘healing garden’ created in his memory. Located in the vicinity of the Sir Charles Tupper school grounds, the healing garden is meant as both a memorial landscape and a community space for contemplation. In this context, ‘community’ is not just an ethno-racialized one, though that is a component; it also includes members of the school and the neighbourhood for whom the garden will be available.

In a similar way, community reactions to Jeffrey’s killing were vociferous, resulting in the formation of the ‘Justice for Jeffrey Reodica Coalition’ (JJRC), an unprecedented grassroots group of Filipino community members from all over the Greater Toronto Area. This group sought to confront the Filipino community’s fraught relationship with the police after Jeffrey’s killing, with the ultimate goal of pushing for a public inquiry into Jeffrey’s death (Keung 2004b). In other words, this coalition sought to link the loss of Jeffrey Reodica with the overt political goal of seeking accountability for the incident. Speaking about the formation of this coalition, Hermie Garcia, publisher of the community paper the Philippine Reporter, notes this outrage and loss: ‘The community is just highly charged and mad. As journalists, we don’t usually take sides, but we feel our voices have been muffled. Jeffrey did not deserve to be shot and killed like this. We need to speak up for him’ (quoted in ibid.). In her analysis of the formation of JJRC, Mila Astorga-Garcia (2007) notes that, as one of several possible reactions to Jeffrey’s killing, the formation and work of this coalition moves the Filipino community ‘from crisis to... capacity building.’

In these cases, the invocation of ‘community’ both by media and legal actors and by public interest groups is often strategic. Perhaps most simply, it relays the idea of slain Filipino youth as belonging to social spheres. But beyond this, it also underpins the re-production of ethno-racial groupings like the ‘Filipino community’ that may have a stake in mourning and politicizing the killing of one of their own, as in the case of Jeffrey analysed by Astorga-Garcia. In this particular case, the use of ‘Filipino community’ is clearly idealized in its (temporary) erasure of massive differences among Filipinos, but it is also clearly politically strategic in noting that Jeffrey’s killing is an affront to the racialized group by a member of the police force, a dominant institution of the state.
Mongrel Cities: Filipino Youth in Canadian Urban Space

The strategic invocation of ‘community’ discussed above needs to be understood in the context of the racial politics of the Canadian multicultural cities. Despite their official framing in the mass media and in government publications as predominantly sites of belonging and racial acceptance, Canadian cities are increasingly sites of intense ethno-racial and class inequality, as well as spaces of racial violence (Goonewardena and Kipler 2005). This socio-spatial context conditions the field of possibilities for public responses to the cases described above. For example, the formation of ‘positive’ community alliances such as the JIRC was tempered by the fact that racial tropes continue to condition media and legal reactions to the slaying of Filipino youth. Most prominently, for example, in three of the four cases above, the idea of ‘Filipino youth as gang members’ framed early reactions to the violent incidents. Indeed, in Jeffrey’s case, one of the major points of politicization by the JIRC is the police force’s overt representation of Jeffrey and other Filipino youth as dangerous. Astorga-Garcia (2007, 6) quotes one participant in a meeting of the Coalition: ‘Our kids are being painted as knife-wielding gangsters, just so people would buy the police version of the story. This is so unfair.’

In some cases, the racialized representation of Filipino youth so obvious in Jeffrey’s case extends to a more general racialized representation of racialized youth as dangerous elements in the multicultural city. In early coverage of Jomar’s case, for example, the violence was framed by the media and the police as a gang conflict between Filipinos and South Asians, resulting in some public tension between youth from these respective ethnical-racial communities (Mickelburgh 2003). Reacting to this ‘incident tinged with elements of racists,’ the police very early on called on people to stay calm amid ‘heightening tension’ (Constable Anne Drennan, quoted in Mickelburgh 2003). The media’s suggestion of inter-ethnic violence in Canadian cities is not one that gained a lot of traction, especially as the investigation carried on. Mickelburgh (2003), for example, notes that ‘most [in the Filipino community] appear to have accepted police statements that Jomar’s death was not racially motivated, despite the racial slurs tossed out by the Indo-Canadian group’ that was implicated in the incident. What is more, youth organizations from both Filipino and South Asian communities actively formed alliances to combat the racial trope of inter-ethnic violence as a threat to the multicultural Canadian city, appearing together in media outlets to denounce further violence (see Pratt 2009, 17). Furthermore, South Asian leaders were quick to denounce violence between groups, noting that ‘all of us feel responsible for this absolute tragedy’ (former BC premier and three-time member of Parliament Ujjal Dosanjh, quoted in Mickelburgh 2003).

The immediate turn by many in the mainstream corporate media to the trope of inter-ethnic violence in Canadian cities as an explanation for Jomar’s slaying was far from accidental. It can be traced to a broader discourse of youth of colour as perilous elements of the multicultural city (see Schissel 1997). Such a discourse not only naturalizes youth of colour as violent threats to order, but also masks the insidious processes of racialization that render Filipino and other immigrant youth ‘other’ in relation to the white settler nation. What this discourse achieves is the constant reiteration of racialized youth, including Filipinos, as not only outsiders but also threats to the Canadian nation. Given the incredible violence of this framing, other counter-discourses were put forward to combat the media reportage on Jomar’s slaying. For example, representatives from the Filipino Canadian Youth Alliance, a civil society activist group that aims to politicize the lived realities of Filipino immigrant youth in Canada, provided a more critical analysis by linking violence against Filipino youth to broader problems with Canadian policy. They point out that Jomar is only one example of many children of live-in caregivers who are rendered vulnerable by inadequate support structures in multicultural Canadian cities.

Such active naming of the racialized political economy of Canadian cities is one strategic way of disrupting the common portrayal of violence against Filipino youth as exceptional individual cases. For example, in at least two cases, family and community members readily named the racism of white national institutions such as the police in their calls for justice for slain Filipino youth. In the case of Charle Dalde, a twenty-four-year-old Filipino youth slain in Richmond, BC in 2008, the Dalde family noted that they were subjected to unfair and violent treatment during the police investigation, in huge part because the police went into the investigation with the belief that Charle – and therefore also his family – were involved in criminal activity (Colebourn 2009). Charle’s father Cezar went on record to accuse the RCMP of ‘falseley believing the fatally wounded Charle was a gang member’ when the family was ‘held at gunpoint, handcuffed and bullied during the Mounties’ probe’ (quoted in Colebourn 2009). Reacting sharply to this accusation, Richmond RCMP Cpl. Nycki Basra noted: ‘we do not police based on
the colour of one’s skin’ (quoted in ibid.). Similarly, Det. Const. Dan Belanger, who fatally shot Jeffrey Reodica, sharply refuted suggestions of racism by noting that ‘he is a full-status Indian’ and that ‘race played no role in his conduct’ (quoted in Teotono 2006). Of course, such an argument does not sit well with research on the role of men of colour in violent nationalist institutions such as the police and the military, which shows that the performance of violent hegemonic masculinity in the service of nation implicates men of colour in state racism despite their own marginalization (see Razack 2004). The murders of Filipino youth in Canadian cities cast profound doubt on publicly circulated discourses of tolerance and liveability and therefore take as problematic the oft-mentioned notion that diversity and multiculturalism are Canada’s greatest strengths (see discussion below). As noted in the examples above, criminal cases like those involving the killing of Filipino youth – especially when they re-circulate and shore up tired old notions of immigrant gang violence – bring to the surface often unspoken tensions about difference-as-threat in Canada’s ‘marginal cities’ (Sandelock 2003). In these city-spaces, multicultural demographic realities combine with uneven hierarchies of privilege to produce anxious public confrontations with sometimes violent results (Goonewardena and Kipler 2005). In the cases described above, we see how discourses of gang violence and mob mentality reveal the marginalization of youth of colour in Canadian cities and produce uneven topographies of policing that order the Canadian city along colour lines (Wortley and Tanner 2004).

(Bordering Identities: Filipino Youth and Transnational Mythologies)

Community-level mobilizations in reaction to the murders of Filipino youth are not limited to critiques at the local scale, however. Indeed, criticisms of national institutions discussed above (e.g., the police) already reveal the complicity of the nation-state in the debate. However, critiques of the nation are not limited to these. Media coverage of these violent incidents also brings into focus the intertwined production of the Canadian nation as, simultaneously, a space of liberal multicultural tolerance and a host nation for labour immigrants and their families. Critiques of these innocent portrayals of the Canadian nation serve to hide the incredible racialized and colonial violence that sustains the Canadian nation (Thobani 2007). They also point out as a particularly

Scales of Violence from the Body to the Globe
create tense relationships between mothers and their children after unification and can have negative long-term impacts on children, particularly in terms of educational attainment and career futures (see also Parreñas 2009).

While some might view such an analysis as coming close to a pathologizing gesture that turns immigrant children into subjects at risk, the wisdom of Pratt’s (2009) analysis has to do with its refusal to map the problems of the LCP solely onto the scales of the Filipino body and household. Indeed, her analysis reveals how implicated Canada, the nation-state, is in constructing national policies that facilitate traumatic family separations and in enabling transnational mobilities between Canada and the Philippines. In other words, violence against Filipino bodies in Canadian cities is tied up in a host of other processes: from the political economic linkages between the Philippines’ labour exportation policies and Canada’s Live-In Caregiver Program, to the concomitant formation of cross-border affective communities that are sustained by transnational modes of caregiving and to the fashioning of Canadian ideals of multiculturalism and tolerance as national identity ‘brands.’

And, of course, this is not ‘new’ in a strict sense per se, since transnational histories of imperialism and contemporary patterns of immigration are genealogically linked. As San Juan (2003) and Espiritu (2003) point out, in the case of the Philippines and its diaspora populations, the country’s historical and contemporary ‘colonial’ relation to the West – particularly the United States – is, in huge part, premised on the spatial construction of modernity and opportunity as further afar, as somewhere else (i.e., in and of the West). It is this very geographical imagination (West as modernity) that shores up – and is also shared up by – the transnational flows of Filipinos throughout the world.

The jump in scale between the violated bodies of Filipino youth in Canadian cities and the global patterns of immigration might seem an extreme rhetorical move, but a view of violence that attends to what Žižek (2008, 1) calls ‘the contours of the backgrounds that generate such [violent] outbursts’ encourages us to look at individual incidents not as mere flashes in the pan but as ‘normal’ incidences. By ‘normal,’ Žižek does not mean that they are justified. On the contrary, he emphasizes that they are made ‘normal’ – i.e., normalized – because they arise out of taken-for-granted institutional arrangements whose everyday violence is not all that visible to us except in instances of obvious but exceptional violence, such as murders. From this light, we might view killed Filipino youths as examples of what Žižek calls ‘directly visible “subjective” violence, violence performed by a clearly identifiable agent’ (ibid.) – agents who, in this case, are the people who directly violated their bodies.

In contrast, the circumstances that bring Filipino families into Canadian diaspora locations may not be seen as ‘obvious’ forms of violence. In fact, state policies are even constructed as benevolent forms of Canadian nation-building, with multiculturalism, immigration policy, and transnationalism in Canada being hailed as evidence of the nation-state’s moral standing (Razack 2002). Indeed, the policy, ideology, and demographic reality of multiculturalism and its neoliberal logic (‘immigrants as economic necessity’) sustain the narration of Canada as humanitarian in nature (ibid.). However, scholars have also argued that the use of multiculturalism as immigration and labour policy – and the neoliberal logics that underpin such policy – mask the structural violence that renders possible the abandonment of immigrant bodies by the nation (Roberts and Mahani 2010). Indeed, Pratt (2005) argues, drawing on Agamben, that Filipino bodies, particularly live-in caregivers, are rendered ‘bare life’ by this logic, no matter their importance for Canada’s social reproduction. What is more, the children of these ‘abandoned women’ (ibid.) are also rendered vulnerable to violence: not only are their ties to kin relations severed by separation-visa-labour-migration, but their own precarious positions as immigrants to the Canadian nation render them ‘outside’ its protection. It is therefore not surprising that it is a common reaction to the killing of Filipino youth for some members of the Filipino community to name – and therefore politicize – their outsider status as a factor in the sloveness or inefficacy of legal investigations.

Resisting Violence: Corporeality, Materiality, Scale

In this chapter, I have discussed how political discourses about slain Filipino youth allow us to think through the place of violence in the making of Canadian cities and nations. My argument affirms the corporeality of violence – that it is something done to bodies, especially in the case of killings – but goes beyond it to note, following Žižek (2008), how violence to immigrant bodies is tied up in broader, structural forms of violence that do so much for the production of ideas about Canadian tolerance and multiculturalism. The cases of Jomar, Deward, Jeffrey, and Charlie brought into public discourse how individual episodes of slayings are intimately related to – and therefore call into
focus – broader societal issues about, among other things, inter-group violence in multicultural cities, police-community relations, immigration policies, and transnational mobilities. Their cases also show that the materiality of violence does not end in the killing of just the Filipino youth themselves and that the impacts of this violence cascade across scales, affecting immigrant communities in particular but also implicating state institutions such as the police and policymakers.

It is difficult though necessary to link the structural forms of violence that sustain the ‘normal’ workings of society (e.g., nation-making technologies like immigration policies) to more ‘subjective’ (Zulek 2008) eruptions of violence such as the individual cases of violence against Filipino youth in Canadian cities. For, according to the liberal logic that underpins much Canadian law and policy, violent incidences are exceptional moments committed by individual people. Such a view treats violence as pathologies of the individual rather than lived realities enabled by the very structures that sustain the everyday workings of society. Speaking truth to power would necessitate not only the undoing of this liberal logic, but also calling into question the normalizing institutions that sustain social order itself.

This is not to say that activists in the Filipino community have not tried to link structural and ‘exceptional’ violence in their political work. The opposite is actually the case. For example, Mildred German, a spokesperson for the Filipino Canadian Youth Alliance, expressly avoids individualizing the cases of Jomar and Deward. She notes forcefully that the LCP “takes” advantage of the desperation of the people in the Philippines” (quoted in Matas 2008). She further argues that such programs “should include funds for integration and settlements of new immigrants . . . and that they should be allowed to bring their children with them” (ibid.). Such a radical call for treating temporary workers in Canada as people with familial relations is simultaneously a call to recognize these same people as more-than-individual cogs in the wheel of Canadian social reproduction. It therefore messes with the singularizing neoliberal logic of such programs as the LCP and reconfigures the discourse on temporary worker programs by pointing out the structural violence of alienating workers from their kin relations and from the nation more broadly.

I end this chapter by looking back at the body and inquiring again about its spatiality as a focus of violence. The question of ‘the body’ in discussions of the politics of difference has produced a veritable literature that deconstructs its construction as a category and object of analysis. In this chapter, I have attempted to think through the slain Filipino body’s materiality, as a space in and through which violence is experienced. Simultaneously, I have also hinted at the construction of the Filipino body in relation to other political processes such as immigration and transnationalism. In a sense, then, my argument concerns the place of the Filipino body in local, national, and transnational spaces. What does it mean for Filipinos in Canada to be reduced to ‘bodies’ through fatal killings, but also ‘normally’ through labour practices, migration policies, and media discourses? To begin to engage this question, we must go back to the body and its disciplining.

I reiterate the utility of Foucault’s (1979) work on power, particularly given its analysis of the production of subjects through the disciplining of particular people’s bodies. His Discipline and Punish has inspired much work on how bodies are put to use in the service of power. As I did in this chapter, I think we can usefully mobilize this treatment of the body as a starting point for making sense of Filipino bodies in the Canadian context. Scholars of Filipino migration to Canada have noted how Filipino bodies are consistently ‘groomed’ as labouring bodies in the face of nationalist demands for docile economic subjects (Pratt 2004) and that many engage in acts of resistance by working beyond national boundaries to maintain transnational linkages (Kelly and Lusis 2006).

But beyond this, I think it is also important to consider how Filipinos in Canada engage in resistance by claiming and airing grievances against the nation (see Astorga-Garcia 2007). This is to say that despite the constant grooming of Filipinos as docile labouring bodies, they actually actively engage in political work that confounds state actors like the police and government officials. In the cases discussed above, for instance, we see that mourning families and communities courageously name flawed immigration policies to grieve the violence of these institutions at the same time that they grieve the loss of Filipino youth. In a sense, then, at the same time that the slain Filipino body allows us to think through the materiality and corporeality of violence against immigrant bodies in the Canadian context, it also sheds public light on the very acts through which activist communities – Filipino and others – attempt to make meaningful material changes to law, policy, and everyday lives more broadly.

The killing of Filipino youth in the Canadian context is a gruesome reminder of the materiality of violence even in urban contexts deemed safe and tolerant, but this should be treated with a grain of salt. For, if we are to take seriously the everyday lives of Filipinos in the Canadian
context, I think it is imperative for us to think through these episodes of corporeal violence in relation to institutions that enable the racializations and political economies of Filipino lives in Canada. That is, if we are to politicize questions of Filipino Canadian belonging, we need to look for ways to name not just the violence in cases of killings, but also the violence that sustains Canadian economies, policies, and institutions more broadly.

NOTES

1 The public discourses I analyze in this chapter are drawn from publicly available published sources. Many of these are archived online through individual publications’ websites. Since most are drawn from corporate news media sources whose audience is the generalized public, the bulk of the articles are written in English. Even those community-based sources I consulted were mostly written in the English language. This arguably enables the political participation of only particular segments of the Filipino community in Canada. While an analysis of the socio-linguistic politics of participation in media and legal discourse is beyond the scope of this chapter, I recognize the importance of this topic and encourage further work on it.

2 See Pratt (2005) for an analysis of the gendered nature of necropolitical relations. This is particularly relevant for Filipino/a lives in Canada: as Pratt notes, the lives of Filipino live-in caregivers are subjected to state-sanctioned forms of necropolitical violence through policies and practices related to the Live-In Caregiver Program.

3 While the consumption of media by immigrant Filipino communities is not an explicit focus of this chapter, Benito Vergara’s work provides clues as to the importance of ethnic print media for immigrant communities. See chapter 4 of his book Philippine Capital (2009).

4 Astorga-Garcia (2007) provides one history of the formation of the JBC. In this paper, she generally weaves a seemingly smooth story of the organic formation of the coalition, though she does hint at the fact that the process of bringing organizations together was actually power-laden. She notes, for example, that ‘an attempt to organise the Coalition more formally, however, was fraught with problems due to differing ideas on how this should be done’ (8). She goes on further to note that the Coalition’s Youth Committee remained organized and active and ‘began to have a vibrant life of its own’ (ibid.). See Astorga-Garcia (2007) for further details.

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Chapter 16

Kapisanan: Resignifying Diasporic Post-colonial Art and Artists

CHRISTINE BALMES

I graduated from the University of Michigan in 2007 with a degree in Asian studies, focusing on Southeast Asia and the Philippines in particular. My aunt Adelwisa Weller, who was then the Filipino-language instructor there, encouraged me to take courses on Philippine history and literature, as well as classes taught by Filipino American professors. In her Intermediate Filipino language class, I read Zeus Salazar and his idea of ‘Fantayong Punanaw’ or ‘Filipino history written by us Filipinos for Filipinos.’ It was an eye-opening experience. No other university course that I had taken at the University of Michigan had given me the proper theoretical models and vocabulary for a Filipino-centred consciousness. Reading Salazar was my first exposure to the indigenization movement that he spearheaded with Virgilio Enriquez and Renato Constantino (see Mendoza 2002).

After completing my undergraduate degree, I moved back to Canada, where my family had emigrated from the Philippines nine years earlier. I sought a community with whom I could share my ideas and interests that matched Salazar’s idea – Filipinos interested in the question of what constitutes a Philippine-inspired viewpoint. But in multicultural Toronto, my desire to become more connected to my heritage could not find an outlet. My immigrant family, living in the suburb of Thornhill, was not part of a strong Filipino community. I experienced a crisis that had to do with questioning not only the validity of pursuing an Asian studies degree but also the relevance of foregrounding my Filipino identity. I felt disconnected and more out of place in Toronto than I ever did in Ann Arbor.

During a summer night in 2008, however, I found the community I had been looking for in the Kapisanan Philippine Centre for Arts and
Chapter 18

Mas Maputi Ako sa 'yo (I'm lighter than you): The Spatial Politics of Intraracial Colourism among Filipina/o Youth in the Greater Toronto Area

CONELY DE LEON

"You're so dark. Naack!" My cousin would say to me in disgust, as she would place her forearm beside mine to compare her light skin to my dark skin.

As early as the age of four, I was taught to feel ashamed of my complexion. I did not understand what was so shameful about being the particular shade of brown that I was. This moment was one of my earliest encounters with colourism, defined by Herring et al. as 'the discriminatory treatment of individuals falling within the same “racial” group on the basis of skin color’ (2004, 3). Contemporary accounts of the significance of skin colour and social hierarchies based on skin complexion illustrate that ‘dark-skinned individuals are viewed as less intelligent, trustworthy, and attractive than their lighter-skinned counterparts’ (Nakano Glenn 2008, 281). Such factors have a significant impact on the social mobility and overall life chances of darker-skinned youth (Fergus 2004). These findings are disconcerting and warrant further investigation to determine their applicability within a Canadian context. With the exception of Sahay and Piran’s research on skin colour preferences among South Asian students at the University of Toronto (1997) and Machani’s work on racial performance among ‘mixed race’ women in Toronto (2009), there does not appear to be substantial research on the ways in which colourism operates among youth of colour in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

The following chapter considers the ways in which diasporic Filipina/o youth express colourism within the Greater Toronto Area. Specifically, I explore spatial articulations of intraracial colourism between and among self-identified light-skinned and dark-skinned Filipina/o youth in the GTA. Engaging with concepts of space is particularly useful because it takes into account intersecting hierarchies of race, class, and gender in expansive and meaningful ways. As Shereene Razack argues, 'the lure of a spatial approach is precisely the possibility of charting the simultaneous operation of multiple systems of domination' (2002, 6). This chapter will also critically engage with notions of the body, the degenerate body, the bourgeois body, the abnormal body in space, and dwell upon considerations of the spatiality of skin itself, as the place where identity can be 'formed and assigned,' as 'boundary and contact surface,' and as a 'place of encounter' (Bhabha 1999, 1-2).

Taking considerations of the spatiality of skin itself one step further, I draw on Ahmed and Stacey's challenge to think 'with or through the skin' but in a way that fundamentally engages with the significance of skin colour (2003, 1). Hence, to think through spatial articulations of intraracial colourism in this chapter will inevitably mean thinking through the multitudinous ways in which skins are made intelligible, imbued with social meaning, enabling the production and re-production of subjectivities and identities, constantly read and re-read, produced and re-produced, written upon, managed, and controlled according to ever-shifting historical, social, and political moments.

Filipina/os in the Greater Toronto Area

In choosing to examine spatial expressions of intraracial colourism among Filipina/o youth, a key goal of this research is to dispel any notion of a presumed racial and ethnic homogeneity among these communities. This work further defies assumptions of a singular form of so-called Filipina/o solidarity. This is not to say that solidarity networks among Filipina/os do not exist. Indeed, solidarity and coalition building have been politically necessary in light of some of the challenges that Filipina/os, particularly Filipina women who have come to Canada under the Live-In Caregiver Program, have had to face (on solidarity and coalition building, see chapters by Tungohan, Davidson, and Eric in this volume; on coalition building involving Filipina/o youth, see chapters by Largo, Balines, Catungal, and Mendoza in this volume). But Filipina/o communities in the GTA are strikingly diverse with different commitments, such as linguistic and regional affiliations, which have extended beyond first-generation Filipina/o im/migrants in Canada. Moreover, while Filipina/os have been identified as the fourth largest ‘visible minority’ group in Toronto (Statistics Canada 2007),
Filipino/o settlement patterns are not as highly concentrated as they are in Canadian cities like Montreal and Winnipeg, but more widely dispersed, thus having an impact on Filipino/o community formations. This chapter therefore serves as a self-reflexive investigation of some of the constructed spatial divisions within and among Filipino/o youth in different regions of the GTA today, and the messy and internal conflicts that have emerged as a result.

Methods
To understand how spatial expressions of intraracial colourism operate within and among Filipino/o youth in the GTA, I conducted focus groups on colourism in July and August of 2009 with Filipino/o youth in two major demographics within the GTA: Mississauga and Scarborough. The call-out for focus group participants was mass-distributed through the Sisters of Colour Collective (SOCC)’ online network as part of our ‘Colourism: Interrogating Shades of Difference’ campaign to raise awareness around the issue. Focus group sessions were formed based on responses to the mass call-out. Follow-up calls were made to schedule and confirm the date, time, and place of each session. One session comprised four female and three male youth from the Mississauga region of Greater Toronto. This session took place in Mississauga in one female participant’s home. The other session took place in a small coffee shop in downtown Toronto and consisted of three male youth from the Scarborough region of Greater Toronto. In total, ten focus group participants between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-six were interviewed. Each session was digitally recorded and lasted an average of two hours. All ten focus group participants identified themselves as Filipino/o. One male participant from the Mississauga focus group further acknowledged that he was ‘mixed race,’ identifying his mother as Filipino and his father as ‘white.’ It is significant to note that the Filipino/o youth participants from Mississauga all identified as light-skinned, while Filipino youth participants from the Scarborough area all identified as dark-skinned. To be very clear, this is not to say that only light-skinned Filipino/o live in Mississauga and dark-skinned Filipino/o live in Scarborough. While my sample consists of a very small number of Filipino/o youth in the GTA, it is intended to present a more intimate and in-depth look at the ways in which some Filipino/o youth spatially express intraracial colourism in their lives. Pseudonyms are used throughout in order to protect the identities of all focus group participants.

Mississauga
Mississauga is a suburb that lies west of the GTA, located in the Regional Municipality of Peel. According to Statistics Canada’s ‘visible minority’ population characteristics, following the categories of ‘South Asian,’ ‘Chinese,’ and ‘Black,’ Filipino(o) were designated as the fourth largest ethnic group in Mississauga at 4.6 per cent, while those identified as white constituted the majority of the total population at 50.6 per cent (2006). Mississauga is hailed as ‘one of the largest corporate/financial districts in Canada drawing in major international companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, General Electric, and Wal-Mart Canada, among many other Fortune 500 companies’ (Statistics Canada 2006). Aside from its reputation as an epicentre of corporate activity, Mississauga also advertises itself as ‘the safest city in Canada 8 years in a row’ (Heritage 2010). This image of a safe and thriving Canadian city is bolstered by what is purported to be a ‘rich’ history of nineteenth-century European settlement. Mississauga is thus constructed and perceived as a very particular space of privilege and power since it is recognized as a valued space of thriving Canadian commerce and wealth, but, more importantly, because it sustains the grand myths of Canadian ‘nation-building’ and European imperial grandeur.

Scarborough
Scarborough is a suburb that lies within the Greater Toronto Area, on the eastern border of the city. Large-scale development along with the liberalization of Canadian immigration policies during the 1960s led to an ‘overabundance’ of low-income housing projects in affordable parts of Scarborough and an increase in new immigrants to the area (Teelucksingh 2007, 652). At this time, Scarborough became marked by economic decline, and limited job availability and social services. As a result, parts of Scarborough have been cited as areas in need of ‘rehabilitation and socio-economic improvement’ (Teelucksingh 2007, 652). Today, a significant portion of Scarborough’s population is composed of immigrants and descendants of immigrants who have arrived in Canada in the last four decades. For example, Filipino/o residents in Scarborough made up 6.5 per cent of a total ‘visible minority’ population of 67.4 per cent, according to a 2006 City of Toronto Community Council Profile (Scarborough 2006). Based on a comprehensive youth safety study conducted by Williams and Clarke (2005), ‘racial minorities are more likely to live in Scarborough than non-racial minorities.’
Teluckingsh confirms: ‘As the proportion of immigrants and racial minorities has increased, Scarborough has become culturally and demographically identified with predominately marginalized lower-income and racialized residents’ (2007, 652). In sharp contrast to Mississauga then, the Scarborough area is constructed as a space of low-income housing projects, of neglect and limited economic opportunity, of a significantly larger immigrant population, and concentrated racialized bodies in particular – a space that Razack might deem a space of perceived ‘degeneracy’ (2002, 102).

The Philippine-American War and the Language of Empire

Although there is no direct contest in which the term ‘intraracial colourism’ is used in reference to the racializing discourse surrounding Spanish and American imperial expansion in the Philippines, some inferences may be drawn from the imperialist language that emerged from Philippine-American relations during the Philippine-American War. U.S. soldiers in occupied Manila ‘commonly characterized Filipinos on the whole as filthy, diseased, lazy, and treacherous in their business dealings, sometimes applying the term “nigger” to them’ (Kramer 2006, 102, for a discussion of the genealogical link between Native Americans and Filipinos as colonized subjects, see McElhinny, this volume). Explicit racial reference to Filipinos as ‘niggers’ is important to note here as it highlights the ‘cyclical discourses that generate symbolic meanings which transpose and reinterpret earlier wars’ such as the American Civil War (Balco 2006, 51–2). It further points to the United States’ outright dismissal of the ethnic, socioeconomic, spiritual, regional, and linguistic heterogeneity among Filipinos, thereby functioning as an exclusionary technique to foreground a particular representation for imperialist purposes (Coloma 2009, 300). Such racial-imperialist techniques underline the changeability and reframing of racial terms, as well as the contingent and ever-shifting relations between Americans and Filipinos in Occupied Manila at the time. Poignantly, on December 10, 1898, after Spain ceded the Philippines, along with Puerto Rico, Guam, and Cuba, to the United States with the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the racialization of Filipinos/os as ‘savage black bodies’ became increasingly pronounced both on and off the ground (Balco 2006, 45). This is demonstrated in persistent racial terms: ‘Being dark men, they are therefore “niggers,” and entitled to all the contempt and harsh treatment administered by white overlords to the most inferior races’ (Kramer 2006, 128). According to Kramer, such language exposed the racial-imperialist logic that came to justify colonization of the entire archipelago. Furthermore, this logic mutually relied on the racialization of Americans themselves as Anglo-Saxons, as part of a ‘grand’ and ‘glorious’ tradition of empire-building constituted by the dual histories of British and American imperial conquest (Kramer 2006, 90, 121). This marked control over Filipinos/os peoples, lands, and resources as simply inevitable – ‘proof’ of the Anglo-Saxon peoples’ ‘racial genius’.

In his analysis of 1903 census data, Vicente Rafael further illustrates the ways in which Philippine history was explicitly racialized, framing the land itself as empty, passively waiting to be ‘settled by successive waves of colonizers.’ These ‘waves of colonizers’ signalled

the inevitable retreat of darker-skinned, more savage inhabitants in the face of advancing groups of lighter-skinned, more civilized, and physically superior conquerors... culminating, presumably, in the arrival of the strongest, most progressive, and lightest-skinned colonizer to date: whites from the United States. (Rafael 2000, 35–6)

The language Rafael uses here to mark these ‘waves’ is important, for it draws out a language of imperialism that persists today in the evolutionist language used to market skin-lightening products – ‘the lighter, the better.’ Clearly, the ways in which skin colour is addressed in racial-imperialist discourse demonstrates the complexities and contradictions of forming classifications around ‘colour.’ Dehumanizing Filipinos/os by referring to them as ‘dark savages’ illustrates the necessity of such terminology in justifying U.S. imperial expansion and control over the Philippines as the ‘Filipino’ was visually and discursively constructed and tailored to a U.S. public audience. Although ‘colourism’ is not explicitly discussed as such here, references to skin colour and the conflation of specific colonial subjects into visually recognizable stereotypes suggest evidence of skin colour hierarchies.

Impact of Racial-Imperialist Discourse on the Philippines Today

To understand the lasting impact of racial-imperialist discourse on contemporary perceptions of skin colour hierarchies in the Philippines, it is worth briefly sketching out what can be referred to as ‘light skin
aspirations' among Filipino/os today. This is perhaps best reflected in reported rates of skin-lightening product consumption. Indeed, Rondilla and Spickard (2007) offer some alarming statistics drawn from a 2003 report which states that 'over 2 million units of skin-lightening soap are sold annually in the Philippines,' followed by a 2004 survey documenting skin-lightening usage in the Asia-Pacific region in which 'the Philippines reported the highest rate of usage, with 50 percent of the respondents stating that they currently use skin-lightening products' (63). Considering the widespread usage of skin-lightening products and historically overwhelming Western ideological and cultural influences rooted in the Philippines' colonial and imperial past, it is no wonder that Filipino/os have developed, to borrow Rondilla and Spickard's phrase, 'a color complex' (ibid.). Clearly, the complex workings of intraracial colourism warrant as much attention among diasporic Filipino/os populations, including those who have settled in Canada, as they do among Filipino/os currently living in the Philippines. However, it is worth noting that while the Filipino/o youth participants I spoke with engaged in discussions about intraracial colourism, they did not express a desire to purchase and use skin-lightening products. Rather, spatial expressions of intraracial colourism seemed to be adopted among focus group participants to derigate other Filipino/o youth, reflecting conflict and tension between and among Filipino/o communities in the GTA.

Mississauga and Scarborough: Some Spatial Reflections on Colour and Class

In this section, I introduce spatial articulations of intraracial colourism as expressed by focus group participants from the Mississauga and Scarborough areas of Greater Toronto in order to map out some of the constructed spatial divisions within and among Filipino/o youth in different regions of the GTA today, and the messy internal conflicts around colour and class that have emerged as a result. Understanding Mississauga as a particular site of white, middle-class respectability is important in understanding how intraracial colourism is expressed spatially as a marker of class. For example, when focus group participants from Mississauga were asked whether they perceived any notable differences between Filipino/os who live in Mississauga and Filipino/os who live in Scarborough, all participants responded in unison, 'Yea, absolutely.' The conviction displayed in this unanimous response is striking. When asked to elaborate on these differences, Grace, with her long, dark brown hair, almond-shaped hazel eyes, and olive complexion, insisted that Filipino/os from Scarborough are from the 'wrong side of the tracks.' This statement presumes, then, that there is a 'right side of the tracks,' and that the right side is emboldened in the west end suburb of Mississauga. These spatial conceptualizations of Mississauga and Scarborough are further reinforced when male participant Chris remarks, 'You’re going from Mississauga to Scarborough, so just saying that alone, you’re already going, “Scarborough is a ghetto.”' This discursive movement from a discussion about Mississauga to Scarborough highlights the spatiality of discourse itself. The very words 'Mississauga' and 'Scarborough' already carry in them particular histories of spatialized class difference, hence the term 'Scarborough' becomes synonymous with the single-word definition 'ghetto' (read: poor, working class).

By contrast, during the focus group with male youth participants from the Scarborough area, two participants in particular defined themselves as exemplifying 'toughness and roughness,' whereas they perceived Filipino/os from Mississauga to be 'soft' and 'a bunch of wussies.' Standing at about five feet and four inches, Scarborough participants Edgar and Rommel both identify as dark-skinned. For them, to perceive Filipino males from Mississauga as soft and effeminate can be understood as an opportunity to define themselves and Scarborough itself as hypermasculine, or as Rommel asserts, 'to show dominance.' It is important to reiterate that the all-male participants from this Scarborough focus group tended to emphasize their heterosexuality and hypermasculinity, while female and male youth from the Mississauga focus group did not openly discuss their sexual orientation, which seemed to have an overall impact on the trajectory of the discussions and the Scarborough participants' preoccupation with particular understandings of Filipino masculinity. Edgar identified the act of Filipino male youth from Scarborough entering Mississauga and other spaces outside of Scarborough in the following way: 'Yo, I’m from the ghetto and we’re coming here to terrorize you.' Rather than rejecting existing stereotypes about racialized youth living in Scarborough, these participants chose to embrace the stereotype of the threatening, racialized male body from Scarborough and use it as a strategic positioning from which to take up space in other areas of the GTA. To borrow from Katherine McKittrick’s theorizations on black counter-geographies, racialized bodies can also inhabit 'the crevices of power ... and from this location ... manipulate
and recast the meanings of dominant spaces, thus creating the possibility of an ‘alterable terrain’ (2006, xvii). Moreover, as Dorreen Massey argues, a given place does not denote a ‘seamless, coherent identity; a single sense of place which everyone shares’ (1994, 153). Edgar’s relationship to Mississauga is obviously different from the relationships Mississauga participants have to this area. This serves to highlight the ‘open and porous networks of social relations’ which constitute our social interactions with places and through which our identities can be multiply constituted (Massey 1994, 121).

Second Skin

Shirley Tate defines skin as ‘a mark of ethnicity, status, identity, [and] self-hood’ (2001, 209). Tate’s definition of skin can be expanded to include the ways in which clothing can also be understood as a ‘second skin’ that marks bodies in rather similar ways, though of course we do not live in and with our clothing in precisely the same ways we live in, with, and through our skin. Understanding clothing as a second skin, and keeping in mind Ahmed and Stacey’s understanding of skin itself as spatial, might allow us to understand the extent to which class differences between Filipinos from Mississauga and Filipinos from Scarborough are expressed. As Grace, dressed in Gucci flats and designer denim, articulates:

I think a lot of it has to do with class – the way they dress, the way we dress. Let’s just put it this way, there’s two of me, me who’s dressed the way I do and the other me who’s dressed in Nikes, really, really baggy pants, and jerseys. Which one are you gonna befriend first?

Grace separates herself into two selves, one of middle-class status from Mississauga who can afford to purchase designer clothing and her other self of working-class status from Scarborough who wears baggy pants, jerseys, and Nikes. Here, Grace constructs her own assumptions about the social status of her Mississauga self and her Scarborough self. She perceives her Mississauga self as more capable of making friends while her Scarborough self is perceived as less capable of initiating and sustaining meaningful relationships. Grace’s ability to make friends seems to rely heavily on her socio-economic status and, significantly, on her light skin. She shares, ‘I think it was easier for me to make friends with everybody. I personally think it is because of my skin colour’. Grace’s statement not only highlights the ways in which space, skin colour, and clothing as a second skin intersect as symbolic markers of socio-economic status, but also points to a need for a more expansive definition of skin, which acknowledges the ways in which clothing as a second skin can further communicate aspects of our social identities to others. But Grace’s statement articulates something more and that is her strategic ability to move between spaces and perform different roles which reflect varied aspects of her identity or multiple selves. It is not that her Scarborough self cannot make friends but that she deems her Mississauga self as the self with greater social capital, which, for Grace, translates into a greater ability to establish stronger social networks. This is complicated by Grace’s physical appearance, which can be read as ambiguous – an ambiguity which she can utilize to her advantage depending on the spaces she moves through. As Mahtani suggests in her work on ‘mixed race’ women performing race, ‘In some spaces, they might be seen as white; in others, they may be seen as people of colour, but often these readings of racialized bodies can be unstable and constantly changing’ (2009, 170).

As with the focus group participants from Mississauga, the participants from Scarborough also identified the ways in which their ‘second skin’ proved to be a powerful identity marker carrying with it certain spatial connotations with respect to their sense of pride and allegiance to Scarborough. According to Edgar, being a straight, male youth from Scarborough meant dressing in a particular way. You go to Stitches’ or buy yourself thirty dollar Timberland boots knockoff. Those are the clothes, gangster clothes, we can afford. ‘The purchasing and wearing of affordable designer ‘knockoffs’ based on such trendy items as the Timberland boot were popularized by New York hip-hop artists like Wu Tang Clan, Boot Camp Clik, and Notorious B.I.G (see Klein 2002). Particular designer brands such as Timberland, Nike, and Tommy Hilfiger became synonymous with the construction of a particular identity, that of the ‘gangster rapper’, which, for working-class youth of colour like Edgar, carried its own set of status markers negotiated by racialized male youth themselves. In this case, their skins, their skin colour and their clothing, together completed the hypermasculine image of a rough, tough ‘gangster’ from the Scarborough area, an image that for Edgar seemed to communicate a sense of pride and resilience, rather than shame or embarrassment as implied by some Mississauga youth participants. Edgar is well aware of how his identity is framed by others, but his response to such framings marks a spatially transgressive
moment, transgressive in that Edgar insists on ‘playing up’ a specifically gendered and racialized image associated with the Scarborough area in order to actively communicate his self-pride and resilience in and through different spaces. Mahtani best articulates such performative acts in the following way:

Choosing what performance depends upon a myriad of conditions – a complex exchange among a variety of characters, where everyday interactions occur across gendered and racialized terrains... The ground upon which these performances are enacted is not permanent, fixed, nor stable. Rather, it is continually shifting and changing. (Mahtani 2009, 172)

But in an attempt to avoid naming and identifying subversive acts too quickly, it is best to take note that such acts can still contribute to the maintenance of certain racialized and gendered boundaries, while simultaneously transgressing others.

Perceptions of Light-Skinned Beauty and ‘Ghetto Fabulosity’

Since the participants from the Mississauga focus group identified as light-skinned Filipinas/os, this enabled them to identify and communicate with each other in particular ways, most notably in ways that constructed themselves as ‘closer’ to whiteness and its attendant privileges. As Maria, tall, slender, and pale, remarks, ‘How many light-skinned Filipinas do you know in Scarborough? I can tell you – zero! Mississauga Filipinas are better looking, hands down.’ Here, light skin is directly associated with Maria’s perception of beauty, but what is more intriguing are the ways in which light skin and beauty are imagined as spatially connected to a particular western region of the GTA. In other words, light skin and, therefore, beauty are seen as belonging to the respectable, white spaces of Mississauga, whereas dark skin and, therefore, ugliness are rejected and expelled from the spatial parameters of the Mississauga area and consigned to the dark, degenerate space of the eastern region of the GTA. This understanding of light-skinned beauty and privilege is reiterated in different ways throughout the focus group discussion. Building upon and reinforcing Chris’s earlier reference to Scarborough as ‘ghetto,’ Grace later suggests that dark-skinned Filipinas from Scarborough are a lower-class type of beauty, which Grace describes as ‘ghetto fabulosity.’ Grace insists that this is ‘how Scarborough girls present themselves.’ She seems to suggest that there exists an unattainable standard of beauty that the ‘ghetto fabulous’ cannot live up to. Presumably, how Filipina youth from Scarborough present themselves pushes them outside the parameters of light-skinned beauty. This issue of presentation is crucial because it highlights a contradiction in Grace’s narrative. On the one hand, she seems to suggest that Filipinas from Scarborough simply cannot achieve this ‘higher’ standard of beauty because their lower-class status, imprinted on their very skins, serves as a barrier, preventing them from achieving the socio-spatial mobility that light skin affords middle-class Filipina/os. On the other hand, she seems to be implying that if Filipina youth living in the Scarborough area were to present themselves differently (by using skin lightening products or appearing as if they were of a higher-class status through such symbolic markers as designer clothes, for example) they might attain a supposed higher standard of beauty. Of course, Grace’s and Maria’s statements operate on the assumption that Filipina youth from the Scarborough area desire light skin and middle-class status. Unfortunately, there was no opportunity to challenge this assumption directly since the participants from the Scarborough focus group session all identified as straight, male youth.

Dark and Dirty

As I have mentioned, compared to the light-skinned focus group participants from Mississauga, focus group participants from the Scarborough area were of significantly darker skin tone. Thus participants’ skin tones had a further impact on the trajectory of the focus group discussion. For example, Edgar recalls distinct memories of his family reprimanding him for being dark-skinned: “Come out of the sun.” Your parents [and your uncles] will tell you, “You look dirty. Go clean yourself up. Next time, don’t go into the sun too much.” In response, another participant, Ritz, shares, ‘Let’s try to keep you inside so that you don’t get darker.’ Studies on culturalism confirm the ways in which dark skin has become a symbolic marker of one’s status as a member of the laboring class. Immigrant generations have a particular idea of what success should look like. In the home country, success is defined by light skin because it illustrates that one is not part of the laboring class and does not have to work under the hot sun (Bondilla and Spickard 2007, 67). While Edgar’s point of reference is leisure rather than labour, what is interesting to note is the possibility of cleanliness expressed in the phrase ‘Go clean yourself up.’ In other words, it is possible to strive towards whiteness if one stays
out of the sun. As Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks would argue, what is being made possible here is not simply the achievement of lighter skin but ‘the fantasy of wholeness, of being,’ that is, the fantasy of achieving the status of ‘master signifier, of Whiteness’ (2000, 5).

What is further intriguing about Edgar’s statement are the spatial restrictions being placed on him by his family. He is unable to freely enjoy the sun and the heat for fear that he will get darker. This instilled fear of darkness and imposed desire for whiteness dictate when, where, and how Edgar takes up certain spaces. His mobility is restricted by the possibility of his skin becoming shades darker and consequently dirtier, effectively destroying his chances of upward social mobility, as implied by his elders. Radhika Mohanram better describes this concept of spatial immobility and mobility in terms of how ‘whiteness has the ability to move [resulting] in the unmarking of the body [white] blackness is signified through a marking and is always static and immobilizing’ (1999, 4).

Rommel frames other Filipina/o’s valorization of whiteness in the form of a question when he asks, ‘Why is lighter skin always exalted, idealized whereas the darker shades are associated with dirt and uncleanliness’? Here, Rommel’s sentiments seem to echo W.E.B. DuBois, who writes that ‘everything good, good, efficient, fair and honorable is associated with whiteness, while everything mean, bad, blundering, cheating and dishonorable is “yellow”; a bad taste is “brown”; and the devil is “black”’ (DuBois 1996, 60). Another participant, Ritz, articulates that it is like being ‘blessed with a disease or a curse if you have darker skin.’ The fear and threat of dirt, disease, and curses incite frustration in the dark-skinned body. This fear and disgust of dark skin has, under Western eyes, been constituted alongside the contrasting idealization of light skin as bright, pure, clean, and good. Frantz Fanon is helpful in illustrating the corporeal encounters between differently racialized bodies in describing the existence of an ‘epidermal hierarchy’ that ‘equates the racial body with a perceivable blackness’ (1967, 112). Indeed, these participants can be seen as living the Fanonian ‘racial epidermal schema.’ As Mohanram aptly articulates, Fanon ‘rages against the strictly epidermal identity bestowed upon blacks in colonized and metropolitan spaces which is different from the corporeal schema normally reserved for whites’ (1999, 26). That corporeal difference is perceivable, tangible in the ways that whiteness is constructed as disembodied, as transcendent, as the antithesis to colour as non-colour, invisible, and unmarked. Just as whiteness is seen as invisible, dark skin is seen as hypervisible, merely functioning ‘to grant a perspective to the white man’ (Mohanram 1999, 26–7). This issue of perspective is relevant insofar as it exposes the ways in which light-skinned focus group participants imposed their own imaginings of what dark-skinned Filipina/o from Scarborough represent to them. Through spatially discursive practices of Othering they dismiss the desire for light skin altogether as a preoccupation of Filipina/o youth who must struggle with sustaining higher class status and privilege.

I think the dark-skinned-light-skinned thing is prevalent as you go higher in social class. Especially when you go up and in social status you tend to see that in order for you to stay on that level, like being with the Joneses, you have to assimilate with the Joneses.

Here, Edgar underscores some of the ways in which a preoccupation with sustaining light-skinned privilege becomes an increasingly important aspect of one’s social identity as one rises in class status, precisely because light-skinned privilege for Filipina/o is so precarious, merely granting them a ‘toehold on respectability,’ as Razack would argue (2002, 103). The imagined attainment of white, middle-class respectability is emphasized by perceptions of Mississauga as a particularly valued space of thriving Canadian commerce and wealth. Light-skinned Filipina/o youth who strive to conform to standards of white, middle-class respectability through the acquisition of social and symbolic capital can imagine themselves as part of this valued space. And yet, the promise of white, middle-class respectability and its attendant privileges are ultimately illusory. Illusory in that this promise is never fully and permanently attainable for either light-skinned, or dark-skinned bodies for that matter, living in the Greater Toronto Area. Illusory in that this promise is ultimately premised upon a false stabilization of racialized, gendered, and classed categories of being. To paraphrase Fanon, one can never be sure how close one is to disgrace (2000, 261). In other words, the ways in which light-skinned Filipina/o participants from Mississauga secure any notion of white, middle-class respectability is through the degradation of dark-skinned Filipina/o youth from the Scarborough area, signifying their own complicity in spatially sustaining dominant systems of racial oppression.
"Passing": Racialized Bodies Accessing Spaces of Light-Skinned Privilege

Bucholtz (1995) argues that ‘passing is the active construction of how the self is perceived when one’s ethnicity is ambiguous to others’ (352). I want to draw attention to the agentive and performative character of ‘passing,’ while also keeping in mind the ways in which spatial boundaries are constructed and transgressed in, through, and around racialized bodies. Those able to ‘pass’ may ‘patrol their own borders using the tools of language and self-presentation to determine how the boundaries of ethnic categories are drawn upon their own bodies’ (ibid.). Here, I wish to highlight the narrative of Joseph, a light-skinned Filipino youth participant from Mississauga. He shares:

My girlfriend’s eastern European and her Dad is really racist (but) he doesn’t mind me. I think it’s easier ‘cause I don’t look it to them. ‘Cause if I did, it’d be a lot different. For them to accept me, it’s easier ‘cause I’m more Europeanized to them. I don’t look Filipino. (Emphasis added)

Joseph seems to pride himself on not looking Filipino, but on passing as white, which grants him access to certain spaces of privilege like his girlfriend’s parents’ home, a space that would be closed off to him if he were of notably darker skin. Joseph’s ability to transgress certain social boundaries is conditional and dependent on a denial of that which would mark him as Filipino. Significantly, Joseph shares, “This is what I never really got ‘cause I was like, Asian too. [My friends] were really racist. It’s almost like they didn’t include me [as Asian] ‘cause they didn’t think I was a part of that.” Although Joseph recognizes that he can pass as white, he still knows himself as ‘Asian. In the presence of friends whom he acknowledges as openly racist, he is never subject to threats of racism himself. This makes Joseph acutely aware of how others have chosen to perceive him and the ways in which the ‘desire to pass offers itself as a temporary solution to racism and rejection’ (Bucholtz 1995, 358). His inclusion in primarily white social networks grants him the ability not only to move in and through particular spaces of privilege but also to participate in racist acts based on an assumed membership. This is made all the more clear when Joseph shares the following story: “I went to the convenience store and I was behind this white guy. And there was this Chinese guy taking really long. I guess he [the white guy] didn’t know I was [not] white. And he’s like, “C’mere, hurry up, ping pong.” But he looked at me like I was a white guy.’

Here, in the space of a Mississauga convenience store, Joseph is invited to participate in a racist act through a look. Significantly, Joseph does not respond to the invitation. It is this look that denotes a (mis)recognition of Joseph’s racial and ethnic identity. Joseph goes on to say, ‘I just always get the feeling that – not that they think that I’m white – but so much more familiar, really, just normal. It makes my life easier’ (emphasis added). The desire to have an easier life, to be more familiar and normal rather than unfamiliar and abnormal, shores up a ‘fantasy of wholeness’ which his strategic performance renders possible (Mercer 1999, 201). Joseph’s ability to perform whiteness and perform it well at specific moments, then, enables him to freely move through privileged spaces and take up space as a presumably white body without the imminent danger or threat of being subject to racism and rejection. So long as Joseph denies any intelligible trace of an essential “Filipino-ness,” he can live a life that, for him, maintains some semblance of normalcy; but this begs the question – what is ‘normal’? At the same time that whiteness is reinforced as normative and superior, it can also be disrupted, as denoted by Joseph’s decision not to respond to the look. As Puwar points out, the white mask on non-white skins (whether perceptible to the naked eye or not) must be understood as being ‘acquired slowly through time by moving through white “civilizing” spaces (educational, neighbourhoods, friends, and institutional positions)’ (2004, 114).

Conclusion

What does it mean to expose the ways in which intraracial colourism is expressed spatially by Filipina/o youth in the GTA? What does it mean to focus specifically on such stark oppositions as west side versus east side; middle class versus working class; light-skinned versus dark-skinned? I chose to draw on these more extreme, and understandably problematic, dualities in order to draw out the class and colour tensions within and among Filipina/o communities, in order to expose the prejudices that are not spoken of yet which are spatially articulated in confrontations, in unspoken gestures, in the physical and psychological distancing from those Filipina/os considered too dark, too dirty, too inferior, or too unworthy to associate with. Placing the different focus group discussions in conversation with each other demonstrated how spaces can be unstable and negotiated, taken over and taken up for different purposes, even as the participants themselves may have perceived and imagined these spaces in particular,
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