

**Bridges are Made with Many Footsteps:
Re-imagining Filipino Identity as Resistance to a Militarized Present**

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Abstract

How can cross-cultural alliance work think through the issues of militarization during this time of U.S. War on Terror? From the perspective of a Filipina born in a U.S. occupied Hawaii, I seek to think this question from a diasporic perspective situated in demilitarization movements, dominant and local cultures, and histories critical to nationalisms that link the Philippines, Hawaii, and the U.S. My research engages the text of Henry Giroux called Against the New Authoritarianism, and Neville Hoad's African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality and Globalization to understand connections between fragments of militarization in Okinawa, Philippines and Maui. I also engage Taiakake Alfred's notion of deconstructing *sovereignty*, Iris Marion Young's *decentered diverse democratic federalism*, and Edward Said's notion of *cosmopolitan* to rethink nationalist Philippine histories and imagine a Filipino diasporic identity that inspires cross-cultural and cross-issue alliances as resistance in the present.

The War on Terror and Questions of alliance

The current war on terror connects countries in the Asia-Pacific, U.S. and Caribbean as strategic points for U.S. Military surveillance and repression of “terrorist” locations (IWNAM Meeting, September 10-15, 2007; Consultation paper, 2006). How do movements within these countries resist the violences that emerge from military installations and the continuation of colonial histories that place them as hosts to U.S. military strategic planning? Reflecting on who I am, as a Filipina born in Hawaii, and having met women activists from Philippine, Hawaiian and San Francisco movements, I have witnessed how movements within these countries face different issues, although they are all struggling against the structural issues of colonization and militarization. As the U.S. Military shuffles funding and soldiers from one nation to another, movements brace themselves at the effects of the military and their consequences it has on local communities (Consultation Paper, 2006; 10). How can these alliances sustain themselves as the U.S. Military acts as without borders? How can strategies of local resistance also be in solidarity with other places that are tied to them through histories and contemporaries of U.S. imperialism?

Military Industrial Complex in the Asia-Pacific

Since 1989, throughout the Asia Pacific, U.S., and Caribbean, alliances have been forged among women activists working around issues of military bases (Women for Genuine Security, 1/5/2007). My relationships to these women began in November 2004 when I went to the East-Asia-U.S.-Puerto Rico International Network Against Militarism meeting in the Philippines as a Hawaii delegate in alliance with DMZ-Hawaii. There, I learned about women from South Korea, Japan, Okinawa, Philippines, Hawaii, U.S. and Puerto Rico building a network of alliances regarding issues of militarization in their communities. In September 2007, the Women for Genuine Security, the U.S. ally of the network now named the International Women's Network Against Militarism, organized another meeting in San Francisco. Through these alliances, complicated issues that challenge nation state boundaries have emerged. An example is the migration of Filipina women to work in bases in other countries. Another is recruitment of soldiers in the U.S. who participate in the violences against local people in countries hosting U.S. bases. To

elaborate on these issues, I will tell the stories of Cherrie-Ann Guzman Coleman and the everyday militarization in Hawaii, juxtaposed with the writings of Henry Giroux and Neville Hoad, to elaborate on the transnational issues that military-corporate hegemony poses, and the possibilities of post modern thinking to imagine new languages of resistance.

The story of Cherrie-Ann Guzman Coleman exemplifies racism and sexism¹, two of various issues against local people in nations that are hosts to U.S. military structures² in the Asia Pacific. According to a fact sheet created by Kanlungan Center Foundation (2007), Cherrie-Ann was an Overseas Performing Artist that migrated from the Philippines to work in Okinawa's military bases. 75% of Japan's military facilities are located in Okinawa (Women for Genuine Security, 12/24/07). Cherrie-Ann met and married Sgt. Glenn Edward Coleman. According to the death certificate issued by Capt. James Caruso, the Regional Armed Forces Medical Examiner, Cherrie died on Oct. 4 due to unstated causes, which were supposed to have been investigated by an autopsy. When Myra Vergara, Cherrie's mother, was notified of her death, she requested that Cherrie's friends and partner send her body back to the Philippines, without being cremated. Myra was notified by Cherrie-Ann's friends that her daughter frequently got into arguments with her husband Glenn because of his jealousy. Often, the friends saw bruises on Cherrie-Ann's body when she went to their house after arguments with him. Consequently, Myra was able to get her daughter's body back intact and saw the bruises and scratches on her remains. However, Myra was not able to get an autopsy because the Philippine National Bureau of Investigation required a court order. Myra's reason for the court order was seen as an "opinion." Cherrie-Ann's body was buried without ever really know the real cause of death. An appeal is being made with the Commission of Human Rights in order to investigate the request.

1 Issues of racism and sexism are not limited to Asia Pacific, as they also exist in militarized countries in the U.S., Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Middle East due to various historical, cultural, economic, political, social forces in relation to histories of militarization and imperialism.

2 Giroux speaks of the military-corporate -industrial-academic complex that operates in multiple institutions and nations to maintain the militarization of every day lives (Giroux, 2005; 65). Therefore structures are military facilities that force or engineer public complacency to industrial and corporate institutions, which profit off resource exploitation. Academic institutions provide the research to facilitate and make effective this system (Giroux, 2005).

This issue touches upon the Japanese Self-Defense Forces, which is a bilateral military agreement that allows the re-militarization of Japan (Consultation Paper, 2006, 8). This agreement is in violation to the 1946 Japanese Constitution Article 9, where Japan was not supposed to have a military after their defeat in World War II. However, the Japanese ruling elite³ is now campaigning to revise this part of the constitution in order to remilitarize the country according to the “U.S. Global Posture Review.” This posture review seeks to have three groups of military structures in the Asia Pacific: bases with permanent facilities, bases with temporary facilities, and use of client military structures to pursue U.S. objectives in the region” (Consultation Paper, 2006; 8-9). This strategy explains why there are differing and shifting relations between military facilities and various host countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Host nations are being used on an as-needed basis in order to serve U.S. military interests. The existence of military facilities becomes an economic opportunity for more underdeveloped nations like the Philippines to send their citizens to work⁴. However, violent acts by American soldiers, stemming from racism and sexism, are not reprimanded. Victims and families of victims who live in the host country of military bases are not given timely justice. What are the connections between histories of colonization, nation-states, and contemporaries of violence that receive no justice?

This brings me to ask about militarization of everyday life in Hawaii, where I am from, in order to understand when complacency to enact racist and sexist behavior on an

3 According to the Resistance Against Military Expansion discussion during the IWNAM meeting, an Okinawan activist said that there are divisions in political ideologies between Okinawan mayor and the Japanese government (IWNAM meeting, 9/13/2007). The Okinawan mayor's legislation, critical to the increasing militarization of their island, was overridden by the Japanese national government because of the need of the military to provide “national security.” The Okinawan activist said that one of their tactics is to redefine what “national security” means, and to prove how the present idea, which circulates within the national government, is actually damaging local ecologies, health and welfare of the local peoples (IWNAM meeting, 9/13/2007).

4 During my trip to Olongapo, Philippines, in 2004, I learned that a large part of the population serviced the Subic Naval Base, the neighboring town, prior to its closure in 1992. I met the organization BUKLOD, which is a Filipino woman's organization that seeks to advocate and provide services for the survivors of the prostitution industry. Now, Subic has turned into a tourist location, and the prostitution industry is still in service with the labor of people from Olongapo as well as different parts of the Philippines (East-Asia-US-Puerto Rico Meeting, November 2004). This is an example of how military structures are framed to bring prosperity to underdeveloped nations, but it is an economic dependency that has social costs rooted in racism and sexism.

“other” begins. In a speech made by Ikaika Hussey during the NO BASES: International Conference, he states that among the environmental, social effects of indigenous peoples, there is the “ongoing military recruitment of indigenous youth to fight [in wars], not dissimilar to the poverty draft in the United States” (Hussey, 2007). During my stay on Maui for the holidays, I have been witnessing the increased militarization of the island through the benign portrayal of the Superferry in the dominant media and the military aspirations of my cousin. The Superferry is promoted as an alternative inter-island transportation vehicle that the public can use to visit other islands with their cars (Hawaii Superferry, 2008). However, there are issues of militarization that underlie this new service. John F. Lehman, former Secretary of the Navy of Ronald Reagan, has invested \$80 million into the ferry (Business wire, 2005). In addition, the ferry's design is the same as WestPac Express model that transports Japanese military artillery to Okinawa (Hawaii Superferry Environmental and Social Impacts, 2008). Demilitarization movements link the Superferry to transporting the Stryker Brigade, state of the art tanks that specializes in urban warfare, from Oahu to the Big Island, where they can do training (Consultation Paper, 2006; 75, DMZ-Hawaii, 2007).

Legal actions and non-violent protests staged by local community activists led to a Maui court ruling, Chapter 343, which said that the Superferry project could not continue without an Environmental Impact Statement (Wilson, 2007). However, Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle overrode the EIS ruling, signing Act. 2 and its 42 conditions, which said the Superferry's operation is allowed to resume as the environmental review is in process (Wilson, 2007, Babson, 2007, Hawaii Superferry Environmental and Social Impacts, 2008). According to Wilson's newspaper report of the case, local activist attorney Hall attempted to discredit Act. 2 stating that it was violating Hawaii's law that sought to protect the unique and fragile environment of Hawaii. However, this argument was stricken by the Maui judge stating that Governor Lingle legislation was legitimate because she was still abiding by the legal system (Wilson, 2007). Lingle's ability to strike outer-island rulings and resume the Superferry operations reveals the state's facilitation of Hawaii's militarization. The Hawaii State government plays a strategic role in the surveillance of the Asia-Pacific and deployment of equipment and troops to other

training and combat zones, in the name of U.S. discourse of national security.

Production of Militarized Americans

According to Giroux's Against the New Authoritarianism, militarization is the "related instances of the centrality of the military in American society, the militarization of US culture, and the increased propensity to suppress dissent" (2005, 62). In his quote of Catherine Lutz, "Militarization is simultaneously a discursive process, involving a shift in general societal beliefs and values in ways necessary to legitimate the use of force..." (Giroux, 2005; 63). Giroux talks about how there is an attack on education being waged by right-wing, Christian lobbyists. They are passing legislation to restrict leftist academics from teaching and to diminish "postcolonial, Middle Eastern Studies, critical pedagogy, and any field 'which generates critical inquiry and thought often in opposition with the aims of the U.S. State and the Bush regime' in the U.S. Academy" (2005; 9). Youth of color are being targeted in schools by military recruiters. In the trailer, "The Short Life of Jose Guitierrez," an immigrant joined the U.S. Marines in order to become a U.S. Citizen. However, when he went to Iraq, he was accidentally shot by a fellow U.S. Soldier, causing his early death (Specogna, 2007). The standardization through No Child Left Behind Act increasingly makes it difficult for teachers to make education meaningful for student's to connect their personal experience to larger issues (Giroux, 2005; 68, Choiceshawaii, 12/24/07 and B.A.Y. Peace, 12/22/07). The militarization of schools affects youth by producing them to have mindsets that sees the military as a way up and out of their present statuses, but at the same time, there needs to be a psychology and culture that propagates a willingness to kill or be killed.

My cousin, who is a high school youth, living on Maui, has provided insight on the subjective effects of militarization. In our conversation, he alluded to the presence of military recruiters and ideals of patriotism circulating in schools and dominant media. He said that he would rather go the military to be a pilot because it would be cheaper than going to college. He said that he is not afraid of war because he would be serving his country and he has faith in God. The words of my cousin are not uncommon among youth in Hawaii where the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act requires schools receiving federal funding to provide military recruiters students' names, phone numbers, and

addresses upon request; where military recruiters actively engage students on campus often disrupting class time; and where JROTC programs provides a sense of discipline and achievement for students (Wager, 2007). According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Hawaii has the largest percentage of its population enlisted in the military among the states (Wager, 2007).

A Critique of Filipino Identity in a Militarized Hawaii

Within Ikaika Hussey's speech called "Indigeneity and Militarism: Aloha Aina Contra Empire," (2007) he says "As an indigenous person of Hawaii, I can really only speak for myself and my immediate ancestors..." Being that my cousin and I are among the Filipino community in Hawaii, it becomes problematic to claim ourselves as indigenous to Hawaii as our ancestry comes from Filipino immigrants, who in varying ways, have assimilated into the American system that disenfranchised the Native Hawaiian peoples (Trask, 2002; 36). To call ourselves "Hawaiian" erases our histories as Filipinos that were shaped by Spanish, Japanese and American occupation in the Philippines who imposed colonial systems of government, irresponsible development, and the consequential migration of Filipinos out of their own country and into another's (Guerrero, 2005). Although Filipinos in Hawaii can trace a common history of struggle with the Native Hawaiians, there must be a differentiation of ourselves in order to determine the issues of internalized oppression, such as racism, classism, sexism, homophobia and nationalism that still lives within our communities (San Juan, 1991; 217, 226, Trask 2002, 21-24).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Hawaii's demographic population was measured as follows: Whites 24.3%, Black or African American 1.8%, American Indian and Alaska Native 0.3%, Asians 41.6 %, Latinos 7.2%, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders 9.4%. Disaggregating the Asian population, Asian Indians 0.1%, Chinese 4.7%, Filipinos 14.1%, Japanese 16.7%, Korean 1.9%, Vietnamese 0.6% and Other Asians 3.5 %. Given these facts, Hawaii's population are predominantly from countries in Asia and Southeast Asia, and other locations outside of Hawaii, producing a dominance of outsiders in the islands. In the question of Hawaiian indigeneity and demilitarization, there is the question of how these people of non-Hawaiian descent can

participate and feel a sense of responsibility in the struggle for demilitarization and self-determination?

From my perspective as a Filipina who was born and raised in an American occupied Hawaii, I construct an imagination where displaced identities, such as the majority that live in Hawaii, can find a place in alliance with Hawaiian movement of demilitarization and self-determination. I propose a rethinking of dominant, nationalist histories in order to give space for diasporic Filipino youth to construct their own identities, rooted in their family histories, self-knowledge and local contexts (Gigi Miranda, 12/31/2007, Pandey, 2001). I am not attempting to describe what a Filipino diasporic identity is. Rather, I am naming my identity as that in order to articulate how a complexified identity, unfixed to a specific nation or cause, can be a tool in cross-cultural and cross-issue alliances, such as within the movements against the increasing militarization of the Asia-Pacific region in this time of U.S. “war on terror.” How can new languages of resistance emerge from youth in the America who no longer find themselves aligned with identity based movements and single-issue campaigns (OVM Collective Meeting, 12/16/2007)?

In African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality and Globalization, Neville Hoad writes about homosexuality complicating nationalist imaginaries as it provides an intellectual resource to challenge a fixity of identity or sovereignty (2007; xv, xvi, xxiv). He proposes a “multiple scale of analysis” in order to see how issues like AIDS and HIV are symptoms of varied levels of structural issues tied to “history, geopolitics, global, financial, government policies, local institutions and cultural politics” (Hoad, 2007; xxxviii). He sees multiple campaigns as multiple symbolic orders that interpret and translate structural issues in varying ways. Rather than thinking there is one solution to an issue like AIDS and HIV, there can be a coordination of various projects: short term initiatives like drug research for HIV, medium term initiatives like community led peer education and local partnerships, and longer term initiatives like macro social policies and interventions toward empowerment of women and poverty (Hoad, 2007; xxv). In the context of the increased militarization in the Asia Pacific, there too are multiple effects that many demilitarization movements are focusing on, such as base

expansion/construction, bilateral military agreements, military exercises, violence against women, indigenous cultural survival and environmental protection (NO BASES, 2007). Rather than capitulating to the nationalistic tendency of unifying by consolidating people's energy under one campaign, how can the work of these various movements continue to practice their self-determination of defining the issues they face locally, connecting their work as building a complex analysis of a far reaching issue like militarization (Consultation Paper, 2006; 12-17)? To focus my question, how can the Filipino diaspora in Hawaii be involved in this discussion?

The Conundrum of Identity-Based Pride

Growing up in Hawaii, there was a lot of shame identifying as Filipino. Elementary and high school curriculum did not talk much about the reasons why Filipinos were in Hawaii. The erasure of differing histories of Hawaii's population facilitated my appropriation of a commodified native identity, linked to tourism, in order to have a sense of belonging to the host culture's identity. However, the education and internalized oppression of the dominant Filipino community of not⁵ circulating Philippines' history of U.S. occupation served the military presence in Hawaii because it did not foster the proliferation of an imagination of non-Hawaiian peoples to build alliances with Hawaiian issues⁶. Rather, the local Filipino culture's appropriation of a

5 Reflecting on my parent's lives, who were both part of the 1970s immigration out of the Philippines, known as the "brain drain" (Allen, 1977; 198), they did not talk critically about U.S. because they aspired to come to America in order to have a better life. During this time, the Marcos regime was in power, passing policies that favored corporate exploitation of land and people (Guerrero, 2005; 54, Rosca, 2004; 24), and maintained a society of social unrest that my parents sought to escape. Living in Hawaii, where one could rise up the social ladder, was seen as resistance against the poverty that they grew up in and faced living in the Philippines. However, this resistance was limited in the sense that that act was about saving one's self and one's family, and leaving behind and erasing the memory of the structural problems of a nation. I do not blame the Filipino community for not circulating a critical history of America's occupation in the Philippines loud enough, but would like to point to our silence that does circulate and ask why we still do it even though a new war is targeting our children to be soldiers?

6 According to Dean Saranillio's paper "Colonial Amnesia: Rethinking Filipino 'American' Settler Empowerment in the U.S. Colony of Hawai'i," there was a Filipino writer who wrote in a local paper circulating during the plantation era, that linked Philippine's occupation with Hawaii's occupation (2006). This revealed how there were Filipinos who were actively trying to build alliances with different communities, which did manifest in the first Japanese and Filipino led plantation strikes in Hawaii. This challenged the plantation owner's tactic of racial divide and rule. However, as these strikes did provide for concessions to improve worker conditions, and unions were created, the labor unions became dependent on Hawaii's big business for funding. The cooptation of big industry with

commodified native identity, was in alliance with Hawaii as “paradise,” legitimizing passivity to social issues linked to histories of colonization, occupation, and their residues in every day violence normalized in family, school, and dominant local culture⁷. It also legitimizes the increasing militarization of Hawaii's society by agreeing that the role of upwardly mobilized non-white Americans is to go to war in support of maintaining the democratic, capitalistic paradise in which they have been so blessed to live in (personal communication, 12/21/07; Trask, 2002; 21-23).

There are various ways in which this justification of capitalism can be explained. The desire for money and working hard is a reproduction of plantation mentality where resistance was based on gaining wages from labor to go back to the country of origin, send money back home, or get rich and no longer be economically subservient to plantation owners and big businesses. But from my observation of family, friends and the community on Maui, resistance is privatized by putting faith in God, continuing work, and self-medication through sex, substance abuse, dominant media consumption and consumerism. The complacency to the capitalist state is reproduced as people's agency is limited from knowing how they participate in the operation of a corporate economy. This corporate economy requires wars abroad and goods production via cheap labor, which is agentized by their labor in a tourist, retail, service-oriented economy⁸.

unions led to Asian dominance within the Hawaiian multicultural government that maintained America assimilationist values that saw capitalism as the system to aspire to, despite its social effects it had on those who had a more difficult time acculturating because they lived according to different cultural values, such as Native Hawaiians and recent immigrants from non-western countries (Gray, 1978, Trask, 2002, Batin and Cachola, 2007).

⁷ In Sia Fiegel's book *They Who Do Not Grieve*, she touches upon the various effects of colonization and militarization within Samoan society that is embedded within relationships and relations of power with different identities among Samoan people. Histories of missionization, which played a role in Samoa's colonization, produced a policing of women's sexuality among women that placed them in impossible roles of not being able to speak about sexual violence because the trope of women as seductresses, would cause them to be blamed if sexual violence was imposed on them. This policing did not question the man who did the act in the first place (Fiegel, 1999). Fiegel's work illuminates the complexity of complacency and silence: the struggle to speak about policing of sexuality among Samoan women attracted violent suppression by family. But also, it was an act of resistance to speak out against gendered colonial systems within island society.

⁸ I qualify this in my experience with friends who still live on Maui and Oahu. Many of them work in malls or service that is related to the tourism industry. Popular past times of teens and young adults is partying and going to the clubs where possibilities of sex, drugs and alcohol can occur as a way to medicate the daily violence of tourist-economic-militarized societies have on their psyches.

People are doing work for alternative economies in Hawaii, such as producing “slow foods” produced by the organic means of composting and manure mixes, rather than genetic and chemical food commodification (Enocencio⁹, 2007). He recalls that there are activities of barefoot haoles practicing perma-culture, and Filipino and Japanese from Plantation camps cultivating homegrown ethnic fruits and vegetables. However, during the Food Summit Conference at the Sheraton Keauhou Bay Resort and Spa, Enocencio wondered why “there were not many farmers of color voicing those same concerns,” such as “issues of “preservation of culturally significant lands, important agricultural lands, food sovereignty and environmental concerns...” (Enocencio, 2007)? He says that “we, the Haole, the Hawaiian, the Filipino, Korean, Japanese, the Portuguese and others need to sit knee-to-knee at the kitchen table...If we are to survive in these islands, we somehow need to get along.” (Enocencio, 2007; 6). Although Enocencio's questions for alliance is asked in the context of a hotel sponsored meeting that may not be accessible for farmers of color, his commentary does point to the issues of alliance that still needs to be addressed to begin ethical discussions on food sovereignty and alternative local economies.

Indigenous & Postcolonial Philosophies as a Method for Imagining Critical Diaspora History

In “Sovereignty,” Taiaiake Alfred writes about how indigenous communities have used Eurocentric ideas of sovereignty—the normalization of the state as dominant within power relations—in order to organize their liberation projects (Alfred, 2002; 464-465). Although indigenous nations have gained significant legal and political gains through “domestic dependent nation” status, the continued assertion of sovereign power obstructed indigenous leaders to protect the integrity of their nations (Alfred, 2002; 465). Alfred calls for the continued deconstruction of the state as indigenous communities are

9 It is important to note that this article was found in the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) free local newspaper “Ka Wai Ola: The Living Water of OHA.” OHA is critiqued among many Native Hawaiian activists who finds the agency intent is to assimilate Native Hawaiians further into state dependency, rather than genuine self-determination for Hawaiian peoples (Trask, 1999; 38, personal communication, 1/2/2008). The presence of OHA and alignment of some Hawaiians to OHA's policies, such as the Akaka Bill, also reveals how there are differing visions and issues within the Native Hawaiian community.

within it, in order to continue asserting indigenous meanings of sovereignty rooted in “autonomy of individual conscience, non-coercive forms of authority, and deep respect and interconnection between human beings and other elements of creation” (Alfred, 470). Iris Marion-Young, in “Hybrid Democracy: Iroquois Federalism and the Postcolonial Project” writes about a *decentered diverse democratic federalism* to challenge the notion of a sovereign self, and draws upon certain feminist and postcolonial writers in substituting a “relational self that recognizes the constitution of selves by interaction with others and their interdependencies” (2000; 253). Hoad notes Said's notion of *cosmopolitan* where the “repeated loss of identity by hanging on to the originary break in identity produces a self/other relation that is not antagonistic in reaction, but indebted to an “other” in more proximate and intimate ways” (Hoad, 2007; xxiv). Upon reading the ideas of Alfred, Young and Hoad’s interpretation of Said, their ideas propose methods of critical self-reflexivity in relation to the state and the self socialized by the state. These activities inform the articulation of an ethical diasporic identity in service to transnational social movement building. The practice of resistance returns back to facing how issues regarding relations to difference, such as racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, continue to exist within national governments because people are socialized to agentize and believe in upholding these dynamics (Said, 1978, Contours of Violence Lecture, 10/18/2007). By rethinking dominant, nationalist histories, perhaps different imaginations of the self and other be recognized in order to practice living in diverse communities that are not about assimilating or annihilating difference (Marion-Young, 2000; 239-241).

Rethinking Filipino Nationalist Histories

In looking at the nationalist liberation projects of the Philippines during the early 1900s, leaders such as Jose Rizal and Andres Bonifacio looked to the French revolution, imagining that liberty, brotherhood, and equality would be the foundation for the new Philippine government. However, this imagination was limited because it upheld a male-centered Eurocentric epistemology that defined who deserved liberty and equality. If we take a look at Foucault's genealogical study of mental institutions in post-revolution France, we see that individuals like Pinel and Tuke, in alliance with aristocrats who

became the new ruling class, had the power to define identities within mental institutions, which governed the lives of people (Foucault, 2006; 464-494). Within this microcosm of society, we can see how the post-revolution France still maintained the practice of “othering” agentized within the imagination of institutional administrators, who, due to their social positions, wanted to affirm societal power dynamics that was aligned with prioritizing economic industrialization toward state power. This, in turn, would maintain their class standing. An “other” had to be named in order to confine and make productive those who did not conform to the state's order. The notions of liberty, fraternity, and equality that were seen as universal rights were in fact defined by an exclusive few.

This exclusiveness was also practiced by Philippine ilustrados, who shaped the imagination of what would become the new Philippine republic. The ilustrados, or the enlightened, were Filipino men from elite families, who studied abroad in Europe and came back as subversive forces during the waning of Spanish colonial rule in the Philippines. Jose Rizal was among the ilustrados creating the La Liga Filipina, which advocated for a national Philippine community to be represented in the Spanish Parliament, but without clearly stating the need for armed struggle to separate from Spain (Guerrero, 2005; 14). After Rizal was assassinated, Andres Bonifacio, who advocated for the peasants, created the Kataastaasang Kagalang-galang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan (also know as the Katipunan for short), a secret society that called for complete revolution from Spain through armed struggle (Guerrero, 2005; 15). The residues of one single national community maintained as Bonifacio was killed by Emilio Aguinaldo, revealing how revolutionary leaders fought amongst each other to become the leader for the emerging, Philippine nation (Guerrero, 2005; 15). In these histories, which even circulate among activist communities in the present, there were no stories of collaboration among these revolutionary leaders as the imagination of a new Philippine nation adhered to singular frameworks: there could be only one leader to be remembered, and one government to represent the whole Philippines¹⁰.

10 It is also important to note that pre-colonial Philippines was composed of diverse cultures and communities that organically evolved according to unique ecologies and cultural exchanges throughout and beyond the 7,000 plus islands (Guerrero, 2005; 3, Barangay Dance Company, 2007). Therefore, the Philippine revolution's implementation of a singular national identity and centralized government

American colonial forces were watching and ready to intervene in the Philippine liberation project. Prior to Bonifacio's assassination, Aguinaldo was actually having relationships to the U.S. forces who promised to help the Filipinos fight off the Spanish (Guerrero, 2005; 15). But in the end, of the Spanish-American War, the U.S. did not deliver the promise to Aguinaldo, but substituted themselves as the new colonizers over the Filipinos, leading to the Filipino-American War. This history reveals how the fathers of Filipino nationalism, Rizal, Bonifacio and Aguinaldo looked up to European thought to define their own imaginations. But in the end, the U.S. used this to their advantage and maintained their racism against the Filipinos. By manipulating the propagation of internalized Eurocentric cultural supremacy embedded within the Filipino psyche since Spanish religious and imperialist colonization, they adjusted colonial government systems toward neo-colonial, commercial systems¹¹ (Poffenberg, 1993). The Philippines continued to be exploited by government officials and administrators who acted as puppets to American forces through enacting Anglo-American bureaucratic governing methods, western cultural aspirations, and institutional telos catering to military-corporate interests¹² (De Castro, 2003, Guerrero, 2005).

Deconstructing the Historical Self

Living in diaspora, nationalist histories have been largely accessible through educational institutions to inform a sense of identity for Filipino-American youth. Yet,

maintained the colonial practice of keeping diverse forms of government, based on local people's traditions and relationships to the land, from self-determining themselves.

11 This can be further exemplified in Ferdinand Marcos's development imagination regarding Mindanao. The Marcos regime's Special Zone of Peace and Development and Southern Philippine Council for Peace and Development would produce the laws for the Autonomous Republic of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). However, various Moro and Lumad peoples, tribal groups of Islamic and indigenous cultural practices, were not involved in the planning of these plans. In the Mindanao Crisis, Estaban elaborates how the Christian dominant Philippine National Republic continues to define the development and resource distribution of ARMM, without considering the self-determination and ethical resource access that provides for the well being and needs of the Moro and Lumad peoples (2004; 197-211).

12 An example of this is how the U.S. closed the bases of Clark and Subic intentionally, not entirely due to the anti-American discontent of mass movements and their support in the Philippine Congress. They were closed as response to the wane of the Soviet Union and it was no longer urgent for big bases to be maintained in the region (De Castro, 2003; 971-973). In 1998, the Visiting Forces Agreement exemplified how the U.S. never completely was ousted from the Philippines. The new agreement opened ports to the U.S. navy and soldiers who were able to roam the whole country, no longer confined to the perimeters of bases that existed in the past (De Castro, 2003, 979, babae, 2007).

these histories are limited as they glorify the patriarchal, nation-building project and does not critique the continuation of racism and sexism that propelled these projects forward. According to James P. Allen, he writes that Filipino “immigrants have created not just one but a set of ethnic subsocieties. These subsocieties form a fluid rather than rigid structure, but some do have distinguishing local characteristics”(1977, 208). He marks the differences of region of origin, class, education, labor practice and political perspectives as producing a complex social structure and spatial pattern that challenge a simple definition of Filipinos in America (Allen, 1977; 208). Even within the Filipino-American community there are differences that shape our understanding of ourselves. Rather than looking to dominant national histories to affirm our identities, how can we engage our creative imaginations informed by our memories, local and self-knowledge to produce counter-histories that challenge the construction homogenous identities (Das, 2000; 5, 7, 13, Pandey, 2001)? Rather than differences as obstacles to unity, how can differences be invitations to build alliances with others through analyzing the discourse of social, political, economic and ecological issues in our communities? How are these issues framed to obstruct alliances by diminishing local knowledge and histories about how our lives have been shaped and depend on multiple cultures in order to exist in the present? How do policies based on identitarian and race based quantifications produce unethical policies that distribute resources based on colonial categorizations of society that seek to keep people divided and ruled?

To think the complexity of today's issues requires an imagination that is willing to think it. Engagement of identity politics of diasporic youth whose ancestries can be tied to multiple histories of militarization and displacement, allows for a self-reflection to understand how one's production from specific cultures and histories is important to know and study in order to have a stake in thinking and responding ethically to the complex, interconnected conditions of one's location in the world. Rather than assimilating or annihilating these varying, problematic and contesting histories, they can be seen as an epistemological practice of living a complex identity and thinking process that sees the value in alliance building across differences, be it racially, culturally, and

ideologically¹³. Instead of waiting for one truth to organize activity, the individual can recognize the value of each person's unique and specific contribution, participating in action that depends on the presence and coordination of diverse activities toward addressing a community's needs and purposes.

Conclusion

Given these visions, the histories that circulate play a role in the imagination of resistance among youth in Hawaii. In Pandey's attempt to write a different history, he asks, "How can the moment of struggle go back into history¹⁴?" (2001; 4). I have been impacted by his concern, compelling me ask questions about which histories are made known within movements concerning militarization in the Asia-Pacific. There has been a formidable amount of research being done by scholar-activists in the Asia-Pacific regarding the economic, social, health, cultural, gendered, and ecological effects of militarization. Within reports, the activist discourse has been about monitoring the policies and tangible effects of the dominant, such as military structures, in order to inform the strategy of local movements (Consultation Paper, 2006). The purpose of this paper, linking every day stories of militarization and theorizing a type of diasporic identity in relation to a rethinking of a nationalist history, is an attempt to bring attention to dynamics within communities as a new site for resistance strategy through cross-cultural and cross-issue alliance-building. By facing the hope, tensions and complications as we tell our histories, they can in fact reveal what else needs to be learned in order to work together to (re)build ethical communities.

13 This is informed by Paul Rabinow's idea of overcoming resentment, which is to challenge the practice of what feminist philosophers call resentment, the fixing of subjectivity of identities. Overcoming resentment provides that agency to shift, and gives space to think alliances, exercise political imagination, and allow the affirmation of meaning in work that is already being done (Rabinow, 1996; 20).

14 In Pandey's telling of the effects of India's partition on various communities, he writes that national memory locks with historical memory to produce memory-history, that writes about a struggle that excludes the complexities of force, uncertainty, domination, disdain, loss and confusion (2001; 4). As India and Pakistan were partitioned, the co-existence that lived among Hindus, Sikhs and Muslim were forgotten and transformed into identitarian violence. The boundary that defined Muslims needed to move into Pakistan, and India was to be Hindu dominated state, shaped the people's imagination about each other, producing them to agentize the violence required for India and Pakistan to be separated nations (Pandey, 2001; 41).

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