The *Manang* Generation: The Radical Origins of the Peminist Pinays of the Central Coast

By

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Abstract

The history of Filipina immigrants and Filipina American women prior to World War II has received less attention compared to their male counterparts, the *Manong* Generation. The gender imbalance of Filipinas to Filipinos in America (1: 20) during the early twentieth century makes it difficult, but not impossible, to locate Filipina American history in the archives. Primary sources like Filipino American and local Euro-American newspapers from the Depression Era such as *The Philippines Mail* and the *San Luis Obispo Tribune* describe Filipinas who lived and worked in rural farm towns like Salinas and Santa Maria as largely supportive maternal figures dedicated to their community's social prosperity. Because of their status as a minority within a minority, and their absence in the archives, my research seeks to 1) uncover narratives of Filipina Americans that have not yet been adequately highlighted in the scholarship, and 2) delve deeper into the agency of pioneer immigrant Filipinas on California's Central Coast during the first half of the twentieth century.

Utilizing the western education offered to them both in the Philippines and abroad while traversing America's empire as colonial subjects and *pensionados* (students under American jurisdiction), Filipinas of the Progressive Era formulated their own modern woman, the "New Filipina" and produced literature and labor that reflected a transpacific p/feminism; one that advocated for community survival as part of the larger movement for independence. Filipina p/feminist politicking would influence and affect the ways that the next generation of Filipina immigrants (1920s-1930s) in California practiced community organizing in their ethnic hubs which would later become known as Little Manilas. My paper describes how Filipinas navigated around patriarchal barriers found in both their Filipino immigrant communities and the surrounding segregated white American landscape in order to secure the survival of their

families and cultural heritage. Such methods of community organizing and labor that immigrant Filipinas relied on, I argue, are a continuation of the Filipina politicking of the New Filipina who emerged out of a Transpacific and Transnational Progressive Era.

To do this research, I use a woman of color, transnational, p/feminist critique to create a history of the Filipina pioneer generation (the *Manang* Generation). My methods are interdisciplinary in practice and draw from Critical Filipinx Studies, the historical method, Critical Asian American Studies, and most importantly, the p/feminist method of Filipina/o/x talk story known as *kwentuhans* to speak with surviving Fil-Am community members whose families were part of the *Manang*/*Manong* Generation. Together these methods will enable my intervention into traditional labor, Asian American, and transnational women's histories, and also contribute new insights into contemporary work in those fields.

Acknowledgements

I would not have been able to finish this dissertation without the labor, love, sacrifices, and blessings of our community elders. From my Grandmother Clara who raised me with different dialects, fried rice, and fish stews; to my parents who labored in the hospitals of San Francisco and Daly City to put food on the table to nourish my spirit as I pursued the impossible; to my Auntie Gloria who saw my literary worth and gave me jazz, hardbound books, and my fashion sensibilities; and the smiling and headstrong *Lolas, Lolos, Manongs*, *Manangs*, Aunties, and Uncles who shared with me their stories of survival, resistance, and love of community as Fil-Ams in California; this dissertation is for all of you who helped me grow and become the *pinay* scholar I always wanted, but never imagined, I could be.

To list all of the Fil-Am and Asian American families who so generously shared with me their memories of war, labor camps, internment, the Farm Labor Movement, the draft, the Third World Liberation Front, immigration, settlement, being mixed-race, the fight for the I-Hotel, community and labor organizing, all of these memories through our talk stories have become my foundation of Asian American history. It was Grandma Lourdes Poblete, a *guerrillera* resistance fighter during World War II in the Philippines, who was the first to sit with me to storytell her life story of being a Filipina in America. Unknowingly she taught me the power of *kwentuhan* as a radical act of community solidarity. What I know about Fil-Am history, I did not learn from established scholars in the field or the archives alone. It was our elders who taught me this history, who so generously sang to me their truths and memories of what it meant to be Filipina/o/x in America.

When I started my research in preserving Fil-Am history, the older Fil-Am families invited me to their homes to speak with our elders. Over bowls of fresh rice and home cooked food, the Dawang family shared their stories of the *Manong* Generation, World War II, and what it was like growing up in Stockton and Sacramento. Thank you to Auntie Ena and her mother, Grandma Bienvenida, for letting a naive *pinay* scholar-in-training speak with you all to learn about your family stories. I will always remember Grandma Babes' pig's feet and fish dishes that she shared with me, even packing me some bowls for the ride home; those moments will always be one of my happiest *kwentuhan* memories.

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To our dear Grandma Sherry and Auntie Susan of Salinas who always had sliced fruit and *merienda* ready for me whenever I would visit, this dissertation is my ode to you. Before Grandma Sherry passed in 2021, she shared her war stories as a resistance fighter during World War II. To me, your tales of love and family spoke to your compassionate character and good heart. Her daughter, Auntie Susan would recount their memories of living in the labor camps

and would always update me about the 90+ year legacy of the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas. I always look forward to any of the FWC events that I can attend. Thank you, Auntie Susan, for always inviting me- your words and encouragement have always been a blessing.

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act of the hustle so that we can preserve our elders' stories for the next generation. Jen and Nani, we must have been real *ate's* in another lifetime. How else can it be that all we have for one another are honest conversations that speak to generosity, reciprocity, and community care? You two only have love for me, and I am so honored to know you both.

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Introduction

Carlos Bulosan's semi-autobiographical novel *America Is In the Heart* (1943) is the Asian American Studies cornerstone resource that expresses the lives and experiences of the pioneer Filipina/o/x generation that would be instrumental in the Farm Labor Movement of the 1960s-1970s. The young pinoys of Bulosan's novel would endearingly become known as the *Manong* Generation, who in their sixties and seventies, rallied and marched for equitable wages and safe working conditions as part of the United Farm Workers Union (UFW). But just as hypermasculine a narrative the history of the formation and success of the UFW is, so too does Bulosan's lived experience on the migrant labor route solely speak to *pinoy* life and culture. In his poems, short stories, and famous 1943 novel, Bulosan's mention of Filipinas in his travels in the United States are almost absent, except for one Filipina, the wife of a labor contractor in the San Fernando Valley, a college educated *pinay* who tells Bulosan how much his poems and his writing resonated with her as a Filipina in America. In this one and only instance of Bulosan's mentions of Filipinas in America, Bulosan describes the meeting as surreal yet hopeful in his pursuit of serious writing on behalf of the Filipinos who sought to unionize.[1] But just as quickly as she is brought up, the nameless *pinay* quickly fades into the distance, waving farewell to him as his bus drives away, similar to the only other Filipina mentioned in his novel; his mother who also stays in Bulosan's written memories also waving poignantly to her son when he leaves their town to sail for the United States, his last images of her as a frail sweet woman who loved her children dearly.

[1] Carlos Bulosan, *America Is In the Heart: A Personal History* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 2014), 271-273.

Many times throughout the novel there are women who help Carlos when he is down on his luck and at his lowest points, whether he is starving from lack of wages, after being beaten and chased by white vigilante justice squads, or tired with his life as a "Filipino in America."[2] It is as if the women he comes across are indeed angels. From Korean immigrant woman restaurant owners giving him plates of food in Pismo Beach, to white Thomasite teachers reading to him to help feed his literary mind, to the unfortunate mixed-race women who were forced to make a living through sex work and yet gave Carlos their wages so he could survive. All of these women share characteristics of his ideal woman—that being represented by his mother and sisters—who, to him, are indeed the *dalagang bukid* (humble countryside Filipina) who are naturally mothering and caring in their own ways.[3]

The gendered silence of his work is almost deafening, and has, in many ways, ensured that historical retellings portray the pioneer Filipina/o/x America generation as hypermasculine, mobile, and lacking in community.[4] The women Bulosan came across in America are portrayed through a limited cast of female characters typically described as either conniving or a sorry sort of lot. In Bulosan's journey through California's migrant labor seasons, he came across the camps and farms of rural towns along the Central Coast. Towns like Salinas, San Luis Obispo, and Pismo Beach for example were spaces that continue to have a much older but strong Filipina/o/x American presence with community organizations founded as early as the late 1920s. And, although the gender ratio was very skewed—in many cases 25 men to 1 Filipina in these rural coastal towns—the presence of *pinays* (Filipinas in America) as daughters, wives, or

[2] Carlos Bulosan, *America Is In the Heart: A Personal History* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 2014), 121.
[3] Carlos Bulosan, *America Is In the Heart: A Personal History* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 2014), 174, 271.
[4] Rudy P. Guevarra, Jr., *Becoming Mexipino: Multiethnic Identities and Communities in San Diego*, 99.

mothers was nonetheless visible in Fil-Am newspapers of the period that highlighted the social work contributions *pinays* made to their communities prior to World War II.

The Filipina that remains constantly on Bulosan's mind during his travels as a migrant farm laborer in the United States is his mother, who he remembers as a nurturing figure. Whenever he misses his homeland, his culture, Bulosan time and again is reminded of his mother's cultural influence, like when he sold food with her in the wet markets of the Pangasinan provinces and towns like Pozzorrobio. It is these memories of his mother, the *dalagang Filipina*, that set the stage of his novel.

Literature Review, Historiography

Many of the pioneer Filipino Americans described their pocket communities as male dominated. But could the migrant Filipino male community(ies) support themselves? Of course not, and my research has pointed to the impact of Filipina labor and women-led kinship networks in building the foundation that helped pioneer Fil-Am communities survive. Family formations formed the backbone of these pocket ethnic communities, making these cannery and rural towns a stable place for Filipino migrant laborers to keep coming back to, much like urban ethnic spaces like Chinatown in San Francisco or Los Angeles. Further investigation of community archives and local historical chapter archives reveals Filipino women's clubs were at the heart of these early hubs. When the Filipino men left for their migrant seasonal work, it was the women

and children of the *manongs* that kept Filipino men grounded in their organizing efforts while incentivizing them to always come back to build and expand these pocket hubs.[5]

In his pre-war period journals, esteemed *manong* Fil-Am labor organizer Philip Vera Cruz describes who he met on board the ocean liner that brought him to the United States, noting the rare Filipina faces among the 200 person crowds of bachelor Filipinos. Vera Cruz briefly notes the professions of these women as "older school teachers."[6] Bulosan's novel on *manong* labor history also does not mention the presence of any Filipinas in the Fil-Am hubs he visits, thus implying that Filipinas held little to no bearing with respect to Fil-Am community and labor organizing in the United States.

Historians Dawn Bohulano Mabalon and Dorothy Fujita Rony emphasize in their research that Filipinas were a minority within a minority with gender ratios of Filipinas to Filipinos being as extreme as 1:35 and, at its lowest, 1:14.[7] Whereas Mabalon and Fujita explain Filipinas' roles as pillars of their community despite their rarity in Seattle and Stockton's Little Manilas during the 1920s-1940s, I found Filipinas along the rural Central Coast of California as being far more vocal. Mabalon emphasizes in her chapter "Women, Families, and the Second Generation" that many *pinays* did serve as "community pillars" and were often praised as

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[5] This phenomenon of community built through family formation for Asian immigrant migrant workers can be seen in the early Chinese and Japanese cannery workers along the west coast and Pacific Northwest in Chris Friday's work *Organizing Asian American Labor*. Eventually by the 1870s more Chinese women would arrive at the canneries like in Astoria, Oregon. Many were prostitutes but over time married the Chinese laborers of the towns or Chinese wives accompanied their husbands and settled. There were also more affluent or wealthy Chinese men who could afford to spend and take care of a wife. But by 1900-1920s Chinese American families were an integral part of the cannery towns that even the local Church and missions went from converting Chinese in the 1870s-1880s to teaching English and night school classes to the Chinese communities.# The growth of Chinese families also helped with providing a labor force for the canneries as well as more migrant laborers to connect with the cannery town because of their relations and work network with the local Chinese cannery community. Despite the gender ratio, Chinese women's roles as mothers and wives to their immigrant enclave allowed for the stable growth of a burgeoning Chinese American working class community in Astoria, Oregon.

[6] Philip Vera Cruz and Sid Amores Valledor ed. *The Original Writings of Philip Vera Cruz* (Indianapolis: Dog Ear Publishing, 2006), 55.

[7] Maria P. P. Root ed., *Filipino Americans: Transformation and Identity* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997), 13.

humble homemakers and cultural bearers of tradition for the next generation. But Mabalon also highlights how second generation Filipina Americans responded to gendered policing, or "cultural surveilling," and how they, in their own ways, challenged the patriarchal preference of Filipina femininity, or the Maria Clara archetype.[8]

Fujita-Rony similarly argues that Seattle Filipinas did not engage in any form of labor activism, focusing more on women's club work as part of their goal of preserving their Philippine heritage and community identity in the United States.[9] Where Mabalon and Fujita-Rony emphasize the second and 1.5 generation Filipinas of Seattle and Stockton, my research highlights an intergenerational (1st, 1.5, and 2nd, and 3rd generational) discussion of Filipina agency covering especially first generation *manang* pioneers' implicit and explicit responses to conservative Filipino expectations of Filipina womanhood.[10] My research demonstrates that the Filipina immigrant pioneers, whom I term as the *manang* generation of the Central Coast, were more present in their hub's labor sectors and labor politics, and were engaged in international discussions on suffrage, Philippine sovereignty, and representation as *pinay* colonial subjects.[11]

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[8] Maria Clara is the main female character and love interest in Jose Rizal's *Noli Mi Tangere*. Rizal is esteemed as one of the national heroes who embodies the intellectual backbone of the Filipino revolution against the Spanish colonial establishment during the late nineteenth century. Maria Clara is described as of the lighter skinned, mixed race, upper class, Filipina urbanites who is described as humble, modest, docile, and pure in the Catholic sense and thus is esteemed for generations as the epitome of Filipina femininity. Her character would lose her love to the Revolution and was sent to a nunnery where she died in obscurity having lost her purpose without a husband or partner.

[9] Dorothy B.Fujita-Rony, *American Workers, Colonial Power: Philippine Seattle and the Transpacific West, 1919-1941* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 159, 160, 194.

[10] Dorothy B.Fujita-Rony, *American Workers*, 194.

[11] The term pinay has a long class and color based history in the Philippines and in the diaspora. Pinay, similar to Pinoy, denotes a Filipina from a working class background, therefore in turn related more to brown skinned Filipinas (brownness "infers" laborer) and has a negative connotation in the Spanish-Chinese-Malay caste system of old Philippines. Filipinas/os/x that migrated to the United States during the pre-war era reclaimed the word *pinay/pinoy* and used it as a term to unite the working class Filipinx in the United States and formulate a working class Filipino identity in America. For more on the historical origins of the terminology of *pinay*, Denise Cruz's "Pointing to the Heart": Transpacific Filipinas and the Question of Cold-War Philippine-U.S. Relations" and *Transpacific Femininities: The Making of a Modern Filipina*.

Furthermore, I argue that Filipina women's club and organization work was essential labor that contributed to and strengthened *manong* dominated union and labor organizing.

Despite their socio-cultural and economic significance to their ethnic hubs, there has been no extensive work done specifically on the activism of Filipina Americans and immigrants who lived along California' Central Coast during the early twentieth century. Bulosan's novel and Philip Vera Cruz's journals describe how the Central Coast towns of Arroyo Grande, Salinas, San Luis Obispo, Guadalupe, and Pismo Beach, to name a few, were always the main stopovers during the migrant harvest seasons. Yet, American labor historians and Asian American studies literature does not speak to these more rural ethnic hubs and instead focuses more on major labor or port towns like Los Angeles, San Francisco, Stockton, and Seattle, all of which tend to have larger, more accessible, historical and institutional archives.

Although Asian American studies and Asian American history has within the last thirty years featured the experiences of Asian women during the early twentieth century, like Nakano Glenn's *Issei, Nissei, War Bride* or Huping Ling's *Surviving Gold Mountain*, the experiences and community organizing of immigrant Filipinas continues to be unaddressed. This is because Asian American studies emphasizes East Asian immigrant perspectives, something which historian Gary Okihiro notes in his work *American History Unbound*.[12] To uncover and locate Filipina American labor and activist history required that I use diverse methods and literature of various fields that spoke to and drew from intersectional and feminist research and frameworks.

Fusing the historical method with other research approaches (including Asian American feminisms, Critical Filipinx Studies, and p/feminism to reinterpret Filipina American labor as

[12] Gary Okihiro notes this issue within Asian American Studies as a field as lacking in its diverse literature to include all Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and this include those communities from the South Pacific, Hawai'i, brown Southeast Asians, South Asian Indians, and West Asian experiences.

reproductive/care work and activist oriented) made it possible to create an effective narrative and timeline on what immigrant women of color faced in the early twentieth century. For immigrant women of color, survival in a new space filled with legal and socio-economic misgivings fueled by violent daily interactions with xenophobic and racist white America was unnerving and difficult. This was intensified by the circumstances of the unforgiving Great Depression, as POC (people of color) and particularly immigrant POC communities were regularly scapegoated for America's economic tragedy. Being an immigrant woman of color meant that economic and social relief was even rarer. Even college educated second generation Asian American women were unable to get jobs outside of their own ethnic enclave's economy because of segregation and the racial standards of America's service economy.[13]

The only reliable sense of security in such hard times in a new world was one's own ethnic community, a community that relied on conservative traditions and conventions on gender. Despite this reliance on one's own community for survival in America's harsh rural landscape, Filipina immigrants, like their other Asian ethnic female counterparts, found other outlets to exercise their voice and contribute towards keeping their peers and kin afloat during the Depression Era. This mobilization of Filipina community and extended household organizing was a feminist call to action to make their needs and desires heard, much more than it was a means of supporting their husbands, brothers, and uncles. Pre-war *pinay* pioneers created a support system for their entire community's survival by exercising to the fullest extent their assigned roles of Mother, Sister, and Aunt. They transformed these limited gendered labor

[13]Asian immigrant ethnic enclaves remained the main sectors where Asian immigrants worked and lived as other labor sectors did not allow integration, paid less, and were unwelcoming to immigrants of color. See Takaki's *Strangers From Another Shore*, Erika Lee and Judy Yung's *Angel Island* and Scott Kurashige's *Shifting Grounds of Race*.

categories by using them as tools and platforms towards avenues of activism on behalf of themselves and their community.

Interdisciplinary feminist scholars like Harrod Suarez and Glenda Tibe-Bonifacio describe Filipina reproductive and care labor as central cultural markers and practices that contribute to their transnational and diasporic community's survival in host countries like Canada and the United States. Although Filipina motherwork comes from, and is celebrated within, traditional Philippine patriarchal culture, Bonifacio describes how a p/feminist interpretation of such transplanted gendered practices are reused by first generation Filipina Canadians and allow for alternative *pinay* forms of socio-political agency. These values may be products of a Filipino patriarchal society, "but their (*pinay*) application fosters community bonds and initiations of activities that help create a means for *pinays* in the Prairies to sustain connection with other Filipinos and Canadians…The ways in which *pinays* practice patriarchal cultural values is an expression of a noble goal of service, not self interest, for the sake of community."[14]

Filipina feminism (peminism) considers the process of migration in its effects on the formation(s) of cultural belonging where gender and sex are the essential lenses and organizers of such analysis. Therefore, as Bonifacio and Suarez discuss in their Asian transnational and diasporic interpretations of Filipina subjectivity and survival through what Suarez terms the "maternal diasporic," although their community and family work draw from gendered cultural values, a Filipina p/feminist critical assessment can help us reconsider the problematic complexities of how and why Filipinas rely on maternalist traditions, or as Bonifacio describes

[14] Glenda Tibe-Bonifacio, *Pinay on the Prairies: Filipino Women and Transnational Identities*. (Vancouver: UCB Press, 2013), 249.

"their experimental knowledge"... in their own lives and in the communities they now call home."[15]

The *pinay* pioneers, the *manang* generation, operated daily as Filipino club leaders and representatives advocating for community fundraisers, afterschool Filipino cultural programs, and community welfare programs. In these seemingly motherwork-based community labor sites, Filipinas could maintain their matriarchal roles as caregivers while simultaneously expanding their care work and reproductive labor into other leadership roles to create real social and political change within their ethnic enclave and beyond. Therefore, to recover early Asian American history, I had to look where *pinay* pioneers themselves were most vocal; where they took legal, political, and community action while utilizing their most trusted guise of caregiver and cultural matriarch to extend themselves beyond the role of homemaker, while not stirring the patriarchal dismay of their male peers.

The historiography of the beginnings of American women's activism shares similar methods of motherwork that *pinay* pioneers used. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries women vocalized their concerns mainly to one another, as men did not see them as fit to join their conversations and organizations.[16] They established their own women's clubs, typically ones that spoke to upholding moral obligations ascribed to gender, where they took it upon themselves to mandate and oversee the health and moral well-being of the home, ultimately

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[15] Tibe-Bonifacio, *Pinay on the Prairies*, 247. Furthermore, Suarez similarly describes how pinays in the diaspora also use their "diasporic maternal" as a way "for making legible a cultural and political terrain that Filipina subjects navigate and negotiate in varying degrees.Their accesses to the diasporic maternal can help bring new readings into the minor and mundane cultural practices to the surface and can help to [Filipinas/os/x] to grasp and re-create culture through and with diasporic communities." Harrod J. Suarez, *The Work of Mothering: Globalization and the Filipino Diaspora* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017), 24, 25.

[16] American women's clubs formed around themes and philosophies in reference to the "cult of domesticity," "cult of true womanhood," and "Republican Motherhood" of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For more information on women's moral and Protestant organizations, reference Adrienne Caughfield, *True Women and Westward Expansion* (Texas A&M University Press, 2005), Linda K. Kerber, *Toward an Intellectual History of Women Essays* (University of NOrth Carolina Press, 1997).

seeing their labor in direct conversation with the maternalist philosophy of the era, stating that the home bred the health and moral compass of community life.[17]

These earlier American women's clubs also served as spaces for women to confide in their frustrations with their roles as wives, mothers, obedient daughters, and as gendered subjects. Such clubs would eventually grow to become the roots of the Woman Movement or movement for suffrage. But, as many scholars have noted, the Woman Movement was largely made up of elite naturalized Euro-American women whose policies and philosophies were racially exclusive. White women's club history therefore is uninstructive in accurately describing what nonwhite women activists of the early twentieth century accomplished in relation to American women's history. What were other women's clubs using their conversational space to advocate for? Where do Asian immigrant women's organizations fit into that narrative of suffrage if they themselves were not allowed to naturalize, let alone did not possess whiteness?

The Black Women's Club Movement beginning in the late nineteenth century espoused that racial uplift required socio-economic and government provided means of healthcare, sanitation, education, and woman suffrage. Linking the racialized violence that threatened their community, particularly in regard to the lynching of both Black men and women, Black women's clubs were, and continue to be, radically feminist in their philosophy of marking gender and racial inequality as the particular markers of difference that exacerbated the violent inequities their communities faced.[18]

Similarly, Korean immigrant women's organizing and club work during the early twentieth century made similar demands for education and mutual aid. Korean immigrant

[17] Gwendolyn Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917–1942* (Cornell University Press, 2018).

[18] Floris Loretta Barnett Cash, *African American Women and Social Action: The Clubwomen and Volunteerism from Jim Crow to the New Deal, 1896-1936* (Greenwood Press, 2008).

women's clubs during the pre-war era. like the Korean Women's Patriotic Society and Korean Women's Relief Society of Hawai'i saw Korea's potential independence as going hand in hand with their American based communities' welfare. Korean immigrant women like Maria Hwang argued that, central to those intersecting and transnational goals of mutual aid, was Korean women's liberation from patriarchal cultural gender norms practiced not only in Korea but in the United States. For Korean immigrant women like Hwang, achieving true sovereignty for all Koreans meant that women also be recognized as citizens of Korea and as equal in potential for political growth as men.[19]

The Korean Women's Relief Society especially believed that humanity and compassion through charity and fundraising work would allow Euro-Americans to view them as equal and in a good light, and as those who "share mutual human interests...and the spirit of good fellowship."[20] Demanding the bare essentials while uplifting their peoples' socio-cultural representations to white American onlookers and policymakers was the entryway in which my research locates the narratives of the early twentieth century Asian female pioneers: Through the women who substantiated their ethnic enclaves, their communities, by serving as more than moral and cultural pillars to their neighborhoods, but also as their transplanted peoples' active representatives to the white communities and institutions that deemed them as aliens ineligible for citizenship.

Scholars of Asian American women's history like Yung and Nakano Glenn write about the perspectives of East Asian immigrant women, and therefore their extensive literature on the Asian American women's worldview does not speak to the experiences of color and gender

[19] Gary Y. Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asian in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 165, 166.
[20] Lili M. Kim, "Redefining Traditional Gender Roles," as found in Gail M. Nomura and Shirley Hune ed., *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology* (NYU Press, 2003), 112.

under American colonialism that laboring class Filipinas of the period witnessed. However, the historical record confirms that Filipina immigrants were also present, engaging with similar sectors in domestic and agrarian work as their East Asian female counterparts. Yet Filipinas are uncommon or absent in the literature pertaining to both the macro Asian American experience and female Asian American experience.[21] Their contributions to both their Filipino ethnic enclaves and the larger Asian American community that remain have been overlooked in part due to their smaller population.[22] Furthermore, Filipina American case studies are overshadowed by the Filipino bachelor agrarian history, the *manong* generation history, and the overall gendered narrative of the Farm Labor Movement. That few histories have been written pertaining to the Asian American women's experience is a result of the gendered prejudices they faced within their communities, their complex intersectional identities as brown immigrant women, and the colonial institutions that economically locked them within their ethnic enclaves.[23] As

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[21] Occupations of Filipinas/Filipina Americans as found in the Salinas, Monterey County census records, 1940, included: students, domestic workers, and wives. Salinas and Monterey County 1940 Census Records, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Enumerator: Fred E. Heeger. April 4th, 1940, pg 1-8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 20, 29, 61, 62, 81-84.

[22] The Filipina American population by 1950 represented 25% of the total Filipino American population. Maria P. P. Root ed., Filipino Americans: *Transformation and Identity* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997), 13-15.

[23] Asian and Asian American women's public, social, legal, and literary exclusion historically are influenced by conservative and male oriented politics on race, gender, immigration, imperialist legacies both physical and psychological, xenophobia, etc. Asian women as women of color in the United States have difficulty when expressing themselves as holistic subjects, because their identity lies at the intersection of multiple forms of insubordination. Letti Volpp, "(Mis)Identifying Culture: Asian Women and the Cultural Defense," in *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, ed. Jean Yu-wen Shen and Min Song (Rutgers University Press, 2009), 391-422. Furthermore, previous immigration laws, among them the Page Act of 1875, specifically barred women of Asian descent from traveling to the United States because they were vilified as sex workers. Furthermore, Anglo American racial anxieties towards maintaining a white only state further supported the legal barring of female Asian immigration in order to prevent any opportunities for unwanted immigrant male laborers to settle down in the United States and establish solid roots, i.e. families. Dawn B. Mabalon, *Little Manila is in the Heart: The Making of Filipina/o American Community in Stockton* (London: Duke University Press, 2013), 170-188.
As visible in the race riots erupted in 1929 and 1930 in the California towns of Exeter and Watsonville respectively, where Filipino agrarian laborers were harassed, taunted, and even killed by Mexican and white laborers, the socio-economic tensions expressed in these events spurred on by white American nativism further emphasizes the hostile environments the *manong* generation faced. Juanita Tamayo Lott, *Common Destiny: Filipino American Generations* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 21.
These racial and gendered prejudices, immigration quotas, and the agribusiness preference for immigrant male labor, gave Filipinas less incentive to immigrate to the United States. These circumstances resulted in a Filipino gender ratio imbalance during the early to mid-twentieth century in the United States. But for many women who did

Okihiro expresses in *American History Unbound*, Asian American Studies is guilty of contributing to this gendered lacunae by producing literature that leans heavily towards the Chinese and Japanese American experience.[24]

Renowned Filipino American author and labor organizer, Carlos Bulosan, was one of the first to capture the day-to-day work experiences of a Filipino immigrant during the 1930s-1940s. In his semi-autobiographical work, *America Is in the Heart*, Bulosan describes his childhood under American colonialism as a sharecropper who eventually made his way to the United States only to find Filipinos struggling to find work while being violently discriminated against and excluded from American society.

Bulosan's poignant snippet of migrant labor life as a brown Asian immigrant during the Depression Era also notes the community formation of small Filipino labor towns that dotted the rural and urban landscape of the West Coast, which also housed some of the most radical Filipino immigrant labor unions to date. They are depicted in works like Fujita Rony's *American Workers, Colonial Power*, Linda Espana Maram's *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles' Little Manila*, and Chris Friday's *Organizing Asian American Labor* as the radical core of Filipinx labor organizing in the United States. Similarly, Bulosan mentions these Central Coast Filipino ethnic hubs and their strong organizing and club oriented Filipinx spaces in a way that matches the Asian American historical literature, depicting them as male radical labor organizing ethnic hubs amid a racially charged Euro-American planter landscape.

immigrate, or are daughters born from the *manong* generation, their experiences are largely not present in both Asian American historical narratives or Asian American literature as visibly active participants of their own ethnic community or within a broader American society.

[24] Gary Y. Okihiro, *American History Unbound: Asians and Pacific Islanders* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 8.

My dissertation is guided by the following research questions: What did the early forms of Filipina feminist rhetoric sound like? What rights, freedoms, agency, or spaces were they trying to challenge and transform through their labor and why? Who was wielding and shaping Filipina p/feminism and what social transformations and forms of equity did these immigrant women under the colonial and Filipino patriarchal gaze gain? How did they use the uniquely Pinay p/feminisms they developed to build their communities in the United States, to the extent that they often held more influence than men? How does inserting Filipina Americans in this period of American colonial history disrupt traditional historical narratives concerning the Progressive and Depression Era and American Imperialism during the first half of the twentieth century? And lastly, how did pioneer Filipinas along the Central Coast maintain or build upon transnational conversations on women's agency and activism with Filipinas in the motherland who were also advocating for suffrage and independence?

My research historicizes how pioneer immigrant Filipinas were active community resources and laborers who directly shaped and created new understandings with respect to gender and femininity and how it was performed within their communities, something made possible by their experience with gender norms in the Philippines--norms they rejected and iterated upon after settling in the United States. In reviving this understudied era of Filipina/o/x American history using the lens of the Filipina pioneer immigrant experience, I hope to show the influence suffragist Filipinas in the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century had on the Filipina immigrants/Americans, the *manang* generation, and vice versa. Both groups of Filipinas experienced American imperialism in different and similar ways during the first half the twentieth century. And although they were an ocean apart, dealing and working through different and similar gender politics and systems, their experiences and actions nonetheless informed and

affected the other, thus creating an early diasporic and transpacific bridge under and over the borders of American empire.

These two groups and generations of Filipinas each interacted with multiple stages of imperialism and Filipino *machismo*. Yet, their histories are seen as independent of one another; one falling into the category of Philippine history, the other as Asian American history, with neither seen as narratives pertaining to American history, particularly in regard to the United States' formation as an imperialist entity in the Pacific. In short, there is a diasporic p/feminist history to be told that has been subsumed under other male-centric narratives, like that of male organizing and male-led movements against American colonization and for independence, and that of Filipino Americans in the US advancing the earlier stages of the farm and cannery labor movements. Meanwhile, on a transpacific diasporic scale, Filipinas worked on both of these goals as well, but in different ways. Their coalitional labor has long been ignored despite its significance in radically transforming and, at times, spearheading what has previously been understood to be male-led movements.

Neither Filipinas in the Philippines nor Filipina Americans can be fully understood without acknowledging or grappling with the stories of the Filipina generations who, at the dawn of the twentieth century, pioneered multiple radical advocacy agendas while in the thick of America's imperialist phase of Manifest Destiny in the Pacific. Their intertwined histories speak to the emergence and transformation of the twentieth century Filipina. Her transpacific transformation offers a window into a moment where the United States and Philippines were undergoing their own changes; one solidifying its position as a white settler state, the other as a colonial territory seeking independence. As Anne Mcclintock argues, "women and men did not

experience imperialism in the same way."[25] By looking at ways that Filipinas negotiated their freedoms and needs on both sides of the Pacific, we can better assess the violent and longstanding issues that women of Asian descent continue to bear as postcolonial subjects. The transpacific Filipina that emerged out of the first half of the twentieth century is thus a crucial window into many historiographies on labor, suffrage, nationalism, empire, race, citizenship, and gender. Above all, the experiences of Filipina p/feminists and the pioneer *manang* generation allow us to make a critical intervention in seeing how these histories are not separate, but intertwined.

Ultimately, the goals of my dissertation are to 1) record, recover, and preserve the written and oral histories of the first and second generation Filipina-Americans who lived in the earlier Fil-Am communities of California, 2) expand Filipino-American labor history by examining the *Manong* Generation beyond the male dominated narrative through a p/feminist analysis of labor that highlights the paid, and unpaid, work Filipinas did at home and in the public sphere as community organizers, 3) locate the p/feminist consciousness behind the *pinay* identity that helped to establish and ground the earliest socio-politically active Filipina/o/x American communities in the United States, and 4) trace the transnational *pinay* p/feminist consciousness that I argue continued to build well after the war and into the early years of the post war era.[26] By connecting and mapping out these earlier pinay p/feminist endeavors, we can better understand and appreciate how current Filipina p/feminist thought, at its core, draws from an older

[25] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (Taylor and Francis, 2013), 5.

[26] The use of the "P" instead of "f" in feminism is in agreement and respect to the emerging Filipina feminist literature. Filipino languages and phonetics do not have the same enunciation or use of "f" and often words with the "f" letter or sound in it is sounded out with a "p" sound instead by Filipinx communities and speakers. Therefore the "P" in feminism is an ode to the "Peminist" critique by Filipina feminist scholars Melinda de Jesus, Allyson Tintiangco Cubales, Jocyl Sacramento, and others.

transnational Filipina p/feminist tradition that always centered their activism on building and sustaining community while finding cultural belonging within the Filipinx diaspora; a diaspora that continues to be conflicted and ravaged by the effects of white settler colonialism and neo-imperialism.[27]

My research is geographically bound to California's greater Central Coast and Central California rural communities. These towns include the Filipinx immigrant enclaves of Salinas, Arroyo Grande, San Luis Obispo, Guadalupe, Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Monterey, Pismo Beach, and Santa Maria, and Delano. I chose this region of California because Asian American historiographies, secondary literature, and primary sources on the Fil-Am experience mentions these small towns as major hubs of Filipinx migrant laborers during the 1930s as their midway work and rest stop in their annual migrant labor routes. But these short mentions are mainly described from a male-centric perspective. Based on a historical analysis of the available primary sources, these towns were the major publishers of the widest distributed pre-war Filipino periodicals, and boasted some of the most active Filipinx clubs and organizations, some of which were founded by Filipino immigrant women, including the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas founded in 1930. Despite the historically emphasized gender ratio favoring men in these Fil-Am towns from the 1910s-1940s, Filipino women's clubs funded and supported many major landmark achievements along the Central Coast, including the formation of Fil-Am community centers, welfare programs, and the production of national Fil-Am newspapers like *The Philippines Mail*.

[27] The United States continues to practice colonialism in the Pacific by engaging with neocolonial methods where they maintain military stations, military funding, and continue to hold onto and promote cultural and economic influences that were instilled during the colonial period of the first half of the twentieth century. "Neocolonialism is the practice of using economic imperialism, Globalization, cultural imperialism and conditional aid to influence a developing country instead of the previous colonial methods of direct military control or indirect political control (hegemony)." https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/neoimperialism.

The material culture and resources that are crucial to my research include over 10 personally conducted *kwentuhans* with the Filipina elders and their children (the Bridge Generation) who lived in and contributed to these rural communities, along with additional oral history interviews (10) I have reviewed in the "Re/collection" archives created by English scholar Grace Yeh at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo's Kennedy Library.[28] Other resources include the newspapers *The Philippines Mail* and the *Ilocano News*, both published during the late 1920s-1960s and which were the longest running newspapers for the community at the time. Other periodicals were not able to sustain publication over the years due to the lack of funding and pause in publications caused by the war as the men who managed it volunteered for the Pacific Theater. The California Census records conducted in Salinas in the 1930s-1940s are the main documents I use to locate and map out the labor camp settlements and Filipino neighborhoods in Salinas, and this resource will be used to provide an outline of where the Fil-Am communities existed as they were torn down or removed due to urban renewal. The census records helped to locate the early Fil-Am towns and community hubs depicted in my digital humanities mapping project, *California Is In the Heart*, which I produced alongside my dissertation.

The other sources I reference speak to the intimate and gendered relations of the Fil-am towns, and include the diaries and writings of first generation Filipino and Filipina Americans like Hilario Moncado (Los Angeles fraternity leader), Helen Rillera (poet), Angeles Monrayo (1.5 generation), Joseph Talaugon Sr. (Bridge Generation, Central Coast FANHS leader and activist) and the first wave of Filipina *pensionadas* whose experiences were recorded in the

[28] The other digital recordings of Fil-Am Central Coast oral histories will be drawn from the Cal Poly SLO archives. Cal Poly Ethnic Studies. "The Re/Collecting Project," *Filipino Love Stories Collection*. California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Last Modified 2013, http://reco.calpoly.edu/.

pensionado pamphlets, *The Filipino* (1906-1913). The majority of my Fil-Am primary source material was bestowed upon me by local Asian-American community organizations and families whose elders were generous enough to share with me their intergenerational family histories in the forms of *kwentuhans*, photographs, and other personal family belongings that speak to the era.[29]

The Philippine archival sources that I included in my research focus on the words and sentiments of Filipina educators, poets, and p/feminists like Encarnacion Alzona during the American colonial period (1902-1930s). This includes Filipina pageantry paraphernalia, Philippine university periodicals, and Filipino women's club pamphlets.[30] Other p/feminist transpacific oriented periodicals included in my research that describe the intellectual political formation of the Progressive Era's New Filipina includes *The Woman's Outlook* (1922-1930), *The Philippine Republic* (1920s) and *The Filipino Teacher* (1907-1912). I employ sources from the Philippines due to my emphasis on transnational p/feminism and empire, and to trace how Filipina club organizing was intrinsic to the type of Filipina p/feminist organizing that would blossom in the United States.

[29] See bibliography for a full account of the 8 personal family collections resources that will be employed in the dissertation which are also archived as a part of the Bulosan Center's Welga Digital Archive.

[30] The journals and auto-biographies of Thomasite teachers include Mary Helen Fee's *A Woman's Impressions of the Philippines* and Herbert Fischer's *Philippine Diary*. These journals and autobiographies of the Thomasite teachers will be used to express the gendered lesson plans assigned to Filipinas under the American colonial education system (assuming domestic roles and sewing industries which were both heavily exploited by American businesses and military and were forms of exported Filipina labor to the United States during the American colonial period). These resources will help to establish in Chapter 1 the historical colonial-educational backdrop that Filipina subjects found themselves under as they advocated for Filipina suffrage and higher education during the American occupation. The primary source material written by Filipina educators, club members, poets (5 Filipina poets) and university students are resources available online via the University of the Philippines digital archive (roughly ten resources of paraphernalia) as well as other digital archives that hold the Manila Carnival Pageant Queen contests and newspapers that covered the biographies of Filipina queen winners. These resources will also help shape chapter one in describing the alternative ways of community and feminist activism Filipinas under America occupation opted to advocate and raise money for women's issues. These resources can also be found listed in the Bibliography below.

Understanding that archives are products of empire, I will also be critiquing and examining sources written or produced by Euro-Americans.[31] These include films produced by white Hollywood featuring Filipina immigrants/Americans in order to better understand their experiences in Hollywood cinema during the pre-war period, and shed further light on how film spoke to the multilayered oppressions that they and other Fil-Ams experienced outside of their own communities. I also analyzed journals written by Thomasite educators and white suffragists (e.g. Carrie Chapman Catt and Alice Paul) from 1903-1930s that critique Filipina femininity and agency as part of their colonial project. Whether Filipinas were being evaluated by white colonizers or Filipino men within their own communities, they faced similar critiques. Both were the product of European and American colonialisms, and Filipina p/feminism developed transnationally in response to these heavy critiques and gender surveillance on both sides of the Pacific, transcending the nation state in response to empire.

Immigrant Filipinas envisioned their labor in a way that most Asian immigrant women pioneers did, which Korean American community activist Dora Yun Kim summarized as "doing what had to be done" to survive.[32] In all of the older Asian American community narratives, I found that what they had emotionally developed was a gendered martyr complex that upheld Asian patriarchy where, despite the essential labor they provided for their communities and families, the men were deemed the real movers and shakers of their ethnic enclaves, hence the

[31] Sarita Echavez See's work, *The Filipino Primitive: Accumulation and Resistance in the American Museum* (2017) and Cheryl Beredo's, *Import of the Archive: US Colonial Rule In the Philippines and the Making of American Archival History* (2013) both argue that the American archive and university that houses Philippine artifacts were efforts to validate and professionalize American expansion into the Philippines therefore through archival critique, both scholars point to the multiple prejudices and biases that have shaped Filipino history in American historiographies of the early twentieth century.

[32] Soo-Young Chin, *Dong What Had to Be Done: The Life NArrative of Dora Yum Kim* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 170.

male centered phrase, "the *Manong* Generation," commonly used to term the earlier wave of Filipino migration to Hawai'i and the United States.

Argument

Peminism, as defined by Melinda L. de Jesus, is feminist theory grounded and informed by the Filipina American experience that includes the Filipina American consciousness, thus addressing or acknowledging the multiple ways Filipinas have struggled against cultural assimilation, racism, sexism, homophobia, nationalist rhetoric, and patriarchal practices within both the white American landscape and the familial Fil-Am community. *Pinayism*, as coined by Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales draws from peminist thought and is Filipina American theorizing that expresses how to decolonize the spaces we inhabit through building a constructive consciousness of *pinay* collectivity (radical Pinay sisterhood), one that allows us to love ourselves as *pinays*, teaches us us how to love other pinays whose experiences with being Filipina in America differs than our own, and offers ways of practicing love for our communities.[33] One decolonial practice of *peminism* and *pinayism* is addressing the colonial influences on gender, sex, family formation, colorism, and sexuality in order to challenge the white hetero-cisgendered hegemonic nature that has overshadowed BIPOC and third world radical feminisms and women of color experiences.

Tintiangco-Cubales' call to *pinayism* does not call only for Filipina liberation, rather Tintiangco-Cubales argues that Filipina feminist engagement and experiences are an opportunity to express a more complete rendition of the larger Filipino struggle. A pinayist consciousness is an opportunity for Filipino men and women to reflect on how white supremacy has manifested

[33] See Melinda L. de Jesus, ed. *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical Theory, Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience*(New York: Routledge, 2005), 5.

"through hetero-sexist exploitation as a method of disempowering men of color and subjugating communities of color.[34] Both Filipina feminist frameworks blend and share a common goal of utilizing love of the Filipina/x self to liberate ourselves and all our people throughout the Filipina/o/x diaspora.

My research seeks to historicize the antecedents to de Jesus' and Tintiangco-Cubales' interpretations of peminism in America. I consider how Filipina American p/feminism as community activism grew from the rhetoric and praxis of Filipina p/feminists and suffragists who challenged American colonialism that intertwined with the social power structures of Filipino-Spanish patriarchies in their fight for sovereignty which they argued went hand in hand with Filipina suffrage, or the liberation of Filipinas by way of being granted full citizenship as active participants in Philippine politics and nation building. I review the gendered analysis of colonial trauma on the Filipina at the turn of the 20th century, her early methods of resistance, and how such early p/feminist practices of community and Filipina organizing carried over with the first generation of working class Filipinas in America, the *manang* generation, and how they continued the p/feminist methods of club organizing in order to safeguard their Fil-Am communities in America, therefore continuing the *peminist* work of the Progressive Era's New Filipina who struggled against imperialism in the Philippines.

Methods

Through the methods of feminist critique and standpoint theory, autoethnography, and community based participatory research, my reliance on the historical and archival methods transformed as I listened to and collected community knowledge through primarily a p/feminist

[34] See Tintiangco-Cubales "Chapter 8: Pinayism," as found in *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical Theory, Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience*(New York: Routledge, 2005), 137-148).

method of holding *kwentuhans* with the surviving *Manang* Generation. With the elders' stories as my primary sources, along with their blessings, I was able to write a Filipina/American p/feminist history.

The *manangs'* and their children's personal records, shared with me by Fil-Am community elders, offer a glimpse into not just a social history, or an American women's labor history, but a personal history of displacement, resistance, and cultural survival during one of America's most racially divided periods. I wanted their histories, their experiences of immigrant women's labor and activism, to not only fill the gaps in the broader Asian American historical narrative and its many neglected entries in American women's labor history, but also to challenge the American Women's Rights Wave Model that continues to linger and claim space as the premiere narrative of American Women's History in public education. These many hurdles in locating Filipina immigrant women in the American historical record and archives makes this history all the more imperative in writing.

I looked beyond writing a narrative of Asian immigrant women's experiences that simply adds onto, or is complementary to, the male-centric *manong* generation literature. Instead, my dissertation offers a p/feminist Asian women's history that centers Filipinas and responds to the urgency to study the history of the Filipina pioneers as community and labor activists. An interdisciplinary handling of Filipina American labor history contributes to combating the model minority myth and decenters whiteness in American Women's History.[35] If nothing else, this Filipina pioneer activist history will serve as a critique of the hypermasculine narratives that

[35] The use of the "P" instead of "f" in feminism is in agreement and respect to the emerging Filipina feminist literature. Filipino languages and phonetics do not have the same enunciation or use of "f" and often words with the "f" letter or sound in it is sounded out with a "p" sound instead by Filipinx communities and speakers. Therefore the "P" in feminism is an ode to the "Peminist" critique by scholars Allyson Tintiangco Cuballes, Jocyl Sacramento, and others.

continue to represent and speak to the colonial pathologies and patriarchies that remain prevalent in Filipinx/American culture and history.

My history of the Filipina/*pinay* pioneers of the pre-war era answers the call to write an alternative genealogy to American feminism and the wave model, while simultaneously serving as one window into what the Santa Cruz Feminist of Color Collective call " the complicated layers of WOC feminist philosophies."[36] With the Philippines as a colonized territory of the United States and Filipina immigrants in California being transnational yet segregated community organizers, my history also employs diasporic feminist methods of storytelling. As nationalist Philippine groups advocated for a sovereign Philippines, calling America out for its hypocrisies as a democratic nation for subjecting Filipinas/os/x to colonial rule, there was also a Filipina feminist movement growing during the pre-war era. The *Asociación Feminista Filipina* (1905) along with other early Filipina self declared feminists like Purificacion Garcia Villanueva and Clemencia Lopez, declared that true Philippine independence could only be gained through and alongside Filipina suffrage.

Filipinas on both sides of the Pacific responded to centuries of ongoing multilayered colonial oppressions with their community activism and labor. It was in fighting for their communities' survival that the roots of the diasporic *pinay* identity were formed. We continue to see the same missions and visions of the Filipino Women's Clubs of California, the Feminist Association, and Manila Women's Clubs of the early twentieth century live on through the growth of international and transnational Filipina led organizations like PAWIS and GABRIELA, which advocate for the freedoms and representation of all *pinays* across the globe,

[36] THE SANTA CRUZ FEMINIST OF COLOR COLLECTIVE, "Building on "the Edge of Each Other's Battles": A Feminist of Color Multidimensional Lens," Hypatia vol. 29, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 23-40.

and for equal access to education, healthcare, and labor opportunities.[37] And, in similar sisterly fashion, these organizations have sprouted chapters wherever Filipina labor is present, much like the American based Filipino Women's Club chapters of the 1910s-1960s. A p/feminist historical method helps to map out the diasporic p/feminist origins of the *pinay* identity so as to demonstrate that the language of the Filipina as activist, as p/feminist, was born out of colonial struggle that still continues today.

Kim Tallbear argues that "subjectivity strengthens research," and that traditional objectivity (a case where the researcher does not get involved with the subject) that researchers are expected to take on is lacking. To participate in the subjects' worlds is a process that can help to democratize one's own field of study. Working in "non-standard" ways can produce a form of research that reflects "objectivity in action."[38] Lastly, the interdisciplinary feminist framework of autoethnography proposed by Jennifer Najera confirmed the possibility of practicing methods of grander interdisciplinary informed history that speak to immigrant women's community activism

[37] Pilipino Association of Workers Immigrants is an international organization that was established in 2002, PAWIS was formed to fight against social and economic injustice faced by Filipino workers and im/migrants in Santa Clara County. Initial PAWIS members were former airport screeners, resulting from the U.S. Aviation and Transportation Security Act after 9-11-2001. *This Act is discriminatory against Filipino workers and im/migrants. It requires airport screeners to be US citizens and that they pass a new employment and language test, which has nothing to do with the job of airport screeners. *Today PAWIS continues to support Filipinos in Santa Clara County, the bay area, in the U.S and around the world. Many are working in industries such as health care, retail/sales, and electronic manufacturing. Last Accessed March 8, 2021, https://pawis-sv.com/. GABRIELA National Alliance of Women, "a grassroots-based alliance of more than 200 organizations, institutions, desks and programs based in communities, workplaces and schools throughout all regions and major provinces and cities in the Philippines. It also has chapters in eight countries outside of the Philippines. Founded in 1984, GABRIELA organizes Filipino women, primarily from marginalized sectors of society, and helps educate and empower them to fight for their rights and interests through collective action. GABRIELA provides direct services to marginalized women including counseling services to women survivors of VAW, medical missions, free clinics, relief and rehabilitation in times of disaster and capability building trainings on women's health and women's rights." https://www.onebillionrising.org/41139/gabriela-national-alliance-of-filipino-women-southeast-asia-philippines-indonesia-thailand-vietnam-singapore-malaysia-cambodia-laos/.

[38] TallBear, Kim. "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry." *Journal of Research Practice*. Volume 10, Issue 2, Article N17, 2014: 6.

and agency, while also validating the role of the WOC researcher-scholar-activist as an essential component in telling that story.[39]

Through Tallbear and Najera's work, I realized the urgency of framing this project from an interdisciplinary perspective with the hopes of decolonizing the historical method. If I was to do justice to Asian American women's labor history, I had to explain, deconstruct, and map out the multiple barriers of misogyny coupled with racism, colorism, classism, and xenophobia, all of which fed off layers of white settler colonial patriarchies and, taken together, have stalled the production of a Filipina American women's history.

It was in collecting this primary source research where my own subjectivity, or as TallBear explains it, my being Filipina, that aided my P/feminist storytelling of the Filipina *manang* pioneers. Personally knowing the gendered and racialized barriers we have and continue to face, Tallbear's theory of "standing with" the research subject (community being researched) remains an ethical orientation that can be argued as a form of feminist praxis, because the inevitable results of the research will reflect an alternative theoretical approach to analyzing social inequality and its many structures operating within both the community, the subject, and the researcher's own political space.[40] It is being an interdisciplinary scholar, a Cultural Studies

[39] Autoethnography challenges traditional notions of subjectivity by defining lived cultural experiences as subjective evidence. Research for them represents personal and emotional research projects and stories that teach morals, ethics, and feelings. Research methods should not treat past and present cultural peoples as data mines to be analyzed and critiqued, as empiricist interpretations tend to do, without the consent or input of the communities involved. For Najera, listening to the inter-ethnic community dynamics and histories of her mother's hometown in south Texas as an insider meant acknowledging and building cultural trust, which led to her reframing and telling their stories in earnest. "AUTO/ETHNOGRAPHY AND REVERSE MIGRATIONS IN SOUTH TEXAS: An Anthropologist's Testimonio About Method and Meaning in the Gathering of History," *Chicana/Latina Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Fall 2009): 55-57.

[40] Scholars like Kim TallBear argue that true objectivity is not produced by distancing the researcher from empathizing or connecting with the communities of interest. Rather, objectivity can be found from the shared lived experience where one feels the cultural, social, and gendered implications in the daily struggles of the marginalized community because the researcher too has also laid witness to those forms of oppression. Forming an identity with one's research and allowing the flexible and reciprocal collaboration with the subjects of interest as peoples with shared perceptions of the direct effects of institutionalized and systemic prejudices, as demonstrated in our feminist science shop, was an invaluable research experience.

researcher, that allows me to dive into these different fields and methods and gives me the tools to build a platform to write Filipina feminist labor history from. The interdisciplinary framework that Cultural Studies promotes—which decenters whiteness and the traditional boundaries of scholarly fields—has guided the kinds of questions I hoped to ask both the *manang* generation and the archives (both community and institutional archives).

My WOC feminist methodology uses a variation of autoethnography employed by *peminism* and *pinayism* that falls in line with the goals of women of color politics. *Peminism* and *pinayism* are categories of WOC and Asian American feminisms that attend to the Filipina gendered experience, and draw from decolonial practice as politics, liberatory education and pedagogy, and community activism. As a branch of women of color feminism that is a relatively new field (being first coined within the last 20 years), it emphasizes the diversity of Filipina experiences in a way that Asian American studies cannot fully encapsulate due to its limitations in portraying Asian America through a monolithic identity formation framework.[41] Furthermore, as Critical Filipinx Studies addresses, the Filipina/o/x has a unique relationship with the United States as a former territory, which the more dominant East Asian immigrant/American core literature of Asian American Studies does not share. Such imperialist legacies continue to haunt and affect the Filipino immigrant/American thus revealing the uniquely patronizing and violent ways that Filipinas/os/x were treated and continue to be seen under a neo-imperialist relationship with the United States. A *pinayist* framework captures and speaks to the diversity, complexity, and many subjectivities of Filipinas in the diaspora such as queer, Indigenous and Native, brown and/or Black, working class, immigrant and undocumented, and intergenerational experiences

[41] Kandice Chuh, *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 111.

that often are silenced or obscured by white colonial patriarchies felt throughout the Filipinx diaspora.

Pinay storytelling as a method and practice of BIPOC feminism reflects on differences not shared so as to build communities across our differences. The Pinay herself has never been able to fit into one category of Filipina. Because there is no one complete history to capture all of the voices and essential experiences of Filipina/o/x in America. As *pinayism* also hopes to achieve, to express and learn the many ways of being Filipina, as there is no one way of knowing and being Filipina. Knowing the many situations, faces, and needs of what it means to be Filipina in America is a diverse history of knowledge and a cacophony of intergenerational declarations of belonging. Therefore this history is many things in its endeavor to retrace the radical origins of the *pinay*. The history of the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas is a rediscovery, retelling, and hopeful tribute and roadmap to navigating our emotions, our traumas, and our conflicts with the effects of white settler colonial patriarchies and all that it has wrought.

Thus, a *peminist*-as-transnational method of critique is crucial in framing my research on mapping the early formations of Filipina (transnational and diasporic) American feminism.[42] Peminist storytelling is "a conversation of race, class, gender, sexuality, nation, and empire from the perspective of Filipinas and demands political action(s)." As my research locates and maps Filipina feminisms in America during the early twentieth century, it requires a peminist method of critique because its goal is to employ intersectional and decolonial politics in order to make

[42] Peminism and Pinayism's goal is to build conversations that challenge the Filipinx American exceptionalism often found in early Filipino American and Asian American historical literature. This early literature essentialized Filipinos Americans as "resilient," heroic, and mostly male. In contrast, Peminism and Pinayism reflect developments within Asian American, WOC, and Asian diasporic feminisms by disrupting the monolithic aspects imparted upon Filipinos by Asian American studies. It builds on a Filipinx American critique that respects the Filipinx struggle for self determination while also "describ[ing] Filipina American struggles against racism, sexism, imperialism, and homophobia and struggles for decolonization, consciousness, and liberation" as found in Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales and Jocyl Sacramento, "Practicing Pinayist Pedagogy," Amerasia Journal Vol. 35, No. 1 (2009): 179-187.

visible the Filipina American in Asian American Studies, Filipino American Studies, and Euro-American feminist critique.[43]

Peminism offers many opportunities for gender to be utilized as an analytic to understand the complex and multifaceted experience of being Filipina, both past and present without the extractive and invasive nature inherent in the historical, archival, or oral history methods. Peminist research and teaching centers intergenerational and transnational *pinay* experiences. P/feminist praxis is not extractive in its data collection, it is instead liberatory and constructive in building conversations between and amongst Filipinas, and centers communal space as part of a pedagogical response in how Filipina scholar activists can transform and disseminate community knowledge as an educational resource to be utilized as a community cultural resource. I chose this particular path of oral history method in favor of autoethnography that intersects with *kwentuhan* so as to ask and learn from family narratives of the Fil-Am community that I was both an insider (second generation *pinay*, Ilokano understanding) and outsider to (Bay Area Filipina raised by post 1965 Immigration Act family).

A *peminist* method I am particularly utilizing is the aforementioned *kwentuhan*. Valerie Francisco-Menchavez's research on transnational Filipina motherhood utilized existing community building cultural practices within the Filipinx community such as *kwentuhans* to collect ethnographic information. *Kwentuhans* is a growing approach that Filipina/o/x community organizations have used to hold conversations about difficult and sometimes taboo topics with others who share their cultural spaces. In practice, *kwentuhans* are similar to talk-story conversations. *Kwentuhans* are conducted not in isolation or with merely the interviewer as

[43] "Peminist scholars refute feminist frameworks that have neglected the complex experiences of Filipina American women," Melinda de Jesus on the definition(s) of a peminist critique, "Introduction," as found in *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical Theory, Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 5-10.

researcher and the interviewee as research subject, but rather these talk-story sessions are encouraged in a more familial group setting. In my p/feminist *kwentuhans*, I wanted our elders who had never met me prior to be in comfortable familial spaces, where their daughters and granddaughters were also present, so that we may all share and ask questions to one another when topics or stories of the female elder particularly struck us as relatable or as profoundly new information.

Peminism and *pinayism* as a form of organic feminism asks us to consider how our subjectivity as Filipinas affect and create intergenerational perspectives that cut across borders like the nation state, which ostensibly keeps first generation Filipina experiences separate and different from second and third generation Filipinas in America.[44] Using *kwentuhans* as p/feminist practice for my research was a way for Fil-Am *pinay* and *manang* community members to share their experiences in a way that highlighted how similar their particular situations and dynamics as *pinays* are, and therefore bridges their worldviews as Filipinas.[45]

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[44] Peminism is a specific form of feminist theory rooted in the Filipina American experience-an experience very different from the implicit (and thus explicit) subject of white liberal feminism… [that] describes Filipina American struggles against racism, sexism, imperialism, and homophobia and struggles for decolonization, consciousness, and liberation." Meant to critique hegemonic feminism's tendency to center the experiences of white, cisgender, heterosexual, middle-class, US-based women while maintaining commitment to an intersectional and decolonial politics that make visible the Filipina American in Asian American and Filipino American Studies. Peminist literature speaks to a conversation of race, class, gender, sexuality, nation, and empire from the perspective of Filipinas while demanding political action(s). Author Melinda de Jesus, 2005. Pinayism, as defined by Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales, is a praxis that asserts a transformative agency that combines theory, practice, and personal reflection. Pinayism as praxis promotes Filipina sisterhood as part of it pedagogical goals where one "Teaches and learns critical *pinay* studies with purpose to develop capacity for *pinays* to confront global, local, and personal problems that face their community while also mentoring, reproducing, and creating a community of *pinayists*." Pinayism as pedagogical praxis allows for the articulation of Filipina Amreicans to navigate between and beyond the binary understanding of race in the United States. *Pinayism* as pedagogy connects the global and local to the personal issues and stories of *pinay* struggle, survival, service, sisterhood, and strength while aiding the individual and the communal in decolonizing our circumstances and knowing in order to move towards liberation. The complexity of being *pinay* is explored through the intersections of race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, spirituality/religion, education, educational status, age, place of birth, diasporic migration, citizenship, and love.

[45] The pedagogical praxis of *pinayism* seeks to achieve freedom through humanizing the traditional sites of knowledge production like the classroom. A pinayist classroom and means of teaching with and for the community thus becomes a place to share personal narratives so as to make pinay literature and mentorship accessible. In my *kwentuhans* as oral history interviews, I drew from pinayist and peminist pedagogy in my questions and conversation with the lolas and their daughters where I positioned myself as the *hija* learning from the elder manang

As the last of the Salinas *manangs* reach their late nineties, the opportunities to record their accounts of these historic events, and the opportunities to add complexity to the labor history of California's Depression Era, are dwindling. To contribute a more holistic picture and recognize all contributions to California's agrarian labor history, and the greater Filipinx experience, the more imperative it is for scholars to focus on local histories, and most importantly, utilize research practices that democratize the production of historical knowledge such as community based participatory research.

Chapters and Themes

My diasporic *pinay* pioneer history will cover chronologically the Spanish-American War of 1898 through the colonization of the Philippines during the American Occupation Era, the migration of Filipinas/os to the Central Coast beginning in the 1920s, the Filipina and *pinay* contributions to World War II, and the postwar wave of Filipina war brides of the 1940s-1950s.

Chapter 1 discusses the Spanish and American colonial gender orders Filipinas navigated at the turn of the twentieth century and how white colonial patriarchies shaped the many practices of American imperialism in the Philippines. The chapter will also analyze the effects of America's public education programs in the Philippines and the gendered nature of the domestic science coursework that Filipinas were forced to learn and how it informed their views of the world as they began to migrate to the United States and engage in domestic and international issues as colonial subjects. Chapter 2 will discuss how the *Pensionada/o* Program, Philippine women's clubs, and access to women's colleges during the 1910s-1920s affected the formation

while in the comfort of a fellow Filipina American's family living room, or *salas*. Having other family members of the manang elders present, other *pinays*, especially their daughters, was a moment(s) of pinayism as pedagogy in practice as all three generations of *pinays* were sharing their histories and feelings of being *pinay* for the sake of producing and preserving community knowledge and history.

of early Filipina p/feminist thought in their intertwined struggle for suffrage and Philippine independence. Chapter 3 will describe the early Asian immigrant community settlements along the Central Coast and the *machismo pinoy* culture that developed as the backdrop and environment that the pinay generation lived and labored in. This chapter will elaborate on the gendered labor roles that pioneer *pinays* found themselves having to conform to in order to help their small communities thrive during the racial and economic turmoil of the Depression Era.

Chapter 4 will discuss *pinay* labor, organizing, and gender performance in rural California and how Filipina immigrants challenged Filipino and Euro-American sexisms in their communities and beyond. Furthermore, I will trace the transpacific p/feminist organizing that *pinays* learned in the Philippines from the New Filipina Generation and how they reproduced those practices along the Central Coast as community organizers and as "mothers of their community". Chapter 5 will discuss how the absence of the *Pinoy* Generation, who volunteered for the war, opened opportunities for Filipina immigrants to take more robust leadership positions in their communities as well as on a national stage for the growing Filipinx American network mid-century.

Chapter 6 will describe the aftermath of the gendered power dynamic shift after the *manongs* returned from war and the addition of the younger generation of *pinays*; the war bride Filipinas (1945-1948) would join and help the established Depression Era *pinay* clubs to help grow and safeguard their Fil-Am communities. Both generations, the *pinays* of the FWC and the war bride *pinays* drew from their cultural maternalist values as well as their peminist politicking that they practiced and were empowered by during the war to collectively put forward more community programs as leaders of their community. The addition of war bride *pinays* to the rural Fil-Am communities of Central California and the Central Coast would inspire more *pinay*

clubs to sprout across the rural Fil-Am network of California. These two generations together, I argue, are the *Manang* Generation; those who survived the American Occupation Era and Imperial Japan's takeover of the Philippines who would one way or another, help establish and maintain the Fil-Am towns we know today.

Lastly, the conclusion will describe the legacy and ongoing efforts of the first Filipino women's club in California and the Pacific Northwest, the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas. This chapter covers the continuing efforts of Salinas Valley Filipinas in their unchanged labor roles as transnational cultural matriarchs, educators, pillars, and organizers for Fil-Ams today, and how their community labor speaks to the diasporic Filipina-*pinay* identity as one of a working-class *peminist* activist. The last chapter will also elaborate on how Filipinx community histories can be implemented to continue *pinayist* methods and pedagogy to promote and sustain creative platforms of Ethnic Studies, Critical Filipinx Studies, Public History, and Education via exhibition, community archiving, and curriculum-making as opportunities for community organizing.

Chapter 1: The Gendered Nature of a Colonial Education: The Spanish Period and the American Occupation Era, 1600-1903

On May 29th, 1902 a Filipina revolutionary, Clemencia Lopez, spoke at the annual meeting of the *New England Woman's Suffrage Association*. At the time of Lopez's address, the Philippines was still in the thick of war against the United States. In that same year the US army declared that they had successfully defeated the Filipino rebel armies and declared the Philippine Islands as an American protectorate and thus an unorganized territory under the Philippines Organic Act.[46] Clemencia, like her older brothers, was a staunch supporter of Philippine independence. Clemencia's brothers and father all supported Philippine independence from Spain during the Tagalog Revolution (1896-1898). In the aftermath of the Spanish American War, her brothers were exiled for challenging American control over the Philippines. By 1901, Clemencia's family's trade and merchant businesses, along with their ancestral home in Batangas, were claimed by the American army which in turn forced Clemencia to put on hold her desire to study abroad in Paris. She immediately left for Hong Kong to seek aid from her oldest brother, Sixto, for help to manage the remaining family finances and to help her devise a plan to seek justice for their family's losses.[47]

From 1898-1902, more than 25% of the Philippine population died from torture, disease, murder, and famine brought on by the American military's "scorched earth" strategy, which they

[46] The Philippines Organic Act "defined a temporary civil government for the islands. It created a bicameral legislature with a popularly elected lower house and a commission of presidentially appointed members that acted like a senate. It also designated the appointment of two resident commissioners as nonvoting delegates to the U.S. House of Representatives." Office of the Historian, "The Philippines, 1898–1946," *History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives,* Office of the Historian, *Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Congress, 1900–2017*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2018, Last Accessed February 27, 2022, https://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/APA/Historical-Essays/Exclusion-and-Empire/The-Philippines/.

[47] Clemencia and her siblings corresponded a great deal even when they were on their travels. Clemencia and her older sister, Juliana, continued to correspond when they could despite the American military surveillance that their family was under in Batangas. In their letters, the siblings discuss the family atrocities, deaths of their workers who were tortured by the American military's slash and burn campaign during the Philippine American War, and above all their hopes for the future. Many of their letters traveled from Hong Kong, Manila, Washington D.C., and Batangas to name a few of the locations the siblings visited in their campaign to liberate their brothers from exile on Tamil Island. Their letters were collected and made into a collection to give a history of the courage and patriotism of the Lopez Family in 1904, with the hopes that their letters would continue to inspire Philippine Independence. *The Story of the Lopez Family: A Page from the History of the War In the Philippines* (Boston, James H. West Company, 1904).

believed would force Philippine peoples and the surviving revolutionaries to submit to American rule. Many staple crops and animal husbandry such as the water buffalo that Philippine communities depended on were purposefully eradicated to make the locals submit and depend on the new American colonial presence.[48] In an attempt to salvage her family's home, save her brothers in exile, and secure the livelihoods of those who had worked for her family for generations, she ventured to Boston, and joined the ranks of the Anti-Imperialists. Such members of the Anti-Imperialist organizers included Mark Twain and Fiske Warren who hosted her in Boston. Clemencia believed she could successfully plead for her people's freedom to American politicians so that they may reconsider their colonial grab for the Philippines. As soon as she arrived, Clemencia would be hosted by Boston's elite families who participated in the Anti-Imperialist Movement. She spoke at multiple events advocating for the Philippines' independence and enrolled into Wellesley College to learn English.[49]

Her connections then offered her an opportunity to speak at the *New England Woman's Suffrage Association*.[50] Lopez regaled the ladies before her on Filipina pre-colonial history, the value of Filipina labor, and her many roles in her family, home, and above all her country. She argued that the Filipina, long before the Spanish arrived, was equal to her husband in every way, and that even the Spanish missionaries could not help but take note and praise Filipinas for their

[48] Letter from Governor-General of the Philippines William Taft to Henry Cabot Lodge, 1902, on how to weaken the Philippine peoples by destroying their staple crops and the water buffalo populations. As early as 1899, General Shafter argued, "It may be necessary to kill half the Filipinos in order that the remaining half of the population may be advanced to a higher plane of life than their present semi-barbarous state affords." Van Meter, Henry Hooker. The Truth about the Philippines from Official Records and Authentic Sources ... a Reference Review, by H.H. Van Meter. United States: Liberty league, (n.d.), 368.

[49] Soon after her arrival in Boston, American newspapers published Clemencia Lopez's plight for her brothers in exile. Most newspapers highlighted her "oriental," or "Japanese stamp" of beauty and "maiden" like qualities rather than her anti-imperialist purpose. Newspaper featuring Clemencia Lopez, "A Filipino Beauty," *East Hampton NY Star*, July 4, 1902. See also "SENORITA CLEMENCIA LOPEZ HAS MADE FAVORABLE IMPRESSION," *Carlinville IL Daily Enquirer*, 1902.

[50] The New England Woman Suffrage Association (NEWSA) was first established in 1868. The members campaigned for the right of women to vote in the U.S. The first leaders of the organization included Julia Ward Howe and Lucy Stone both of whom are seen as major radical figureheads of the earlier stages of the Woman Movement. Their core philosophies for the advancement of women drew from an abolitionist framework. Its initial leaders were allies within the abolitionist movement during and after the civil war. Their leaders opposed Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony's beliefs that white women should receive the vote before freed Black men. Rather, they saw universal suffrage as only possible with the enfranchisement of Black Americans.

skills, roles, and respect they had in their communities.[51] Clemencia lamented that the Filipina was a respectable and upright patriotic individual, and, in essence, that it was colonialism that tainted her and denied her access to the rights and privileges of citizenship under both colonial regimes and modern day attempts at democracy:

> *"Mentally, socially, and in almost all the relations of life, our women are regarded as the equals of our men. You will also be surprised to know that this equality of women in the Philippines is not a new thing. It was not introduced from Europe, but was innate, and the natural expression of the love and respect which a man ought to feel toward his mother, his wife, and his daughters."*[52]

Clemencia Lopez at the turn of the nineteenth century was a giant in her own right. She crossed nations and oceans to support the anti-imperialist movement. She mastered English in a foreign country within a matter of months, adding it to the lexicon of foreign languages and Philippine dialects already under her linguistic belt. She was the first Filipina to enter the White House, meeting warmonger President Theodore Roosevelt as a woman patriot of her nation to argue that her brothers be returned from exile. And lastly, in one speech alone, she demonstrated a glimpse of what we would know today as radical women of color feminist pedagogy; she offered her peoples' histories and shared their gendered struggles under colonialism and juxtaposed American women's struggles with gender inequality with the sole purpose to create long standing coalitions and "radical alliances across difference."[53] She taught white women that, despite their experiences under different political, gender, and cultural systems, they both recognized the potential for a freer world by allowing women access to political power and presence:

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[51] "Long prior to the Spanish occupation the people were already civilized, and this respect for and equality of women existed. Dr. Antonio de Morga, the first Spanish governor-general, in his history published in 1609, gives an interesting account of Philippine life before the Spanish invasion." "Women of the Philippines: Clemencia López," Speaking While Female Speech Bank, https://speakingwhilefemale.co/global-affairs-lopez/. "Women of the Philippines: Address to Annual Meeting of the New England Woman's Suffrage Association, May 29, 1902," *The Woman's Journal*, June 1902, p. 184.

[52] "Women of the Philippines: Clemencia López," Speaking While Female Speech Bank, https://speakingwhilefemale.co/global-affairs-lopez/. "Women of the Philippines: Address to Annual Meeting of the New England Woman's Suffrage Association, May 29, 1902," *The Woman's Journal*, June 1902, p. 184.

[53] Elizabeth R. Cole and Zakiya T. Luna, "Making Coalitions Work: Solidarity across Difference within US Feminism," Feminist Studies 36, no. 1 (2010): 71–98.

"I am glad of this opportunity to address you, so that you may have a better idea and may form a different and more favorable opinion of the Filipinos than the conception which the generality of the American people have formed, believing us to be savages without education or morals. I believe that we are both striving for much the same object — you for the right to take part in national life; we for the right to have a national life to take part in. And I am sure that, if we understood each other better, the differences which now exist between your country and mine would soon disappear."[54]

Clemencia explained that suffrage for all could only be attained under a true democracy where all people are free. Such a world without colonial governance would allow all women to participate politically where they were needed. Women's political agency as mothers, daughters, and dutiful patriots to their motherland meant helping to end "the miserable condition of the women of my country." Clemencia concluded her radical speech on the Filipina struggle with the ongoing horrors that America's colonial war exacted on women, "thousands have been widowed, orphaned, left alone and homeless, exposed and in the greatest misery. It is, then, not a surprising fact that the diseases born of hunger are increasing, and that to-day immorality prevails in the Philippines to an extent never before known. After all, you ought to understand that we are only contending for the liberty of our country, just as you once fought for the same liberty for yours."[55]

Despite Clemencia's courageous efforts to liberate her family and country while progressively advocating for the political worth of women of color under colonial regimes, her speeches fell on deaf ears. She would return to the Philippines and in 1905, she would help to co-found the *Asociacion Femnista Filipina* (Philippine Feminist Association). The group of Filipina feminists that created this organization advocated for social welfare work, public education, charity work, moral campaign, labor reform, settlement houses, and women representation on boards of education (public and private), sanitation, emergency relief, and reproductive

[54] "Women of the Philippines: Clemencia López," Speaking While Female Speech Bank, https://speakingwhilefemale.co/global-affairs-lopez/. "Women of the Philippines: Address to Annual Meeting of the New England Woman's Suffrage Association, May 29, 1902," *The Woman's Journal*, June 1902, p. 184.

[55] "Women of the Philippines: Clemencia López," Speaking While Female Speech Bank, https://speakingwhilefemale.co/global-affairs-lopez/. "Women of the Philippines: Address to Annual Meeting of the New England Woman's Suffrage Association, May 29, 1902," *The Woman's Journal*, June 1902, p. 184.

healthcare.[56] Other organizations branched off from the (AFF), inspired by the guest lectures they held on reproductive health and sanitation. This included *La Gota de Leche* project headed by *La Protección de la Infancia*.[57] Other channels of social service born from AFF include the Philippine Islands Anti-Tuberculosis Society and the *Liga Nacional*, as well as the Society for the Advancement of Women, or Women's Club of Manila as it was known after 1912, which continued a uniquely Filipina p/feminist praxis by emphasizing social service as women's political agency rather than direct policies for suffrage.[58] Their goals included prison reform, segregating women from men and ensuring that female police officers could be trained and hired and thus participate in civic service. In time, the Philippine government itself would come to rely on the Filipina Women's club in times of need.[59]

The *Asociacion Femnista Filipina* as a women's organization used the word feminist and developed their own radical concept of feminism as community-facing before Euro-American women developed and utilized feminist philosophies and incorporated it into their agenda for women's rights. The word feminism and feminist would only enter Euro-American circles and vernacular beginning in 1914 but particularly from a Euro-American working class lens.[60]

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[56] The AFF would also work to create government sponsored programming such as typhoon and emergency relief that the Philippines still uses today. Tarrosa Subido, *The Feminist Movement In the Philippines: 1905-1955* (National Federation of Women's Clubs Publishers, 1955), 7.

[57] Co-founder of the Philippine Feminist Association, Concepcion Felix Roque helped to co-found *La Gota de leche*, which provided nutritional and medical needs to poor Filipina mothers and their children. The foundation continues to deliver daily milk rations for Filipino children. Concepcion Felix Roque was one of the first female lawyers in the Philippines and was a suffragist and social worker.

[58] Subido,*The Feminist Movement In the Philippines*, 8

[59] Subido, *The Feminist Movement In the Philippines*, on the AFF's WWI organized food drives.

[60] The 1914 book titled *What Women Want: An Interpretation of the Feminist Movement* and the organization Heterodoxy established in 1912 argued that "women of the future were big spirited, intellectually alert, devoid of the old 'femininity," and some of the members of the early formation of the feminist intellectual circles were socialist activists part of the Industrial Workers of the World or were from other regular walks of life arguing that there were multiple fronts in which women were denied access to because of definitions of gender and sex for example, being able to keep one's name even in marriage, or having to abide by fashion standards, to being recognized for specializing in domestic industries, or for even being able to form a union and to organize despite one's assigned gender. Feminism in America prior to suffrage, 1912-1920, was more conversational and consciousness raising and was more geared towards individualism and self development, this was the "new woman" during the Progressive Era. Suffragists and older woman circles emphasized motherly self sacrifice and "submergence in the family." Black women feminists and activists during the 1910s-1920s were tackling multiple issues that included racial uplift and social reform/service by emphasizing the gendered labor, motherwork, and community work that was required in securing Black political determination as found in Nancy F. Cott *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*

Rather, as I will demonstrate, Filipina feminisms as a category of BIPOC women's radical feminist praxis functioned and were directly informed by abolitionism in the sense of a desire for self-determination as colonial female subjects of color that outright challenged and critiqued the infiltration of patriarchy in all facets of their daily life.

Prior to the American Occupation of the Philippines, other women of color feminisms helped to establish the language and framework of BIPOC feminisms that Filipinas would contribute to as their response to a second wave of patriarchal colonialism. Black feminist tradition, especially during the nineteenth century, as Max Peterson argues, was unique in that it did not grow "out of other movements, but out of the condition of being both black and a woman. It is a long tradition which resists easy definition and is characterized by its multi-dimensional approach to liberation."[61] Black feminist tradition as demonstrated by Sojourner Truth in their advocacy for full citizenship and abolition allowed for the expression and political participation of Black women to challenge how race and gender intersected as categories of difference to further disenfranchise Black families, communities, and individuals. The racism and sexism that Black women faced under America's racial capitalist system of bondage limited Black women's agency and voices. In bell Hooks history of Black women's feminisms, Hooks locates Black feminist voices in the historical record and argues in *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (1981) that Black women's resistance, Black feminisms, came in the form of articulating and recording their experiences "in particular they emphasized the "female" aspect of their being" that expressed how there existed multiple "patriarchal social orders" that

(Yale Press, 1987), 38-40. A timeline on the use of the word feminism as part of the woman movement, Https://www.adolescent.net/a/a-brief-history-of-the-word-feminist.

[61] Max Peterson, "Collection Story: The Revolutionary Practices of Black Feminisms," *The National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian*, Last Modified March 4, 2019, https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/revolutionary-practice-black-feminisms.

"granted them no political voice."[62] In the 1920s during the supposed doldrums of women's rights, women of color again began the arduous task of redefining the parameters of feminism as BIPOC community organizing philosophies and practices that centered women of color along their needs and issues as tied to their communities' survival, civil rights, because BIPOC women were still denied access to full citizenship despite the 19th amendment.[63] During this same period of BIPOC feminist growth (the late Victorian Era through Progressive Era), colonial female subjects of color, Filipinas, would also contribute their own unique p/feminist praxis to BIPOC female activism that outlined their interpretations of sovereignty and self-determination that expressed their own "experiences of being" Filipina that uniquely described their political agency as brown women challenging imperialist patriarchies at the intersections of Euro-American and Filipino-Spanish legal, cultural, and social parameters.

The *Asociacion Feminista Filipina* (AFF) helped Filipinas/os across the islands, providing the family essentials that Filipinas were in desperate need of while also attending to social issues facing them at present. Once those basic needs were met, and their communities were protected and guaranteed through public policies and welfare organizations, Filipinas could then tackle the conjoined issues of suffrage under their current colonial puppet government. For these Filipina p/feminists at the dawn of a new colonial era, p/feminism for them represented a new female socio-political arena where if women had equal opportunities to an education, they could participate in reforming the Philippines alongside the men, therefore drawing from and reproducing the precolonial maternalist and kin-partnership that resonated with Filipino

[62] Bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (Routledge Press, 1981), 3-5.
[63] Martha S. Jones in their book *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All* (2020) describes how Black women on multiple occasions from one state to the next, were denied access to enjoying the privileges of the 19th amendment, and instead, through grassroots organizing were able to create movements towards both women's rights and Black Civil Rights during a time period that historians normally describe as the "doldrums" of feminism.

matriarchal cultural values as to the supporting roles of women.[64] Filipina p/feminist club organizing for these same upper class and well-rounded women also represented a public facing arm that could carve out leadership opportunities for women to oversee issues they saw as strictly women's concerns which, to their perspective, male leadership whether colonial or Filipino, had neglected to solve.

Thus, this chapter will describe how colonial influences, particularly colonial education, affected and informed gender roles in the Philippines. The colonial projects put forth by both the Spanish and American Thomasites and governors were critical in shaping what Denise Cruz describes as the emergence of the Transpacific Filipina, or the modern Filipina, whose colonial education offered her pathways to becoming literary figures and leaders as the Philippines continued to be dragged into the international spotlight as a colonial possession of the United States. I argue in this chapter that the modern Filipina, or the New Filipina of the Progressive Era, tutored and mentored under American Thomasite instruction, remained subjected to a limited and gendered education. The Thomasite curriculum centered first and foremost a colonial agenda because of the gendered nature of its domestic science curriculum, which sought to emphasize and extract Asian women's domestic and care work. But despite the economic success and extraction of Filipina labor as part of the American colonial enterprise, Filipinas opted to utilize their modern education as an entryway towards building a modern and independent Philippines.

Clemencia and the women of the AFF carried the burden of the gendered system carried over from the era of Spanish colonization, and they did not want these norms to continue into the era of American colonization. Their goal was to draw on a pre-colonial model of gender relations, whereas the Americans wanted to retain some of what the Spanish had implemented

[64] Filipina wives as *katulong* (servant, maid) had particular responsibilities especially if their marriages were to prominent families or particular revolutionary leaders. Their kinship ties dictated that they would handle the charity and fundraising work of their communities including providing healthcare resources, clothing, and food for their family members and extended barrio. Mina Roces, "Women in Philippine Politics and Society," as found in A Mixed Blessing: The Impact of American Colonial Experience on the Politics and Society in the Philippines (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 167.

while making a few progressive adjustments.[65] The Filipina prior to Spanish colonization was equal to her male peers. She could own property, participate in local forms of government and tribal affairs. She could hold the same prestigious military and socio-political positions as men. She could inherit property and could pass down her own inheritance to her children independent of her husband's will and name. Filipinas could also freely divorce if she chose to. Wives were referred to as *may-bahay*, "the lady of my house," which for precolonial standards inferred that she held authority over her home and family reputation, and that the family's standing in society was governed by her, not her husband or partner.[66]

Under the Spanish, Filipinas were not allowed to attend higher education with men, and only the most prestigious of families could send their daughters to higher learning. But even in those spaces, the courses and subject matter available to Filipinas was relegated to domestic duties, Spanish literature, religious teachings, and writing. Indeed, the Spanish nuns only instructed the local Filipinas in sewing and garment-making.[67] Filipina writers of the nineteenth century were a rarity. Leona Josesfa Florentino was one of the first Filipina poets to write in her native tongue of Ilocano whose poems, only after her death, would be showcased in Spain, France, London, and Louisiana. She was tutored by her mother and received private tutoring in

[65] The Spanish system had implemented an education system that only benefited the landed elite and the Church. Many of the elite families were of mixed Spanish and/or Chinese heritage. The American colonial system continued the semi-feudal land system by allowing many of the landed elite working with them to exploit Filipino agrarian labor, therefore perpetuating the class-caste system where the peasants, even if they were land owners, could not experience social mobility. Furthermore, the knowledge of the Philippines' geography and natural resources that the Spanish had came as part of the American demands in the Treaty of Paris. The United States would thus continue the land grab and fiefdom system of the Spanish but at an accelerated pace as they continued to compete with other European empires in the Pacific. For more information on the carryover of Spanish colonial oversight into American colonial policies, please see Michael Salman, *The Embarrassment of Slavery: Controversies over bondage and Nationalism in the American Colonial Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

[66] Tarrosa Subido, 1. I say partner here as well because the *babaylan*, or *baglan* in Ilokano, were spiritual healers and leaders that in many cases was a role assigned to women; but *babaylan* could also be what we would consider transwomen today and they would also marry men and have the same privileges and social and legal authority as their hetero-cisgendered Filipina peers.

[67] Marilla Weaver, "American Schoolmistress In the Philippine Islands," *Topeka State Journal*, Article, September 1909, Library of Congress.

advanced Spanish from the local head priest in Vigan. Her father arranged her marriage with the wealthiest man from her Ilocos town of Vigan and she would bear him five children.

Nalpay A Namnama **("Blasted Hope")**

What gladness and what joy
are endowed to one who is loved
for truly there is one to share
all his sufferings and his pain.
My fate is dim, my stars so low
perhaps nothing to it can compare,
for truly I do not doubt
for presently I suffer so.
For even I did love,
the beauty whom I desired
never do I fully realize
that I am worthy of her.
Shall I curse the hour
when first I saw the light of day
would it not have been better a thousand times
I had died when I was born.
Would I want to explain
but my tongue remains powerless
for now do I clearly see
to be spurned is my lot.
But would it be my greatest joy
to know that it is you I love,
for to you do I vow and a promise I make
it's you alone for whom I would lay my life.

Florentino's writing style was unique in that she had blended the oral Filipino and Spanish traditions that women at the time practiced in storytelling performances. She performed and wrote her work for private audiences in both languages. Her poetry, written in both Spanish and Ilocano lyrical prose, was provocative for the period because it reflected on the roles and agency of women beyond homemaker and wife, and the purpose of life and love as a Filipina. As a queer Filipina living in a conservative colonial environment, she too had a life governed by familial and filial obligations that she had to conform to in order to survive and provide for her children. Because of her critique of marriage, her queerness, and desire to pursue writing, she was exiled from her family, although her husband Marcelino Florentino, a major politician of Vigan, cited the reason for exile was her contraction of tuberculosis. She succumbed to her illness in 1889 at the age of thirty-five, less than a decade shy of the Philippine Revolution of 1897. Josefa had penned a total of 22 poems in her short life, and it would be her son, Isabelo de los Reyes, a labor activist who would publish her work. Her literary defiance would become a hallmark in Filipina literature and open the doors to questioning heteropatriarchal standards that defined both Spanish colonization and Filipino manhood during a tumultuous phase where the educated elite were questioning Spanish rule. Thus, her poetry helped well-read Filipinas find their footing and language in questioning their roles within multiple power dynamics under empire that they were forcibly bound to. Her work would help usher in the larger *p/feminista* movement which would continue to gain traction during the early stages of American colonization in the Philippines.

The questions she posed were radical in the sense that she reflected on the limitations and barriers that Filipinas felt. Questioning the gendered values placed on the home and family were the earlier pathways of resistance to colonial patriarchies. Other Filipinas would continue to act

on their conversations of colonial resistance by serving the *Katipunan*, a secret revolutionary society established in 1892.[68] Through challenging colonialism, women questioned the gender dynamics that colonial institutions and minds put forth and forced onto them. Some women, like Agueda Kabahangan, advocated for their freedoms by serving in the independence movement as soldiers who would eventually earn the title of woman general (*henerala*) of Laguna. Others served as part of the treasurers and secretaries of the katipunan itself, like Gregoria Alvarez de Jesus, who was the founder of the Women's Chapter of the *Katipunan* serving as both its custodian and vice president. When the *Katipunan* was first formed, only men were allowed to join. The women of the *Katipunan* believed similar to what Clemencia argued, that Filipinas were also capable and just as essential in taking on the mantle of fighting for their country's liberation. As the custodian of the women's chapter, she preserved major documents and managed the funding of the revolution throughout the duration of the Filipino rebellion against Spain.[69] It is because of her many roles in the *Katipunan* that documentation and histories of the *Katipunan* survive.

The onset of American colonialism would present another set of gendered obstacles and contradictions similar to the Spanish system. Under Spanish folk Catholicism, women were revered for their mother work and maternalism, and the ideal woman was that of the pure Virgin

[68] The Tagalog word *katipunan* translates to an "association" or "gathering." The intention of the choice of *katipunan* as the word to name the anti-Spanish colonial movement is shorthand for the phrase *Kataastaasan Kagalang-Galang Na Katipunan Nang Manga Anak Nang Bayan* "Supreme Worshipful Association of the Sons of the People."

[69] In 1893, women were given the chance to join the organization. The first members were Gregoria de Jesus, Josefa Rizal, Marina Dizon and Angelica Lopez. They served as the keepers of important and confidential documents of the Katipunan and staged galas as fronts for the regular meetings of the male members. NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE PHILIPPINES
REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS, "ANDRES BONIFACIO AND THE KATIPUNAN," *NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE PHILIPPINES: REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS*, Last Modified MARCH 25, 2013, Last Accessed March 2, 2022,
https://web.archive.org/web/20140417005606/http://nhcp.gov.ph/andres-bonifacio-and-the-katipunan/.

Mary. Yet, women under the Spanish system were legally dependent on their husbands or father. Under Spanish colonialism women were deemed as vulnerable to sin and vanity, especially as colonized subjects of color, and thus were described as needing extra guidance and oversight by white male authority. Thus, to be out in society Filipinas needed chaperones and attendants, otherwise she risked the shame and criticisms of her larger social networks which would ultimately reflect poorly on her family.

In a similar vein, American colonial practices emphasized that it was the white man's burden to help civilize the Filipino by instructing them on the rigor of freedom and democracy. In order to justify their intervention in the Philippines, American educators argued that Spanish teachings had not led to modern civilization and instead were backwards and false; teaching the Lord's will as American Protestantism, not Spanish Catholicism, as ideal.[70] Under the Spanish, only a select few of Filipina/o elite could attend school, with only two thousand small schools available to the public up until the Tagalog Revolution. American government officials and colonial educators argued that "liberating the Filipino" meant that both sexes be allowed to attend higher learning.[71] Within two years, the colonial government opened nearly 1000 public

[70] Euro-Americans carried the same biases towards Spanish authority similar to the English in regards to the Black Legend, painting Spanish Catholicism as brutal and savage in its treatment of Indigenous people. Anything carried out by the Spanish Empire was thus viewed as backwards or uncivilized, and this reflected on how Americans viewed Filipinos, who although they had been Christianized, were deemed as inferior for having been taught by the Spanish. Euro-American Christianity is more informed by English antecedents, and therefore they adopted the same interpretations and negative connotations towards Spanish colonization. For more on the Black Legend and the differences in colonization techniques between the British and Spanish Empires, see J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492-1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006). For more on the English justifying colonization by arguing that they could do it more effectively than the Spanish, see Peter C. Mancall, *Hakluyt's Promise: An Elizabethan's Obsession for an English America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

[71] During his research, Taft concluded, and overstated, that "the great majority of Filipinos" did not object to U.S. colonial rule in a general sense; they simply reserved their main "hostility" for America's "Military Government."[75] Nevertheless, his commission report, issued in August 1900, was a scathing indictment of the population at large. Filipino people were described as being "ignorant, superstitious, and credulous in remarkable degree." Taft laid out a plan to introduce government institutions, establish a civil service, and enact currency and tax programs. It also called for public works, capital investment, and educational reform. On the heels of its report, the commission assumed all legislative powers in the Philippines on September 1, 1900. For more information on the colonial education policies please see San Buenaventura, Steffi. 1990. *Nativism and Ethnicity in a Filipino-American*

schools for grade school learning and established more universities like the University of the Philippines and women's colleges, which many of the founders of the AFF were alumni of.[72]

Despite the progressive attempt in democratizing the Philippine landscape through education, American goals of implementing a formal public education were nevertheless colonial in nature. According to renowned Filipino historian Renato Constantino, the colonial department of education was formulated so that government services were "Filipinized," or in other words, had influence or were led by some Filipino intellectuals and civic officers. But Filipinization would only come *after* the first wave of American colonial administrations had implemented their own visions of education and social and economic policies. "Although the Filipinos were being prepared for self-government, the Department of Education was never entrusted to any Filipino. Americans always headed this department. This in a nutshell was (and to a great extent still is) the happy result of early educational policy because, within the framework of American colonialism, whenever there was a conflict between American and Filipino goals and interests, the schools guided us toward thought and action which could forward American interests."[73] It would not be until after the Tydings-McDuffie Act that a Filipino—one who was trained in the most elite schools overseen by American administrators—would be allowed to head the department.

The American Education Director during the first stage of American colonial intervention was Fred Atkinson, who implemented the goal that Filipino public education focus on vocational training. Filipina/o/x students learning and practicing crafts and trades were seen as the first

Experience and Wesling, Meg. Empire's Proxy : American Literature and U. S. Imperialism in the Philippines, New York University Press, 2011.

[72] Steffi San Buenaventura, *Nativism and Ethnicity in a Filipino-American Experience* (1990),

[73] Renato Constantino, "THE MISEDUCATION OF THE FILIPINO," 4. Last Accessed March 3, 2022, https://nonlinearhistorynut.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/miseducation-of-a-filipino.pdf.

stage of the Filipinization process. The Filipina/o/x pupil thus began to create cheap goods that the American empire would both consume and profit off. Ngugi wa Thiong'o describes colonial education as the "psychological violence of the classroom," and, in true colonial fashion, American administrators and colonial officials created a curriculum and educational space that in many ways limited the Filipina/o/x from achieving true democracy.[74] Roland Coloma argues that European and American colonial classroom curricula in Hawai'i also promoted similar "colonial myths," that brown female colonial pupils were being liberated through a public education, when in truth, in traditional pre-colonial society, Filipinas had far more spiritual and social kinship power compared to that of their white Christian female counterparts.[75] Thus, under the guise of providing civilized instruction, American colonial pedagogy used forms of tutelage as a means of surveillance and to ensure that Filipina/o/x subjects were productive.[76]

Americanizing the Philippines as a colonial method, even in the form of progressivism—as when they introduced public schools open to all regardless of class, gender, or familial lineage—had its priorities. Taking the Philippines was a means to an imperialist end, designed first and foremost to exploit the region for its natural resources and its people for their cheap brown labor in growing American owned industries and economy. Furthermore, the location of the Philippines was essential for the United States to have as it allowed them a further foothold in the Pacific, especially to enter China's market, in order to compete with its European imperialist peers as a superpower. Ten years prior, the American planters in Hawai'i staged a coup for the very same reasons: to overthrow the monarchy so as to gain total control over the

[74] Malini Johar Schueller, *Campaigns of Knowledge: US Pedagogies of Colonialism and Occupation in the Philippines and Japan*, 23.
[75] Roland Sintos Coloma, *Postcolonial Challenges Education* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2009), 91.
[76] Malini Johar Schueller, Campaigns of Knowledge: US Pedagogies of Colonialism and Occupation in the Philippines and Japan, 26.

Indigenous Hawaiian lands and gain full autonomy over their plantation and agrarian economies. The same methods of manifest destiny of moving westward to gain access to property and resources under "god's name and will" thus extended beyond the borders of the United States and into the Pacific: displacing Native and Indigenous communities, taking their lands, forcibly assimilating them into American culture and internalizing white settler patriarchal ideologies.[77]

Many of the first projects that the American colonial administration funded included research relating to anthropological studies including the cataloging of natural resources in the Philippines. Official American government records and published books include Dean Cornant Worcester's *The Philippine Islands and their Peoples* (1898) and O. Coursey's *History and Geography of the Philippine Islands* (1903). Worcester, a zoologist and former Secretary of the Interior and Local Government of Philippines, noted the following in his research on the island of Mindoro:

> *"There are outcroppings of lignite at numerous points on the island, and in the vicinity of Mt. Halcon is found the finest marble yet discovered in this part of the world. Gold is also present in some quantity at various places. In short, Mindoro is naturally one of the richest islands in the Archipelago. If its tillable lands were under high cultivation, it would support half the population of the Philippines."*[78]

In 1904 Homer Stuntz, Superintendent of Missions in the Philippines, wrote a history of the Philippines in which he describes American intervention as leading to "nearly eight million people emerging from the twilight of a belated civilization into the high noon of modern life. If

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[77] John Louis O'Sullivan, a popular editor and columnist, articulated the long-standing American belief in the God-given mission of the United States to lead the world in the transition to democracy. He called this America's "manifest destiny." This idea motivated wars of American expansion. He explained this idea in the following essay where he advocated adding Texas to the United States. John O'Sullivan, "Annexation," *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, Volume 17 (New York: 1845), 5-6, 9-10.

[78] Dean Conant Worcester, *The Philippines: Past and Present* (1914), 214. Worcester's history of the Philippines involved listing the natural valuable resources in the Philippines, "There are outcroppings of lignite at numerous points on the island, and in the vicinity of Mt. Halcon is the finest marble yet discovered in this part of the world. Gold is also present in some quantity at various places. In short, Mindoro is naturally one of the richest islands in the Archipelago. If its tillable lands were under high cultivation, it would support half the population of the Philippines."

the purposes of God for them in the Philippines are accomplished," he added, "there must not be only evangelization but legislation. The book has been written in the midst of very heavy duties as pastor and presiding elder of this rapidly growing work. The controlling motive has been to arrange and present as much information about the Philippines…I pray that the book may be accepted of Him [God] in whose name it has been written."[79] In all of these American attempts at historical, anthropological, and zoological research on the Philippines, the themes remained the same; making the Filipina/o appear savage, mapping the natural riches of the islands supposedly wasted on the "savage Filipino races," and marshaling America's intellectual and industrial capabilities in harnessing such resources for the benefit of humanity, thus justifying the American agenda of humbly and benevolently assimilating the Filipino into the American imperialist scheme of modernity.[80] All of these processes allowed for the complete takeover and usurpation of Native and Indigenous peoples' resources, stripping communities of color of their free will and livelihoods and making them dependent on American teaching and missionary goodwill.

The first colonial general of the Philippines, William Howard Taft, espoused such colonial trademark ideas of American goodwill. Military schooling was a primary objective of America's colonial project in the Philippines, one which was extractive and violent in nature and designed to turn the islands into a U.S. foothold in the Pacific. These strategies could be witnessed in the memoirs of Helen Herron Taft—the president's wife—who wrote in her *Recollections of Full Years* (1914) about the interactions and conversations her husband had with other military officers on the subject of resolving the white man's burden in the islands.

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[79] Homer C. Stuntz, *The Philippines and the Far East* (Cincinnati: Jennings and Pye, 1904), 5-6.

[80] Renato Constantino's discussion on the American (mis)education of the Filipino meant to control both physically and psychologically the Filipina/o /x as a way to submit a people under the exploitative will of the American colonial powers, 219.

According to Helen Taft, the purpose of enforcing a military schooling onto the Filipino recruits was to create "a force of several thousand Filipinos, trained and commanded by American Army officers." Taft goes on to explain how the army used similar imperialist reasoning and tactics with other colonial territories:

> *"The same thing had been done with success by the British in India and the Straits Settlements, by the Dutch in Java and by our own General Davis in Porto Rico, and as the insurrectionary force had dwindled to a few bands and to scattered groups of murderers and ladrones, so acknowledged by everybody, there was no reason why a native constabulary should not be employed to clear these out. This plan was among the first things submitted to General Chaffee, but he was evidently not impressed."*[81]

Rather, General Chafee preferred to use military training as a means to control and demean the Filipino. H. Taft remarked that "Pin them down with a bayonet for at least ten years" was her "favourite expression of [Chafee's] Army sentiment which sometimes made the Commissioners' explanations to the natives rather difficult. When General Wright explained the purport of the measure General Chaffee said, 'I am opposed to the whole business. It seems to me that you are trying to introduce something to take the place of my Army.' General Wright responded, 'You have announced your purpose to concentrate the Army in the interest of economy, and to let our civil governments stand alone to see what is in them and we consider it necessary to have a constabulary, or some such force, to take care of the lawless characters that are sure to be in the country after four years of war, and especially in a country where the natives take naturally to ladronism.'"[82] Military leaders like General Wright would continue to argue that the implementation of military education would help to instruct the Filipino soldier on discipline and moral policing, but as Mrs. Taft's eavesdropping reveals, American colonial education, whether manned by the military or the Thomasite school teacher, was a project of subjugation and surveillance with the ultimate goal of owning access to the Pacific.

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[81] Helen Herron Taft, *Recollections of Full Years* (New York: Butterick Publishing Co, 1914), 219-220.
[82] H. Taft, *Recollections of Full Years*, 219.

America's taking of the Philippines was no different than previous colonial projects in Asia and the Caribbean, and their intentions remained true to their desire for gaining access to footholds in Asian markets. Using the rhetoric of Rudyard Kipling's "white man's burden" as purported in 1901 by Senator Beveridge in his address to congress, American politicians and colonial educators argued that the local Filipinas/os needed direction and guidance.[83] In the same settler colonial fashion previous American administrations practiced on Native Americans and Native Hawaiians for over a century, politicians and educators argued that an American education and oversight were the necessary tools for instructing Filipinas/os on the value of democracy and earned liberation.[84] American educators prior to the 1930s in the Philippines, known as Thomasites, taught a similar gendered interpretation of how Filipino society should be structured if they wish to be modern and independent.[85]

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[83] The Progressive Era was a racially conservative period of politics where Anglo Saxons operated in a paternalistic manner in handling its territories arguing that racially inferior peoples were understood as those who could not govern themselves as they lacked civilization and democratic methods and education. The Philippine Question was answered with this Progressive response and thus was also part of the reason why they were denied American citizenship because they were deemed unfit to take on the responsibilities of citizenship (racially, psychologically, physically, economically, socially). Baldoz, Rick. *The Third Asiatic Invasion : Migration and Empire in Filipino America, 1898-1946*. New York: New York University Press, 2011. On Senator Beveridge's congressional statements on the Philippines please see *Congressional Record*, Senate, 56th Cong., 1st sess. (9 January 1900): 705, 708; Peter W. Stanley, *A Nation in the Making: The Philippines and the United States, 1899–1921* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974): 164.

[84] According to a 1945 pamphlet published by the Office of War: Institute of Pacific Relations titled *EM 24: What Lies Ahead for the Philippines?*, there was a strong reflection of what America's role in the Philippines consisted of, mentioning clearly the role American oversight played in regards to public education on the islands. "Though America gave the Filipinos the opportunity for education, the people themselves paid for it. With slim resources and inadequate equipment they made it possible for schools to be continued and expanded. The result is that the English language, English literature, and, through them, the liberal ideas of the West, have been carried to every part of the islands." Catherine Porter, "EM 24: What Lies Ahead for the Philippines?," *American Historical Association*, Last Accessed March 12, 2022, https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/gi-roundtable-series/pamphlets/em-24-what-lies-ahead-for-the-philippines-(1945).

[85] The Thomasites were the first wave of American teachers who arrived in the Philippines in 1901. Their nickname as Thomasites originated from the ship that they arrived on which was the United States Army Transport Thomas. Many of these teachers had previous experience teaching Native American youths and were familiar with the pedagogy of instructing people of color with the intention of modernizing them through the English language and discipline. There were a total of 600 American teachers who came from the United States who came from 43 different states. The first form of public education prior to the arrival of the Thomasites was led by American soldiers on the island of Corregidor where English was taught beginning in 1898 after the Spanish American War.

A Colonial Education on Gender and Domesticity

The Domestic Science courses, which would eventually become known as Home Economics, was gendered in its colonial purpose. Filipina youths were expected to take home economics courses, where they practiced hygiene and sanitation, sewing, and cooking all of which spoke only to American tastes in fashion and culinary preferences.[86] The courses demanded that Filipinas learn and internalize that traditional Filipino food was grotesque and not appropriate to serve modern American audiences.[87]

Less than a century prior, American expansionist policies enforced a similar gendered curriculum that doubled in cultural assimilation as well as labor extraction.[88] As American historian Caroline Radesky notes on Native American schooling at the Carlisle Boarding School at the turn of the twentieth century, "domesticity was something Native American girls could not be taught by their mothers as Native women's housekeeping was backbreaking grunt work, not an artistic expression of their 'true womanhood.' …The vocational programs were divided into male and female trades. Female students were limited to five vocations: cooking, housekeeping,

[86] For more information on the topic of the history of Philippine cuisine affected by American imperialism, please see René Alexander D. Orquiza, *Taste of Control: Food and the Filipino Colonial Mentality Under American Rule* (Rutgers university Press, 2020).

[87] *Taste of Control: Food and the Filipino Colonial Mentality Under American Rule* by Rene Alexander D. Orquiza, The history of cuisine in the Philippines affected by America acting as empire draws attention to the transnational amnesia that America used visceral, violent, and less obvious means to control the Philippines. In trying to preserve their heritage through cookbooks that maintained their culinary as cultural knowledge, and through their own re-interpretation and implementation of food science courses during the pre-war period, Filipinas/os/x attempted to challenge American power over their food as cultural heritage. While Filipinos were expected to do the labor in American enterprises of "cleaning" and "engineering" in food refining aspects, Americans were forced to adapt to Filipino foods as a means of their own survival while still looking down on Filipino cuisine; Filipino food was a colonial gateway to insult and debase other "Asian" countries American merchants and military visited therefore painting a monolithic racist caricature of Asia and America's role in it as an empire. Filipina home makers who made Filipino cookbooks in the 1930s argued that Indigenous foods and practices are what made Filipino people unique and culturally strong in that they could adapt to American methods of cooking- American writers and chefs forced to work with Filipino ingredients made dishes they claimed were Filipino but were only "Filipino" in ingredients and thus through culinary colonialism, American influences tried to erase Filipino heritage in many ways through their instruction on cuisine.

[88] Caroline Radesky "The Gender of Assimilation: The Carlisle Indian Industrial School Experiment," *Pennsylvania Heritage*, Last Modified Summer 2014, Last Accessed February 27, 2022, http://paheritage.wpengine.com/article/gender-assimilation-carlisle-indian-industrial-school-experiment/.

laundering, nursing or sewing. Male students could choose anything from blacksmithing to carpentry, plumbing to shoemaking. Even though agriculture was the largest vocational department at the school, young women were barred from enrolling in the program. The administration wanted them to pursue a trade that corresponded to their gender within an Anglo-American framework."[89] At the turn of the twentieth century America's colonial projects in the Philippines, Haiti, and Puerto Rico would perpetuate the "domestic dimensions" of Americanization on a larger scale.[90]

Having practiced such curriculum on Native American youths, the colonial administration in charge of the department of education in the Philippines continued the same extractive pedagogy. The curriculum in the Philippines assigned male students to learn horticulture or particular artisanal trades. Male students who could afford a higher education, were geared towards agricultural and civil engineering or political science.[91] Filipinas were often trained to become primary education teachers or were the maid servants, or "house girls," of Thomasite instructors and other colonial administrators. Teachers' handbooks like the *Philippine Education* (1907) manual series blatantly stated that "for the girls, in addition to sewing and elementary domestic art, instruction should be given in domestic science, including

[89] Radesky "The Gender of Assimilation," http://paheritage.wpengine.com/article/gender-assimilation-carlisle-indian-industrial-school-experiment/.

[90] Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 211.

[91] The process of Filipinization was centered on the idea that Filipinos, after receiving the appropriate time and tutelage of American influences, would be able to take on the mantle of independence and self rule. Filipina/o/x students who were granted or could afford access to higher education were trained to fill particular administrative roles and replace the Euro-American colonial administration. There they were to maintain American philosophies and instruction, serving as overseers for a western world interested in keeping a foothold in the Pacific. In sum, the United States transformed Philippine infrastructure and society using its colonial influence to foster educational and cultural assimilation. For more information please see "Philippine-American War," in *Southeast Asia A Historical Encyclopedia, from Angkor Wat to East Timor* (ABC-CLIO, 2004), 503, 504.

housekeeping and cooking, home nursing and sanitation."[92] Filipinas thus were only allowed to enter labor spheres deemed fit for brown colonial subjects of "the more delicate sex."[93]

American colonial instruction for Filipinas included courses in the domestic sciences or education. Filipinas were rarely offered administrative positions in education sectors. According to historian Rene Alexander Orquiza, the Bureau of Education believed that introducing a Filipina to western methods of cooking and hygiene would be the surest and fastest way to modernize the average Filipino family, therefore reinforcing women's subservience and sphere of influence to the home and her family. Both female Thomasite teachers and Filipina students were seen as the appropriate choice as "agents of [American] assimilation" solely because of their sex and the assumption that women are naturally prone to nurturing as potential mothers.[94] Filipina students were thus introduced to and taught how to make particular American goods, foods, and articles of dress through the colonial discourse of domestic science. Filipina students began to prefer American goods and foods over time but found that buying American items was very costly.

Filipina students were instructed by their teachers to create their own products that they had learned to make from the very same sewing and cooking courses they attended.[95] As early as 1902, Filipina students were producing "exportable high-priced commodities such as baskets, lace, and textiles that appealed to American consumers" using her skills learned from her

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[92] David Barrows, *Philippine Education: Vol. 5 No. 1* (Manila, 1908), 17.

[93] A description on women as the more "delicate sex" as compared to men. Catharine V. Waite, ed. *The Chicago Law Times: Volumes 2-3* (University of Michigan Press, 1888), 405.

[94] Meg Wesling, *Empire's Proxy American Literature and U.S. Imperialism in the Philippines* (NYU Press, 2011), 115.

[95] See Filipino Children at Work in the classroom, "A Class in basketry at Mandane, Cebu, Philippine Islands. Philippines Cebu, None. [Between 1890 and 1920] Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/91730331/.
Igorate girls in the All Saints Mission School at Bentoc, Philippine Islands, making lace for the American Red Cross. Philippines, 1919. [4 February date received] Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2017668931/.

domestic science courses to make her own purchases.[96] According to Hugo Miller, the head of Industrial Information and Bureau of Education, the impact of the gendered curriculum in the form of domestic science not only afforded the Filipina her own independent earnings through valuable skills she learned under American tutelage, but she became ever the more modern by dressing and consuming American goods. Miller wrote on his observations of Filipina students and local girls who had once lacked shoes and stockings and "cared little for such things. Now they long for pretty shoes and stockings, a scarf, some other pretty article."[97] Similar observations of Filipinas/os desiring more American clothing were noted in reports conducted by anthropologists, teachers, and missionaries who argued that Filipinas/os by the 1920s had become modern citizens of the world under America's Christian influence. Missionary Frank Laubach described Filipina consumer mentalities of the 1920s as such: "The real Filipinos, men and women, are as modestly and as neatly dressed as the real Americans. If there is any criticism to be made it is that they spend too much money for clothing, instead of too little."[98] Boston heiress and children's literature author, Isabel Anderson, in her observation of the Filipina in her travels to the archipelago in the 1910s described the Filipina darling consumer in enthusiastic detail:

"Whenever they [Filipinas] can get off they go to baseball games and the movies. The little girls wear American-made store dresses now, and great bunches of ribbon in their hair, white shoes, and silk stockings. I don't believe you could force independence on them! The señoritas trip home from normal school with their high-heeled American pumps, and paint enough on their

[96] Rene Alexander Orquiza, "Kitchen as Classroom: Domestic Science in Philippine Bureau of Education Magazines, 1906-1932," Asia Pacific Perspectives, Vol. 14, no. 1 (2016): 111.
[97] Hugo Herman Miller, "Results from Domestic Science," *Philippine Craftsman 2*, no 7 (January 1917). For more on the domestic science courses front he perspective of colonial administrators, please see *Philippine Magazine* and *Philippine Education*
[98] FRANK CHARLES LAUBACH, *THE PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES: Their Religious Progress and Preparation for Spiritual Leadership in the Far East* (George H. Doran Company, 1925) xiii.

faces to qualify for Broadway. The poor children have to swelter in knitted socks, knitted hoods, and knitted sweaters, just because they come from America."[99]

Educational handbooks during the early years of America's occupation of the Philippines, or as I call the American Occupation Era, laid out for both Filipino and Thomasite teachers how to conduct a domestic science course for young Filipinas.[100] According to the teacher's manuals beginning in 1905 through the 1920s, Filipina students in domestic science courses were required to practice using English sewing and textile terminology in their regular conversations with one another. Above all, female students needed to follow a set of rules in regard to finishing their work including Rule #7: "Never hurry, especially in preparing your work. However little is done, make it your very best."[101] A side note stated "Remember the girls are working for quality and that the amount of work doesn't matter. When they have learned to sew well they can very soon learn to sew rapidly," therefore implying that the American public education instilled in the Philippines had particular goals: to produce generations of assembly lines of efficient, highly disciplined, English speaking domestic workers.[102]

American desires to produce colonial factories using domestic Filipina artisans created by the colonial classroom was made immediately clear in one of the earliest and largest stages of

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[99] Isabel Anderson, *The Spell of the Philippine Islands* (Boston: The Page Company, The Colonial Press, 1916), 307.

[100] Describing the American colonial management of the Philippines from 1898-1941 as the American Occupation Era I argue speaks to the total manipulation and imperialist social, cultural, economic, and political control that the United States exacted on the Philippines as part of their early twentieth century campaign of empire. One of the first books produced by American publishers as part of the war department's and Washington's attempt to study and thus control the Philippine Islands and its peoples describes their first interactions and observations of the Philippines in a bibliography titled *List of Works Relating to the American Occupation of the Philippine Islands* (1905). By couching this period of America's continental expansion into the Pacific with the descriptor of "occupation," I argue from a pinayist framework that exposes the total control intended that the United States set their sights on as colonizer rather than what they would later label their intentions and actions as paternalist guides answering the call of white man's burden aiming to help, direct, and oversee the eventual buildup of Philippine Independence and modernization.

[101] *Philippine Education: Vol. 5 No. 3* (Manila: Frank R. Lutz Publishing, 1908), 32.

[102] *Philippine Education: Vol. 5 No. 3* (Manila: Frank R. Lutz Publishing, 1908), 31, 32.

American exhibition: The World's Fair of 1904. The St. Louis World's Fair, also known as the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, was an international exposition held in St. Louis, Missouri, from April to December of 1904. American local, state, and federal funds of around $15 million were used to finance the entire fair. The choice of the location and name of the fair celebrated Thomas Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase. The exhibits and fair grounds of the World's Fair showcased the West's influence and innovation, especially in regard to European and American expansion. Anthropologists made a spectacle in their choices and staging of exhibits that were meant to demonstrate to Euro-American audiences "how the other half of the [colonized] world lived." [103] Indigenous and Native American ethnic groups like the Cherokee and Navajo were paid to perform cultural dances or to stand in front of replicas of what anthropologists at the turn of the twentieth century deemed to be their authentic and natural environments. American visitors who could afford the fifteen-cent entrance fee ($4.74 today) for some of the "human exhibits," could visit "Akhoun's Mysterious Asia" (which was considered Persia, India, Ceylon, and Burma).[104]

American benefactors also showcased America's recent colonial possessions through human and horticultural exhibits on the Philippines. The Philippine Exposition was a forty seven acre site that boasted 70,000 exhibits, six villages, representing ten Native and Indigenous Filipino ethnic groups, forty different tribes, 130 buildings, 725 Filipino trained soldiers, with a total of one thousand Filipina/o participants as part of the "human exhibits."[105] There were exhibits featuring the natural rich resources of the Philippines and the products they produced,

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[103] Jeffrey Daryl Gauss, "The Department of Anthropology at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition: Motives, Methods, and Messages," Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects, 1994: 20.

[104] Alan Taylor, "Photos of the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair," The Atlantic, Last Modified September 9, 2019, Last Accessed March 9, 2022, https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2019/09/the-1904-st-louis-worlds-fair-photos/597658/.

[105] Newell, Alfred C., ""A Bird's Eye view of the Philippine Exposition." in pamphlet "Philippine Exposition: World's Fair, St. Louis, 1904 : 40 different tribes, 6 Philippine villages, 70,000 exhibits, 130 buildings, 725 native soldiers"," *Materiality & Spectacle*, accessed March 10, 2022, https://ds-carbonite.haverford.edu/spectacle-14/items/show/64.

the role of Americanized schooling in stripping the savagery from Filipinos, and how Filipinas served as domestic workers, seamstresses, creators of cheap goods, and as teachers.[106] Above all they were meant to showcase the natural wealth of the Philippines, cultures, food gathering, and craftsmanship (weaving and basket making).[107] But most importantly, the exhibits displayed the Filipino as a native savage and that it was through American efforts by use of benevolent assimilation and a colonial education that the savage Filipino tribesman could become an upstanding soldierly disciple of the modern world. In one of the village exhibits, a Filipina teacher by the name of Mrs. Zamora was photographed teaching different Philippine tribes peoples in her makeshift classroom, lessons on English and reading.[108] Such a popular exhibit demonstrated how the instruction of nurturing Filipina teachers through a colonial education became the preferred tool for transforming the wild Filipino native into a learned and obedient man.

Filipinas in other exhibits were hired to showcase their "domestic arts" and traditional weaving techniques. Forty-two hundred exhibits were dedicated to "material classed under department "D" or manufactures, a small number of textiles and embroideries."[109] Filipinas received the majority of the awards for their textile and manufacturing exhibits.[110] The

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[106] *Report of the Philippine Exposition Board*, 12.

[107] See "Domestic arts of the Bagobos women, in the Philippine Village, St. Louis World's Fair," *Materiality & Spectacle*, accessed March 10, 2022, https://ds-carbonite.haverford.edu/spectacle-14/items/show/65.

[108] "Miss Zamora, the native Filipino teacher instructing an Igorrote pupil in reading." The Euro-American onlookers can be seen in the back of the photograph, watching the Filipina teacher explain the English alphabet to her students. According to oral history accounts, for many of the "pupils" at the school hut exhibit, it was their first time attending a school lesson. Upon returning to the Philippines, some of the Igorot participants, like Mia Abeya's grandfather, wanted all of his children and grandchildren to attend the American schools in the Philippines. See Primary source, "Miss Zamora, the native Filipino teacher instructing an Igorrote pupil in reading.," Materiality & Spectacle, accessed March 10, 2022, https://ds-carbonite.haverford.edu/spectacle-14/items/show/69. "Living Exhibits' at 1904 World's Fair Revisited Igorot Natives Recall Controversial Display of Their Ancestors," NPR, May 31, 2014, https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1909651.

[109] Philippine International Jury, *Report of the Philippine Exposition Board* (St Louis, 1904), 25.

[110] Filipinas were listed as the award winners in categories of sewers, textile makers, weavers, and other domestic manufacturing for a total of 8 pages in the rewards list of the *Report of the Philippine Exposition Board* (St Louis, 1904), 101-109.

Connecticut reporters commented on the Filipina handmade textiles with great enthusiasm and zeal noting:

"It is difficult to say which proved the greater attraction — the scantily clad Moros and the Negritos mainly dressed in a beautiful garb of bronze epidermís ; in the natural products of oriental forests (the richest exhibits of polished woods seen at the Exposition), or the handiwork of some of the higher grades of Filipinos - textiles rivaling gossamers in fineness, to say nothing of exhibits in many other classes, indicating an unusual degree of proficiency in the realm of manufactures."[111]

The Philippine Exposition of the World's Fair was so well-liked that its exhibits won over 200 awards. Their popularity attracted American business investors who, upon seeing the exhibits, soon monopolized the trade and manufacturing of the Philippine liquor, cigars, and handmade crafts that were on display at the fair.[112] The same basket weaving techniques demonstrated in the exhibits would become a major aspect of the "domestic science" courses instructed in the public-school systems in the Philippines. In demonstrating the ways in which the United States intended to civilize the Philippines, these exhibits revealed the ties between gender and U.S. imperialism. They were organized so that American audiences could understand both the Philippines' value in terms of its natural resources and justify its status as a colony. American onlookers gawked at Indigenous Filipinas/os being diligently taught English and literacy by Filipina teachers, before moving on to witness Philippine militias trained by the American military. U.S. imperialism in the Philippines was not just about labor and extraction,

[111] *Report of the Commissioners of Connecticut to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition: Connecticut at the World's Fair* (Hartford: Press of the Case Lockwood and Branard Company, 1906), 113, 114.

[112] Comments in the World's Fair reports mention directly the purpose of exhibiting Philippine products: "While in the Philippines, Dr. Gustavo Niederlein , of the Philippine Exposition board , conceived the idea of making a commercial exhibit, showing the articles of importation , their cost, method of packing, etc. This was carried to a most successful conclusion, and has awakened much interest in Philippine commercial matters , which can but result in benefit to both American and Philippine business men. Exhibitors of samples of imports in this department have been awarded suitable medals and diplomas for their collaboration and the wisdom of the scheme has been fully demonstrated." Philippine International Jury, *Report of the Philippine Exposition Board* (St Louis, 1904), 10-12.

but also operated through gender. Colonizers used the items and gender systems produced and reproduced by Filipinas to achieve their agenda.

The United States would continue exhibiting the Filipina as domestic producers in women's stores. For example, during the 1920s Euro-American store owners put Filipina seamstresses on display in their clothes stores to demonstrate the delicate Filipina hand sewing her lace designs for customers. Behind these seamstresses were replicated nipa huts, intended to remind viewers of the uncivilized and colonized status of the Philippines.[113] These "human exhibits" made clear how Filipinas, whether as trained teachers or domestic production lines, were to be used within this new colonial territory. We would see colonizers employ these tactics again in the selling of Filipina and Puerto Rican made goods moving into the 1910s-1920s.[114]

Newspapers during the early twentieth century through the 1920s describe affordable imports of both Filipina and Puerto Rican hand sewn undergarments, lingerie, nightgowns, aprons, lace, and stockings for sale in major American retail stores such as Macy's. The Philippines and Puerto Rico were taken in the aftermath of the Spanish American War in 1898 through the Treaty of Paris and were purchased and ceded, respectively.[115] Both island territories would undergo similar colonial conditioning and labor extraction by way of education. Girls in both Puerto Rico and the Philippines would take mandatory courses in domestic science and could even specialize in sewing as part of their high school education.[116] Girls in Puerto Rico

[113] Nipa huts (or bahay kubos) are stilt houses indigenous to the Philippines normally constructed from bamboo and covered with a thatched roof.

[114] See ad in the Evening Star promoting a live demonstration of Filipinas embroidering lace and lingerie for customers, Evening Star. (Washington, DC), Oct. 25 1921. https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1921-10-25/ed-1/.

[115] Library of Congress, "The World of 1898: The Spanish American War," *Hispanic Division of Library of Congress*, Last Modified June 22, 2011, last accessed March 11, 2022, https://loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/intro.html. "Representatives of Spain and the United States signed a peace treaty in Paris on December 10, 1898, which established the independence of Cuba, ceded Puerto Rico and Guam to the United States, and allowed the victorious power to purchase the Philippines Islands from Spain for $20 million."

[116] Solsiree del Moral, *Negotiating Empire: The Cultural Politics of Schools in Puerto Rico, 1898–1952*

thus were geared under their American colonial education to lean towards a "career" working in the local sewing factories. The hand sewn women's clothing and intimate wear were so well liked by American female audiences that Philippine products outcompeted French lingerie imports in major stores at a third less of the French prices.[117] Ads from the 1910s-1920s boasted that American industries purposefully had Filipinas copy and imitate the French style embroidery and lace designs and went so far to argue that the Philippine knock-offs were far more "superb in style, design, and variety" with a cheaper price tag to boot.[118] Tea apron imports from the Philippines during the 1920s show how Indigenous women's sewing patterns and designs were appropriated for American consumers and described instead as providing a "variety" of "vibrant colors, stripes, and shapes" and embroidery with "ineffable skill only women of the Philippines display."[119] Philippine and Puerto Rican produced lingerie and clothing would eventually become staple products seen in American women's shopping ads up until the onset of the Great Depression.

The domestic science curriculum that the United States used to instruct Filipina and Puerto Rican girls and young women maintained strict gender roles under colonial supervision (so as to better control and dictate colonial bodies) while indoctrinating both their psychological and physical loyalty to America to exploit their profitable gendered labor. Many Filipinas, both at the urban and rural levels, became dependent on the notion that an American education and

(Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), 22, 164. "Teachers could transform the allegedly physically weak and submissive Puerto Rican girls into modern and progressive homemakers by teaching domestic science in school and bringing that science directly into homes through extension work. They intended to modernize male jibaros into efficient farmers through the teaching of scientific agriculture in rural schools."

[117] Philippine nightgowns sold for $3.98 whereas the smaller French nightgowns sold for $5 in Brooklyn in 1917 according to the New York Tribune. New-York tribune. (New York, NY), Apr. 29 1917. https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83030214/1917-04-29/ed-2/.

[118] *The Sun*. (New York, NY), ads, Jan. 2 1918. https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83030431/1918-01-02/ed-1/.

[119] See Ad for Philippine tea apron and skirts, noting especially the care and effort of the "effable skill only women of the Philippines display," "James McCreery & Co., Plaid and Striped Skirts Special," *The Evening World*, January 13, 1921. Library of Congress.

American industry would help them provide for their families while securing their access to social mobility in a country that still operated on semi-feudal practices under American jurisdiction and interests. Filipinas under American tutelage who worked in American industries in the Philippines (particularly cigar, shoe, and garment factory work), received a higher education, learned and practiced English, and were sporting all the latest western fashion trends were called the "New Filipinas" by the 1920s.[120] The image of the "New Filipina" became a major component of America's capitalist endeavors abroad.[121] Not only was the Filipina producing popular women's products, but she was also consuming American products that represented the lifestyle of American elegance, modernity, and class she was conditioned to desire in her colonial curriculum.[122] Therefore, the gendered curriculum of domestic science

[120] Mina Roces describes the New Filipina as an opportunity to dismantle grand narratives of womanhood and instead speak on other alternative narratives of Filipina women to be fashioned and promoted as part of the Filipina feminist project over the last century. Mina Roces, *Women's Movements and the Filipina, 1986-2008* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 16. Dawn Mabalon historicizes succinctly the emergence of the "New Filipina" as a transformative moment in response to American importations of their gender systems and Euro-American women's popular culture during the first decades of the twentieth century. The "American archetype of the "New Woman" - educated, wage-earning, athletic, and independent- had become a new model of womanhood for Filipinas." Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, Little Manila Is in the Heart: The Making of Filipina/o American Community in Stockton, California (Duke University Press, 2013), 175-176.

[121] A Singer Sewing Machine Advertisement, 1912. The Singer advertisements were so popular that they created collector's cards with similar depictions and photographs of the modern Filipina posed in front of her Singer sewing machine. The Singer sewing company sold 250,00 units across three hundred stores in the Philippines alone by 1912. The Singer company location in Manila employed 1,500 employees during the early 1910s. See Pinoy Kollector, "SINGER SEWING MACHINE in the Philippines,' *Pinoy Kollector*, Photocard Advertisement, 1912, Last Modified September 4, 2011, Last Accessed March 12, 2022, http://pinoykollektor.blogspot.com/2011/09/35-singer-sewing-machine-in-philippines.html.

[122] Filipinas would spend copious amounts of their wages on photostudio pictures such as this one located in old Manila where many American shops opened up at the turn of the twentieth century. Young Filipinas would pose with their new American dresses or flapper-inspired *Filipiniana-terno* dresses. These photographs would cost anywhere from $1 to $50 depending on the coloring in technique, film and paper type, and if the customer wanted to purchase copies. See Emmanuel Encarnacion, "SHOPPING at ESCOLTA at the TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY," *Pinoy Kollector*, Advertisements Philippines, 1902, Last Modified August 16, 2012, Last Accessed March 12, 2022, http://pinoykollektor.blogspot.com/2012/08/75-shopping-at-escolta-at-turn-of.html?q=ads. The Philippine peso under the Philippine Coinage Act of 1903 set a peg of 2 pesos to the U.S. dollar and was maintained until independence in 1946. Thus if the American dollar increased in value, the Philippine peso would continue to decrease, creating an economic disadvantage for the Philippines where their exports became more heavily exploited by American demands year by year. Filipinas on average earned 25 cents/day ($6-$7/month), female children earned 10 cents/day, for 8 hours of work in Manila during the first decade of the twentieth century in the shirt factories (equivalent to $18.25/year today). The United States would rake in 15,623,567 Pesos (equivalent to $31,247,134 today) in 1920 for embroidered textiles alone. Because the United States enforced the coinage law of

ultimately served as a form of colonial conditioning that exploited its female working and lower class subjects, offering Filipinas a public education but one that had limited pathways of upward social mobility beyond the roles of the domestic sphere or affective laborer. U.S. manifest destiny cloaked by the rhetoric of the white man's burden thus helped to bolster America's role as a formidable capitalist competitor in the new age of empire in the twentieth century.

The colonial crafting of the "New Filipina" created a laboring domestic body outfitting her with the domestic training and schooling to mirror the cult of domesticity's ideal woman citizen whilst simultaneously limiting her by keeping the majority of lower- and working-class Filipinas within fields relating purely to the domestic sphere. The public tutelage that the Bureau of Education implemented made schooling widely available to Filipinas that the previous colonial administration did not offer during its three-century reign. Domestic curriculum was not only practiced in public schools but was also heavily implemented in the American built orphanages and convents. Filipinas who had children out of wedlock, who were raped, or abandoned by American soldiers gave their daughters to such organizations. Missionaries and Thomasite teachers in their journals and observations noted that these daughters born from war were sad inevitable results of warfare, and that despite their shortcomings, these "innocent creatures" were so skilled in their form and attention to lace making and sewing thus proving

2P/ US $, the true value of Philippine exports was worth more than what the Philippines received from the United States as payment. Tobacco was another commodity Filipina labor contributed to at every stage of its production, from the farm to the factories. In 1922 alone, the United States imported $8.5 million worth of Philippine cigars whereas the total Philippine made cigars were only valued at a total of $5.5 million. Therefore, there was not nearly enough capital to pay everyone involved in the process of making the cigars a livable or sustainable wage. For more information on the exports of textiles please see Philippine Commission of Independence, *Beautiful Philippines: A Handbook of General Information* (Manila Bureau of Printing, 1923). United States. Bureau of Labor. "Prices of Commodities and Rates of Wages in Manila," in the United States. Bureau of Labor. "January 1901 : Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor, No. 32, Volume VI," *Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor, Nos. 1 - 100* (January 1901) : 33-46. https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/title/3943/item/477588/toc/498003, accessed on March 13, 2022.

their salvation was secured by American colonial intervention.[123] But nonetheless, it was the type of education the American colonial administration had practiced with previous Indigenous and Native communities in their quest for expansion; a curriculum that functioned as American cultural imperialism by promoting racial and gendered philosophies of democracy under the guise of benevolent assimilation. Filipinas especially became their targets for shaping the Filipino household with the goals of subjecting the new Filipina to other forms of gendered control and surveillance whilst making her become dependent on American tutelage in order to expand her economic independence.

Despite the gendered lessons of domesticity found in American colonial curriculum, access to public education allowed more opportunities for Filipinas economically and socially. Education would become a means for Filipinas to expand their socio-economic opportunities but would always stem from a matriarchal standpoint. Education became yet again an entryway to political power in the Philippines. Public facing work and community projects that spoke to women's roles as caregiver and mother translated to mothering a new nation, similar to and inspired by the white women who arrived in the Philippines as Thomasites and suffragist teachers, who too were of the generation of the cult of domesticity and true womanhood.

The cult of domesticity and true womanhood were a set of maternalist values and culture defined by white women who during the nineteenth century were vigorously designating and

[123] The American Guardian Association was created solely to "save" Filipina/o mestizo (mixed race) children who were the offspring of American soldiers. The Union Church of Manila, the Episcopal Orphanage, Red Cross, and dozens of other nurseries within the archipelago were some of the spaces that were funded to house, educate, and rear orphaned mixed race girls. The Protestant orphanages by the 1920s took in over 300 Filipina girls. Resource: Frank Laubach, *People of the Philippines*, 390-391. Filipina girls were tasked with sewing children's garments, underwear, and lace. The convents and orphanages would send their materials to Chinese/Chinese Filipino merchants and tailors who would then finish and package the final product. Local Native Filipina women who also worked for other sewing industries or independently made significantly less than the convents and orphanages who produced the same products. Resources: Philippine Commission of Independence, *Beautiful Philippines: A Handbook of General Information* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1923), 109 and Isabel Anderson, *The Spell of the Hawaiian Islands and the Philippines*, 134.

shaping their own sphere of power that women in American society could be guaranteed in comparison to white men who had power over all other public institutions. By claiming their natural mothering dominance in the private and thus intimate spheres of American society, white women utilized this role to also make their claim to power within colonial projects. According to Nerissa Balce in their discussion of the "private" intimate moments of imperialism, "American imperialist fantasies from war" were made apparent in the physical, social, and legal treatment of Filipinas and thus "highlights the centrality of race and gender in the language of U.S. empire."[124] Thus, the imperialist fantasies born from war and conquest of white men and women informed and affected the (mal)treatment of Filipinas, in other intimate and motherwork related spaces like the Thomasite classroom. White female teachers were helping to maintain the submissive nature of Filipinas by teaching them to value maternalism and treating them always as girls-not women, even with the introduction of schooling and the notions of suffrage pushed forward by some white suffragists in the Philippines. Forged by this cult of domesticity training, the new Filipina was caught between the crosshairs of a new era of imperialism, capitalism, and progressivism, making her own pathway of p/feminist insight and political agency. It would be this mentality that they brought with them upon moving to the United States, and which would inform how they operated there.

Under both colonial systems, Filipinas were limited to one ideal falling in line with Christian gendered preferences; having maternal qualities attributed to her for which she was glorified. Through an American colonial education, Filipinas strived to acquire "the qualities of an ideal mother - high intelligence, patience, frugality, patriotism, and love of God."[125]

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[124] Balce, Nerissa. *Body parts of empire: Visual abjection, Filipino images, and the American archive* (University of Michigan Press, 2016), 17.

[125] Christine Doran, "Women in the Philippine Revolution," Philippine Studies , Third Quarter 1998, Vol. 46, No. 3 (1998): 361-375.

American male Protestant missionaries in the Philippines remarked upon how Filipinas were more faithful than their male counterparts, being seemingly quicker and more willing to internalize their colonial teachings. In 1922 Protestant missionary Frank Laubach observed that Filipinas were the majority of pupils, volunteer workers, and attendees for public bible studies and family planning. "Woman is absolutely indispensable as a steadying factor in the life of the nation. She is the balance wheel of society not in business only, but even more in character, in religion, and in the home. This sounds like a truism, for it applies to many countries, but it is more true of the Philippines than of almost any other country in the world. Intellectually, the Filipina is quite the equal. In America it is often said that one may judge the strength of a church by the number of its men, in the Philippines one may judge a church's strength by the number of its women. No church is regarded as anchored and permanent until it has a strong quota of women." Laubach concludes his chapter on Filipino Christian women noting how Filipina/o natives called upon the American churches to send Filipina, rather than Filipino, pastors: "Send us a deaconess whether you can send us a pastor with her or not."[126] Male American colonizers like Laubach were laudatory of Filipinas, praising their ability to become good educated Christian women, and the ways in which she was supposedly the model colonial subject for having effectively answered the word of God through her nurturing as a "happy little wife" and mother to her kin, thus becoming the model Protestant teacher themselves.[127]

However, many white female teachers in the Philippines were prone to seeing Filipinas as children, being more critical than missionaries and other white male colonizers in infantilizing

[126] Frank Laubach, *The People of the Philippines: Their Religious Progress and Preparation for Spiritual Leadership in the Far East* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1925), 291-299.
[127] Laubach, *The People of the Philippines*, 294.

them. Several examples of white female critiques of Filipinas exist, coming everywhere from Thomasite teachers to a future First Lady of the United States.

In her autobiography of her time in the Philippines prior to the 1910s, Thomasite teacher Mary H. Fee described Filipinas in a degrading and critical fashion: "It [Filipina servant woman] was a very small girl in a long skirt with a train a yard long and with a gauzy *camisa* and *pañuelo* --a most comical little caricature of womanhood." Fee commented on the way that Filipinas dressed their children and ridiculed their supposedly mediocre singing abilities, describing Filipina/o children as "sharp-eyed attractive little creatures."[128] She also mocked Filipinas' sartorial prowess, whilst simultaneously exoticizing their features and dress. In Fee's observations she commented that "the raiment which their deluded mothers fancy is European and stylish; but there is always something wrong…One little maid in particular was such an invariable holder of an advantageous position that my curiosity was aroused to see how she did it. I watched her, saw her glistening brown body — perfectly visible through the filmy material of her single garment."[129]

When Filipinas instructed Fee on the Filipino pronunciation of Spanish words, Fee's takeaway was that they were simply being arrogant and incapable of grasping any European language let alone English.[130] The sole praise she gave Filipinas was that colonial instruction had made them obedient, docile, and disciplined. The Filipina therefore was not a woman, but an

[128] Mary Fee, *A Woman's Impression of the Philippines*, 79.
[129] Mary Fee, *A Woman's Impression of the Philippines*, 85.
[130] Mary Fee, *A Woman's Impression of the Philippines*, 89. "What she meant was that the avoidance of th sounds in c and z, which the Filipinos invariably pronounce like s, is an improvement to the Spanish language. I imagined some of that young lady's kindred ten years later arguing to prove that the Filipino corruption of th in English words—pronouncing "thirty" as "sirty," and "thick" as "sick"—arguing that such English is superior to English as we speak it. It would, I think, be hard to convince us that the euphonic changes in these words are an improvement to our language."

obedient and absent-minded child compared to American women her own age, according to Fee.[131] "Filipino womankind, who are so alluringly feminine, are also femininely helpless in a crisis, and if there be no men around to direct and sustain them, often lose their heads entirely. They give way to lamentations, gather up their babies, and flee to the homes of their nearest relatives."[132] For Fee, Filipinas were little more than infants, house servants, or teacher's aids, making viable colonial subjects who she could not tolerate in terms of their countenance, cultural insight, and traditional garb.

Other retired Thomasite teachers in American newspapers of the era shared Fee's interpretations and criticisms of the Filipina. One teacher remarked that, with the introduction of American "homemakers' courses," then and only then could Filipinas become "the youngest and prettiest and brightest future wives and mothers."[133] They concluded their remarks on America's educational intervention in the Philippines by praising Filipinas as "the readily adaptable Filipino [who] can become the finest of young women" as nurses and "slender brown-fingered" seamstresses thus again reinforcing gendered and racialized caricatures of the Filipina colonial subject as purely an obedient domestic laborer.[134] Another Thomasite teacher by the name of

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[131] Mary Fee, *A Woman's Impression of the Philippines*, 120. "It is a contradictory state of affairs, I must admit, for this same American girl is a self-reliant creature, accustomed to the widest range of action and liberty, while the matter-of-fact, self-possessed Filipina has been reared to find it impossible to step across the street without attendance. But the free, liberty-loving American yields shyly to her captor, while the sedateness of the prospective matron has already taken possession of the dusky sister." "Filipino women never affect the dominating attitude assumed by young American coquettes. They have an infinite capacity for what we call small talk and repartee; and, as they never aim for brilliancy and are quite natural and unaffected, their pretty ways have all the charm that an unconscious child's have. They love dress, and in one lightning flash will take you in from head to foot, note every detail of your costume, and, the next day, imitate whatever parts of it please their fancy and fall in with their national Customs."

[132] Fee, *A Woman's Impression of the Philippines*, 288

[133] "So summed up the training of the young Filipino women means that when the Americans came to teach them the desire for better method of living the new and strangely benevolent conquerer showed them at the same time how the desire might be gratified." "Civilizing the Filipino," *The Hays Free Press*, July 18 1914.

[134] Marilla Weaver, "American School Mistress in the Philippines," *Topeka State Journal*, September 13, 1902. "If the teachers will not too soon become discouraged and if the government, as it should do, forces its young Filipino

Marilla Weaver in 1902 crafted a reflection piece for the *Topeka State Journal* where they commented that the only saving grace of Filipinas, whom she calls "brown malay girls," is their mastery of "the art of seaming, hemming, and stitching" adding further that "any Tagalo[g] woman around Manila will show you of her handiwork upon pina cloth specimens so exquisite so as to put to the blush the best of our vaunted art embroidery."[135] Despite Filipinas' adept skills with embroidery and esteemed docile nature, Weaver concludes her article by chastising Filipino "brown women and girls" for not having "inherent Christian virtues and discipline."[136]

Other observers, like Eleanor Franklin Egan, a journalist and foreign correspondent of the *Washington Times*, argued in her piece "Making a Nation from Human Hash" that the only true measure of merit of the Philippine people is to look at the stage of intellectual development and dress of the highest caliber of gentleman in Filipino society.[137] In Egan's review of the Philippine tribes, she continued to argue that the Philippines was incapable of self-government because of the racial makeup of its diverse people, all of which were at different stages of "medieval backwardness," therefore making it difficult for the United States alone to "harmonize" and collectively educate such a mass of "crinkly headed, naked forest dwelling savage[s]."[138] Her silence on the roles of Filipina women under "Uncle Sam's regime" is emphasized by enlarged photographs of bare chested Native Filipinas laboring in the fields or as needlepoint workers, thus speaking to her imperialist scorn and gendered prejudice for America's new colonial subjects. The literary and pedagogical ways white women like Fee, Weaver, and Egan treated

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wards, like its Indian youth, to attend the schools and be trained to regular discipline, by and by the American school mistresses will have made their impress." … "Brown malay girls in the art of seaming hemming and stitching"

[135] Weaver, "American School Mistress in the Philippines," *Topeka State Journal*, September 13, 1902.

[136] Weaver, "American School Mistress in the Philippines," *Topeka State Journal*, September 13, 1902.

[137] See Eleanor Franklin Egan's cover article, "Making a Nation from Human Hash," *The Washington Times*, November 29, 1908. The Washington times (Washington [D.C.]), November 29, 1908.

[138] Eleanor Franklin Egan, "Making a Nation from Human Hash," *The Washington Times* (Washington [D.C.]), November 29, 1908.

and critiqued Filipinas reinforced the racial and gender systems that the American colonial enterprise forced upon Filipinas.

Even the most sympathetic white woman observers shared similar patronizing tones when speaking about the potential of the Filipina under American colonial jurisdiction. Helen Taft, the wife of the first governor general of the Philippines and the 27th American president William Howard Taft, saw the Philippines and Hawai'i as part of America's ambitious future, treating both Hawaiians and Filipinas/os she encountered as moldable bright eyed innocents who came to be her "little brown neighbors."[139] She and her husband were seen as radical for their informal interactions with Filipinos; simply shaking Filipino soldiers' hands at a public event and dancing with Filipino politicians and officers was seen as an affront and threatening to the white male soldiers who attended the events and wanted to maintain racial segregation.[140] But despite her benevolent intentions, in her recollection of the Filipino locals she encountered, Taft noted that all "Filipinos of the muchacho class always play like children, no matter what they are doing, and they have to be treated like children."[141]

Helen Taft accompanied her husband from 1900-1903 in his survey work and civic duties as colonial governor general traveling as far as the mountains of northern Luzon to the southern islands of the Philippine archipelago. As the governor general's wife, she took on similar

[139] Helen H. Taft, *Recollection of Full Years* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1914), 127.

[140] Taft, *Recollection of Full Years*, 125. "My husband is supposed to be the author of the phrase: "our little brown brothers "-and perhaps he is . It did not meet the approval of the army, and the soldiers used to have a song which they sang with great gusto and frequency and which ended with the conciliating sentiment: "He may be a brother of William H. Taft, but he ain't no friend of mine!" We insisted upon complete racial equality for the Filipinos, and from the beginning there were a great many of them among our callers and guests."

[141] Helen Taft on Filipina/o working class youths. "There was one little dwarf who was bolder than the rest and who followed us everywhere. He was like a little, brown, toy-child, beautifully formed, and looking not more than one year old, but we were told that he was at least fourteen." Taft, *Recollection of Full Years*, 194, 213. Taft also initiated the nutrition program, "Drop of Milk Program" as part of her outreach to Filipina/o youths.

colonial roles, but, in true Victorian fashion and with a maternalist flair, oversaw nutrition programs for Filipina/o youths and organized local fetes and beautification projects. She described Filipinas of all ages as delicate and humble wives and daughters whose pride was often misplaced due to poor Spanish upbringing.[142] Taft's demeanor towards her Filipina/o stewards was similar to the Thomasite teachers, seeing Filipina/o youths as the most capable of internalizing American influences. She described Filipinas/os as youthful and naive but nevertheless strong-willed colonial pupils. As well intentioned and progressive as Taft was in terms of some of how she viewed Filipinas/os and valued integration rather than segregation, she still took on a maternalist patronizing tone echoing the language of other American women working in the Philippines during this period.

The rare occasions that American women did speak positively of Filipinas could be found in Filipino circulated periodicals published by Filipina/o *pensionados*. *The Filipino* was an annual magazine that celebrated the achievements and social circles of the Filipina/o/x students who were part of the *Pensionado* Program that began in 1903.[143] Although Filipina *pensionados*

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[142] Helen Taft's rare discussions of the Filipina includes notes on the dainty style of dress that Filipinas adorned themselves with, their state of destitution as widows of war, comments in disbelief of the working class cigar smoking Filipinas ""lifted off its feet by the overbalancing weight behind it. It was something of a shock to see many women, in *carreteras* and on the street, smoking huge black cigars," and in other parts of her autobiography, describes the misplaced pride Filipina mistresses had: "On this point the moral standard of the Filipino people was not rigid, and women were rather proud than otherwise of the parentage of their Friar -fathered children who were often brighter, better looking and more successful than the average Filipino. Taft, *Recollection of Full Years*, 96, 128, 132, 166.

[143] A *pensionado* was a Filipina/o student whose education, travel, room and board were paid for by the American government to study and graduate from American universities. This was an annual program and began with 100 students, 3 of which were Filipina. Majority of the students came from well to do families while others were selected after completing and scoring high on comprehensive exams. Not all pensionados studied in the United States and some instead attended universities in Manila that the American government created or oversaw such as the Women's Bible Training School established in 1919. The intention behind the scholarship program was to prepare the Filipina/o for their future to self-govern, thus offering them the education and skills needed to take on the mantle of independence without the United States intervention in the foreseeable future. The program ended in 1943 but overall, roughly 500 Filipina/o/x students participated in the program, majority of whom served in leadership positions upon returning to the Philippines in one of the four fields including the civic, medical, military, or educational sectors. Laura R. Prieto, "Bibles, Baseball and Butterfly Sleeves: Filipina Women and American Protestant Missions, 1900–1930," as found in *Divine Domesticities Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific*

were a rare sight, usually only 1-3 Filipinas on average were selected annually for the program, their intellectual success combined with their "demure domesticity" were often celebrated by both Filipino classmates and their American female instructors. A Thomasite teacher by the name of Mrs. David Gibbs wrote an article titled "The Filipino Woman" for the *pensionado* magazine in 1906. Similar to Helen Taft, Mrs. Gibbs paints a patronizing image of Filipinas as her "little Filipino sisters" or "little women."[144] Her summation of the Filipino woman is far more light hearted and gentle in their interpretations and observations of the roles of Filipinas in Filipino society, remarking that "one Filipino woman is worth three of the men" and that "Philippine womanhood" is what "gives bright promise for the future" of the Philippines thus seeing Filipinas as the backbone to Filipino society.[145] Gibbs goes on to describe the many roles Filipinas fulfill in their community including their work in the fields, as weavers, wet market sellers, dutiful mothers, and to her greatest pride, as multitasking "little school teachers and aspirantes" that Gibbs notes as having trained herself.[146] Nonetheless, in her entire account of the Filipina, Gibbs reaffirmed that a Filipina's highest achievement, regardless of her station or caste, is that of an endearing, hardworking Christian, and kind wife and hostess noting that the Filipina especially is overall "naturally domestic in their tastes."[147] Gibbs' fondest memories of the Filipinas she encountered were ironically tales of woe. She describes Filipinas in these instances as perseverant and that despite the sexual and/or public displays of physical abuse, or in some cases the complete desertion that Filipinas commonly experienced in their relationships

(Australian National University Press, 2014), 14. For more information on the Pensionado program please see Teodoro, Noel V. "Pensionados and Workers: The Filipinos in the United States, 1903–1956," *Psychological Science* 8, no. 1–2 (March 1999): 1228–39. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797617700622.

[144] Mrs. David Gibbs, "The Filipino Woman," *The Filipino*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (January 1906): 8.

[145] Gibbs, "The Filipino Woman," 6-8.

[146] Gibbs, "The Filipino Woman," 6.

[147] Gibbs, "The Filipino Woman," 6.

with American soldiers, Filipinas nonetheless always demonstrated their fierce "endurance" and faithfulness to their men commenting that "whatever she may have been to him, wife, sweetheart, or friend, there was pity, protection, and tenderness in her manner."[148] Sadly, Thomasite female teachers like Gibbs normalized the sexual predation of Filipinas by American soldiers, arguing that Filipinas' natural propensity for affective labor for men made her the ideal domestic partner.

Records left by female colonial overseers that Taft and others have offered thus give the impression that, within the archives, the Filipina was a one-dimensional colonial wallflower learning and toiling silently behind her needlework in her attractive white laced *pina* refinery preparing herself for domestic servitude. Such consistent imagery from both American men's and women's literary observations serves as American historians' main window into this period, therefore resulting in a narrow interpretation and collective erasure of Filipina agency and the movements and enterprises they embarked on.

The Colonial Nature of White Suffrage

White women facilitated America's Manifest Destiny in the Pacific, serving as benevolent mothers and instructors who saw the molding of the "beautiful brown native" as their maternal responsibility.[149] This maternalist mindset always portrayed the Filipina/o as incapable of fully understanding the depth of western political philosophy, civic engagement, and bodily

[148] Gibbs, "The Filipino Woman," 7.

[149] Taft, *Recollection of Full Years,* 50-51. Taft and Fee both commented on the attractiveness and athleticism of Filipinas/os and Pacific Islanders in the auto-biographies. Taft described her surf lessons during her trip to Hawai'i while en route to the Philippines: "Surf-riding at Waikiki Beach is a great game. In the first place the surf there doesn't look as if any human being would dare venture into it ; but when you see a beautiful, slim, brown native, naked save for short swimming trunks, come waves. gliding down a high white breaker, poised like a Mercury, erect on a single narrow plank - it looks delightfully exhilarating."

autonomy, therefore validating their imperialist presence. Even when Filipinas expanded their civic duties and enacted progressive policies and social welfare programs to better serve their local communities, white progressive women like Carrie Chapman Catt were unable to conceive of their efforts as legitimate and in line with the Woman Movement.

Carrie Chapman Catt was already a prominent face of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association (NAWSA) and broader Woman Movement when she visited the Philippines in 1912 as part of her tour in promoting suffrage abroad. Although more openly supportive and gentle in her observations of the Filipina under colonial rule, similar to Helen Taft and school mistress Gibbs, Catt also deemed the Filipina as passive novices on the instruction of suffrage. Catt argued that Filipinas required more time under American guidance to help refine the Filipina in becoming better equipped to understand the value of suffrage. What Catt achieved instead was the denial of Filipinas as colonial subjects to suffrage, ironic considering her prior efforts to promote women's rights. Like the Thomasite female teachers before her, Catt practiced and taught white suffrage as a gendered colonial tool of control and oversight. By labeling Filipinas as "reluctant suffragists," Catt perpetuated the limitations Filipinas faced in their efforts towards participating fully in national politics for independence. In her eyes, as it was for many of the colonial overseers during this period, Filipinas were not ready or prepared to bear the full weight and burden of democracy and self-determination.[150]

[150] Suffragists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Carrie Chapman Catt's interactions with the ideas of allowing Asian persons the right to vote began much earlier than Catt's trip to the Philippines. As a participant in the abolition movement, Stanton withdrew from her abolitionist colleagues once the conversation of allowing Black men the right to vote before white women arose. She then covered the topic that if Black men were allowed the vote before white women, then the Chinese in California, which had recently been claimed as a new state of the American union, would also have the precedent to claim access to the vote before white women, making it clear that for Stanton, the lines of gender and race were clear and mutually exclusive. For Stanton, the Chinese immigrants in California and the Pacific Northwest could never be made into upstanding American citizens, infantilizing and caricaturing Asian immigrants as savage and unintelligent. Such rhetoric and characterizations of the Asian other would also be applied in similar fashion to the Philippines. With the Philippines as a protectorate and steward under American imperialist care, Catt's gentler characterizations of the Asian woman of the Philippines speaks to the maternalist imperial

Like her male white peers who understood the Philippines as an American territory that needed American oversight to guide them into modernity, Catt saw Filipinas as childlike and naively ignorant of the world around them which informed the tenets of white feminism in empire, what Joyce Zonana describes as Feminist Orientalism.[151] In multiple political cartoons, speeches, and public forums on the topic of America's role in the Philippines, the Filipino was depicted as a dark skinned native who tended to be half naked and unkempt. Juxtaposed to that imagery were other cartoon depictions of the Filipino native, illustrating how being educated and dressed by Uncle Sam in American finery transformed him into an upstanding gentleman. Catt's depiction of the Filipinas she came across on her tour reveal similar stereotypes and interpretations of the Filipina, who in Catt's mind, faced an uphill battle in trying to persuade her to take on the lessons of white suffrage.

What Catt did not understand during her tour of the Philippines were the multiple colonial and societal barriers Filipinas faced, thus making the leap towards total suffrage less certain and far more difficult to achieve. Allison Sneider argues that American suffrage during U.S. Expansion (1870-1929) was extremely divergent and contradictory. Suffragists like Catt and those of NAWSA held contradictory opinions, "advocated for inharmonious policies," and in many stages of their philosophical interpretations of suffrage and abolition, were especially intellectually inconsistent as many viewed themselves as imperial citizens who had the means and experience to teach democracy to others.[152] Like the many white women before her who

mindset that white women practiced in American colonial territories and is reflective of the racial ideologies that Stanton shared only decades prior.

[151] Joyce Zonana, "The Sultan and the Slave: Feminist Orientalism and the Structure of 'Jane Eyre.'" *Signs*, vol. 18, no. 3, University of Chicago Press, 1993, pp. 594. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174859.

[152] Allison L. Sneider, *Suffragists In An Imperial Age: U.S. Expansion and the Woman Question, 1870-1929* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9, 10.

sought to instruct the Philippine peoples on western interpretations of civilization and decorum, Catt did not see the Filipina as an equal and echoed the colonial gaze of her male peers in her observations of the Filipina.

Although much more supportive of the Filipinas she came across, having recognized their social independence and privileges as Clemencia Lopez explained in her address 10 years prior, Catt, like the female Thomasite teachers before her, sexually objectified the Filipina and thus justified the sexual prowess of white men in the Philippines. In one observation, Catt notes the social respect Filipina sellers exhibit in community spaces like the wet market. However, immediately after she reduces them to dainty brown skinned girls wearing pretty garments, concluding that it is no wonder that American soldiers are quick to be enthralled by the Filipina's brown girlish beauty. Catt describes her takeaway from an evening dining and interacting with prominent Filipino families and colonial administrators having been very taken with the Filipinas in her presence noting that "had I been a young man, I should have gone home bewildered as to which girl I was in love with - they were so pretty and sweet and had I been a white young man, I should certainly have dreamed of brown beauties."[153] White women observers thus proved to also be complicit in the sexual imperialism that Nerissa Balce describes as the "erotics of American empire."[154] Benevolent women of the Progressive Era like Catt and the Thomasite

[153] Carrie Chapman Catt, Carrie Chapman Catt Papers: Diaries, -1923; Philippines, 1912, July 19-Aug. 20. - August 20, 1912, 1912. Manuscript/Mixed Material. https://www.loc.gov/item/mss154040012/, 13.

[154] Nerissa S. Balce, "The Filipina's Breast: Savagery, Docility, and the Erotics of the American Empire," *Social Text* 1 June 2006; 24 (2 (87)): 89–110. doi: https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-24-2_87-89: 97. According to Balce, the early colonizers associated new worlds including the Pacific as feminine. European and American maps painted new worlds as virgin if not innocent and shapely and this gendered interpretation translated into the use of gendered violence as part of imperialist expansion. Balce argues "that the naked images of brown women—in this case Filipinas and Pacific Islander women—are representations of American imperial power and visual icons of "sexualized savages." "The Age of Exploration inaugurated "new" tools of genocide in the Americas: sexual violence, in particular the rape of native women and children, and military violence such as war, occupation, and forced removal from one's native community through land laws and boarding schools. Balce charts the origin of an American idea—the Filipina savage. "Pacific fetish was translated by photographs, journals, magazines, that were circulated in America and Europe, men taking photographs of Pacific women without their consent and with

teachers thus furthered the exoticization of the Filipina by portraying Filipinas as fleeting love interests for lovesick and adventurous American soldiers. Despite Catt's role in women's suffrage, her colonialist mentality prevented her from perceiving Filipinas as truly part of the Woman Movement whilst simultaneously validating the sexual violence Filipinas experienced under American colonial rule.

Ann Laura Stoler argued that the production and reproduction of the conceptions of race were simultaneously done so at the same sites of colonial productions and interpretations of sex throughout the age of imperialism. The colonized subject according to Stoler was used as a model to reify the bourgeoisie identity particularly along lines of sex, race, and gender. With the colonized subject portrayed as overly sensual, dark, unkempt, "fertile," and childlike, the European subject of the metropole appeared more wholesome, democratic, and paternalistic in their colonial endeavors. This juxtaposition therefore justified the role of European expansion abroad. Thus, white feminism in America was validated as the brown Filipina was seen and associated with savage and sinful qualities who therefore needed the aid of her white female teachers to show her the right path to modern society as one female teacher to her mentee. Placing Stoler's discussion of how race, gender, and sex were social constructs that shared the same sites of cultural reproduction within the colonial context, Lisa Lowe's *Intimacies of Four Continents* further contextualizes that the freedoms and leisure of white women to travel and thus break from the homefront could only be made possible through empire; the disenfranchisement, displacement, and subordination of the colonial subject, and in this case at the turn of the twentieth century, the Filipina mentee.

anonymity- no names or cultural references furthers the savagery associated with the female Pacific body and person."

In *Intimacies of Four Continents,* Lisa Lowe describes the colonial philosophies projected on Native and Indigenous peoples by white colonizers in a similar vein to Balce's discussion of using intimate encounters and imaginings of the Native other to hierarchize racially the superiority of the free white colonizer and the unfree Native. American freedoms, according to Lowe, are made violently true at the expense of oppressing colonial spaces and persons.[155] Thus, America's benevolent colonial philosophies argue that for territories like the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Hawai'i to be free, they must undergo American tutelage that is inherently violent and extractive. The contradictions of American democracy and liberalism as part of the colonial project is thus similar to Anglo American women's feminism and purpose in the Philippines; Filipinas must be unfree or made unequal first so that they can undergo the supposed intellectual process of freedom. White women's rights promoted during the Progressive Era thus was only allowed because Brown and Black women domestically and abroad were being made unfree by filling the domestic and care work that white women previously were relegated to under white men. Through white women's intimate colonial projects, Thomasite tutelage alongside white colonial feminism were pathways that exacerbated the fetishization and exoticization of Filipinas thereby limiting the New Filipina's agency but uplifting white women, allowing them to share power in the colonial enterprise of white man's burden. By painting the new borders and colonial territories as an expansion of the private sphere, the American home, white women could articulate and justify their roles in America's empire and expand and

[155] Lisa Lowe, *Intimacies of Four Continents* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2015), 31. Lowe discusses how Black, Brown, and Asian persons, particularly Asian and Black women's labor and bodies were used as means to stabilize the racial and capitalist order and hierarchies that fed the economies of Victorian empires. With the addition of new colonial territories, the Black and white binary became questioned and unstable, thus through the exploitation of Asian women's bodies as sex workers and laborers, turning them into an imperial fetish and commodity, the white and black binary continued to function as part of the desire and justification for colonial expansion. The domestic, and sexual, labor that Black women were forced to serve thus freed up the boundaries of white women's labor. With the entry of Chinese women into the imperialist fold, white women's domestic duties and sexual obedience experienced new varying degrees of autonomy away from white men.

transform their domestic duties into new political arenas thus granting themselves positions of power in America's future as an empire.

In her tour of the Philippines, Catt visited women's prisons, primary schools, markets, and hospitals, all spaces Filipinas labored in. In her estimation of the diverse groups of Filipinas she met and came across in her tour, the Filipina was portrayed as brown colonial subjects that were forever childlike, exoticized, and thus open for the taking by white soldiers. It would be 25 long years under American indoctrination before Catt would revisit supporting Filipina suffrage alongside her colleague, then First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, arguing that Filipinas were finally capable of "realizing the importance of undertaking this responsibility" of the woman vote.[156] In 1937, Filipinas were able to register more than 300,000 votes across the archipelago to enact suffrage into the Philippine commonwealth constitution. Despite the 30 years of work many Filipina women's club organizations and labor undertook to ratify and secure the Filipina vote, American observers commented that the achievement could have only been made possible with Catt's intervention on behalf of "her little brown sisters," as Philippine "women had been virtual slaves in their homes until the Philippines came under U. S. rule in 1899."[157] According to the *Time* magazine it was thanks to the "gallant ally" found in then governor general, Frank Murphy, that Filipinas were able to have their suffrage bill passed. Filipina suffrage was not seen as a Philippine victory but rather an achievement and example of the success of American intervention. The Times article concluded that it was only with American aid and "with more

[156] Carrie Chapman Catt Papers and Correspondence, 1933-1943, FDR Library. Manuscript/Mixed Material.http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/_resources/images/ersel/ersel017.pdf, 68-70.
[157] "THE PHILIPPINES: Votes for Women," *Time*, May 10, 1937, http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,757749,00.html.

than 100,000 votes to spare, [that] they [Filipinas] became the first females in the Orient to hoist themselves to political parity with their menfolk."[158]

The writings of schoolteachers, suffragists, and other colonial observers all directly spoke to the long-term goals of American colonialism. Newspapers and articles written by white women who worked or visited the Philippines exemplified the white female colonial gaze. White suffrage and white male military prowess were two sides of the same coin of American imperialism. These gendered systems of control and violence applied to Filipinas by white women ultimately forced them to reconsider and practice alternative ways of securing Philippine independence while simultaneously ensuring Filipinas became essential partners and collaborators in liberation and state formation. An American education therefore became the only entryway for Filipinas to participate in local and national affairs.

The *Pensionado* Program beginning in 1903 was in full effect by the 1910s and hundreds of handpicked Filipinas/os had already returned to the Philippines from their education in America. These *penionadas/os* became the replacement teachers for the Thomasites and introduced into their civic and academic positions what they had learned in the United States. The purpose of the *pensionada/o* program at its core was to offer scholarships to the most prestigious and smartest Filipinas/os who would travel to American universities where they would earn an education and learn American values and culture which they in turn would bring back to the Philippines. This process would "Americanize" the Philippines, making the Filipina/o/x peoples much more culturally assimilated to American ways and language thus

158 "THE PHILIPPINES: Votes for Women," *Time*, May 10, 1937, http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,757749,00.html.

transforming the Philippine people into a like-minded and acculturated polity of colonial subjects that would be easier to oversee and manage.

Filipinas could apply and take the qualifying exams to enter the *pensionado* program. Other *pensionados* would take on a college education at the universities established by the United States, like the University of the Philippines. From 1903 to 1907 the Philippine colonial government sponsored about two hundred men and less than a dozen young women at colleges and universities throughout the United States, giving these students up to $500/year (equivalent to $15,092 today) for their expenses.[159] As part of their roles in American universities, Filipina/o students regularly were expected to function "self-consciously as pioneers explaining the Philippines to Americans."[160]

In 1905, the two highest scoring students to enter the *Pensionado* Program were young women. Honoria Acosta became the first Filipina *pensionado* to graduate from an American University in medicine from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania. Filipina *pensionados*, although only numbering eight during the first two years of the program, were revered as a "splendid impression" of Philippine pride that would "redound greatly to the benefit of our beloved Filipinas." *The Filipino* magazine article covering the biographies of the first cohort of *pensionadas* concluded with "whatever influence that the Filipino young men may exert upon our National life in the Philippines is almost insignificant when compared with that deep and lasting home influence that will be exerted by Our Girls who have come to America."[161] The success of these Filipina students became the proud results of the direct

[159] Posadas and Guyotte, "Unintentional Immigrants," 28.
[160] "Our Girls," *The Filipino* (1906): 3.
[161] "Our Girls," *The Filipino* (1906): 6, 7.

influence of American colonial intervention. These women were seen as paragons of American intellect while maintaining the revered qualities of the famed Maria Clara when they returned to the Philippines with the goals of transforming their islands into a model nation of the world.[162] To have maintained all symbols of Philippine cultural femininity including one's humble Christian values, virginal purity, and quiet obedience as they absorbed an American education as mothers and care workers for their nation, was expected by both their Filipino male peers and American overseers. Such a pathway for intellectual growth for Filipinas during the American Era would become the main opportunity for Filipinas to advance their own political agenda. But of course, Filipinas like Clemencia Lopez and those who transitioned from the Spanish gender system to the American Thomasite gendered curriculum, were well aware of the colonial monopoly of women's labor under empire and thus always reconceptualized alternative forms of subversive resistance.

Conclusion

White women teachers and advocates for American expansion continued to practice what Amy Kaplan terms as "manifest domesticity" on the Philippines islands and the other territories ceded to America by Spain in the aftermath of the Spanish American War. Using domestic rhetoric, calling the nation and its expansion a "home" housing multiple families, validated a false sense of goodwill that the United States was taking on nonwhite colonial subjects so as to provide and care for them as they guided them under their tutelage to make decent upstanding subjects. But

[162] Blanco explains the cultural and religious metaphors that are found throughout national hero Jose Rizal's novels. In his explanation of the Filipina major characters, Blanco juxtaposes the cultural and gendered character development of two very different female characters, Dona Victorina and Maria Clara from the novel *Noli Me Tangere* (1887). Dona Victorina has Native ancestry and is the wife of a Spanish military man. She is extremely vain and tries not to speak Tagalog but has moments of violent outbursts. Maria Clara is a mixed race Filipina with Chinese and Spanish ancestry and is described as humble, pure, and quiet natured. Both characters Blanco describes are the most dominant literary female figures that in popular culture are still used to reference the two types of Filipina personalities. John D. Blanco, *Frontier Constitutions: Christianity and Colonial Empire in the Nineteenth-Century Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 258.

unbeknownst to the colonial regime's tutors and overseers, Filipinas would take advantage of the new co-education system, and use the citizen-mother language of their Thomasite female teachers, to prove that their intellectual and political merit warranted more than suffrage in the islands. The presence of the modern Filipina intellectual, the progressive peminist Filipina thus argued, guaranteed Philippine sovereignty.

The imagery and grand nationalist rhetoric of the Filipina as the prime example of the Filipino's progress as a colonial subject is common in both literary and artistic renditions of Filipino nationalism during the American Era. The gendered language of Filipinos in describing the potential of the Philippine people also spoke to how they wished to challenge American colonialism and discrimination by showcasing their Filipino pride as a unique and intelligent peoples, where the Filipina's gentility and femininity were tied to the virtue and health of the Philippines. The courses Filipinas were allowed to take revolved around primarily three fields, including domestic science, English, and medicine. The intentions in narrowing a Filipina's education to these three fields had one purpose: to ensure that the Filipina emerged as the ideal matriarch who could heal, nurture, and educate the next generation of Philippine citizens into upstanding westernized citizens of the world. The enlightened Filipina *pensionada* performed her maternalist duties as part of her patriotic duty upon returning to the Philippines. *Pensionadas*, or the New Filipinas, used their education as an opportunity to expand her socio-political liberties in the new Philippines that was emerging. Despite the gendered nature of her education, Filipinas would use their new skills to vocally and socially demonstrate that they had become viable participants and collaborators in nation building. Although Filipina mothering virtues and agency were seen as metaphorically tied to the motherland, Filipinas in many ways reframed and considered themselves as capable of handling multi-faceted and multi-tasking roles not just as

cultural matriarchs fulfilling their patriotic destiny of domesticity. Rather the New Filipina of the Roaring Twenties would argue that the rigor of motherhood lent itself to other types of potential that the Filipina had yet to do on behalf of the Commonwealth of the Philippines.

The conflicting emotions and agendas of "progress" from all parties (American colonial government, white feminism, male Filipino leadership) would bear pressure on the Filipina wherever she went. And as the United States opened its doors to extract Filipina/o/x laborers for their plantations in Hawai'i, or their canneries and farmland in the Pacific Northwest and west coast, Filipinas could extend and practice their new sense of self. Unfortunately, the critical male gaze, or culture of surveillance, would also follow her making sure that she did not forget her duties to her country and heritage. The New Filipina woman was used as a testing ground to see America's role as tutor and colonizer, to justify their progress and role in the Pacific. She was also the canvas to validate white women's roles in empire as domestic caretakers of empire.

For her Filipino peers, she was the embodiment of cultural heritage and respectability. For all three audiences, the New Filipina would not be alone in her questioning and critiquing of her agency and role in nation building and community welfare. Rather the New Filipina would embark across the Pacific as *pensionada*. The *pinays* transformed from their intellectual Pacific crossings would take on new roles, questioning filial piety and traditional interpretations of Filipina femininity as they navigated and survived a new terrain in a status they did not carry before; as immigrant women of color. Her new unsettling status would inform her new experiences and confrontations at the intersections of race, gender, and citizenship and which would magnify her previous misgivings on gender in Filipino colonial society as she advocated for self-determination and sovereignty.

Chapter 2: Constructing the New Filipina: Filipina Peminist Writing and Activism, 1903-1927

Filipinas under the American educational system viewed their new educational opportunities beyond the role of simply supportive partners to their male counterparts. Rather, their access to a more extensive public schooling and curriculum became their means toward becoming viewed as intellectually capable, politically savvy, and thus modern patriots and equally participating citizens of their fledgling country. Filipinas during the early twentieth century co-opted their "American" education as a means to transform the creole Spanish informed gender conventions of their parents to empower themselves and insert their presence into what they saw as a nationalist (and for others an anti-imperialist) movement that included women's participation for the liberalization of the Philippines. For the Filipinas coming of age under the American occupation, a public education politicized them far more than what the Spanish system had intended as famed national hero Jose Rizal described Filipinas serving as "beautiful maidens" and "good mothers" with "an amiable character."[163]

Rizal's beloved female leads in his literary works, like Maria Clara from *Noli Me Tangere* (1887), exuded the trademarks of the ideal colonial Filipina archetype at the turn of the century: Demure, obedient, and devoted partner. Rather than absolving themselves of such a cloistered and hyper feminine persona, the New Filipina attempted to transition and build off the preferred image of the Filipina to gain access to the new colonial politics under a guise more agreeable to Filipino male leaders. This chapter will discuss the formation of the New Filipina, one who advocated for equal access to higher learning and was open to experiencing the intersectional cultural influences of American femininity and progressivism. For the New

[163] Rizal, "To the Young Women of Malolos," 1889.

Filipina, these marked her gendered transformations and the beginnings of a decolonial, transpacific, and feminist politicking, which I argue were the formative years of Filipina feminism, or more specifically, peminism.[164]

The process of Filipinization represented for many Filipinas/os an opportunity to achieve their independence by proving that they could successfully blend Philippine cultural values and leadership within an American political framework. The *pensionado* program coerced the transpacific and colonial migrations of Filipinas across the American empire and back again to the Philippines, marking the early nodes of a Filipina diaspora; one that advocated for the potential of Filipina intellectualism as essential to Philippine democracy, modernity, and independence. Being educated abroad in multiple topics including but not limited to Science,

[164] *Peminism* as defined by Melinda L. de Jesus is feminist theory grounded and informed by the Filipina American experience that includes the Filipina American consciousness thus addressing or acknowledging the multiple ways Filipinas have struggled against cultural assimilation, racism, sexism, homophobia, nationalist rhetoric, patriarchal practices within both the white American landscape and the familial Fil-Am community. Pinayism as coined by Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales draws from peminist thought and is Filipina American theorizing that expresses how to decolonize the spaces we inhabit through building a constructive consciousness of pinay collectivity (radical Pinay sisterhood), one that allows us to love ourselves as pinays, how to love other pinays whose experiences with being Filipina in America differs than our own, and ways of practicing love for our communities. See Melinda L. de Jesus, ed. *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical Theory, Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 5. One decolonial practice of Peminism and Pinayism is addressing the colonial influences on gender, sex, family formation, colorism, and sexuality in order to challenge the white hetero-cisgendered hegemonic nature that has overshadowed BIPOC and third world radical feminisms and women of color experiences. Tintiangco-Cubales' call to pinayism is not one solely for the benefit of Filipina liberation, rather Tintiangco-Cubales argues that Filipina feminist engagement and experiences is an opportunity to express a more complete rendition of the larger Filipino struggle. A pinayist consciousness is an opportunity for Filipino men and women to reflect on how white supremacy has manifested "through hetero-sexist exploitation as a method of disempowering men of color and subjugating communities of color. See Tintiangco-Cubales "Chapter 8: Pinayism," as found in *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical Theory, Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 137-148). Both Filipina feminist frameworks blend and share a common goal of utilizing love of the Filipina/x self to liberate ourselves and all our people throughout the Filipina/o/x diaspora. My research seeks to historicize the antecedents to de Jesus' and Tintiangco-Cubales' interpretations of peminism in America. I consider how Filipina American feminism as community activism grew from the rhetoric and praxis of Filipina feminists and suffragists who challenged American colonialism that intertwined with the social power structures of Filipino-Spanish patriarchies in their fight for sovereignty which they argued went hand in hand with Filipina suffrage, or the liberation of Filipinas by way of being granted full citizenship as active participants in Philippine politics and nation building. I review the gendered analysis of colonial trauma on the Filipina at the turn of the 20th century, her early methods of resistance, and how such early peminist practices of community and Filipina organizing carried over with the first generation of working class Filipinas in America, the *manang* generation, and how they continued the peminist methods of club organizing in order to safeguard their Fil-Am communities in America, therefore continuing the peminist work of the Progressive Era's New Filipina who struggled against imperialism in the Philippines.

Medicine, Domestic Science, Law, Education, English, Mathematics, Civics, Business, and Administration offered multiple career opportunities for middle- and upper-class Filipinas. Breaking from Spanish inspired maternalist interpretations of Filipina agency would take two generations of Filipina thinkers, *pensionadas*, and laborers vacillating between the Philippines and the United States, both culturally and physically, to produce a new and bespoke way of engaging with politics and creating new opportunities for Filipinas that were not always tied to the domestic realm. In this chapter, I examine the writings and work of the first generation of New Filipina peminists who came to embody alternative interpretations of Filipina p/femininity as a means to secure Philippine independence and thus Filipina citizenship.

One of the most prominent peminist figures of the Progressive Era was writer Pura Villanueva Kalaw. She came of age during the tail end of the Spanish Era and witnessed the violent beginnings of the American occupation. Born in 1886, she became a teenager during a period where Filipinas who could afford an education could only register for six months' worth of courses at their local colleges under the tutelage of priests and nuns. There they would learn simple Spanish, some Latin instruction, and housekeeping and sewing. If they were lucky, the local friars would impart some knowledge on mathematics and science. Spanish thus became a symbol of the elite few, keeping the majority of the Native and Indigenous populations in the peasant or working classes.[165] Indeed, the generation of Filipinas and Filipinos who came of age

[165] The Spanish missionaries and overall colonial mission opted to teach Spanish to only a select landowning or merchant class families; many of the Ilustrados were part of the merchant class, like Rizal's family, and were allowed to study art, literature, among other topics in Spain and other parts of Europe. The Spanish vernacular and the written word were methods and tools used to eliminate the Filipina/o/x oral traditions which were the more popular forms of communication and operated as ways to preserve generational histories. By destroying the majority of the pre-colonial Philippine texts and enforcing the Spanish vernacular, the Spanish missionaries and crown that they represented were able to dictate and enforce their rule over the Native and Indigenous Filipinas/os/x.

during the first decade of American instruction preferred Spanish over English, many choosing Spanish as their form of literature as a direct challenge to American imperialism.[166]

Pura Kalaw, a self-trained journalist in her native Ilonggo, opted to write her award-winning essays in Spanish and became the first Filipina writer for Iloilo's local paper *El Tiempo* as the editor of the women's column. She used her platform, education, and influence to create the Ilonga Feminist Association in 1906. Women's rights would still have a long way to go however, and in 1907 she wrote the suffrage bill and sent it to the Philippine Assembly. Despite the bill's rejection by the assembly, Pura Villanueva would continue to advocate for women's rights, education, and women's organizing. In 1908 at the age of 22, she became the first pageant winner of the Queen of the Manila Carnival Contest.[167] Using her national platform, she would continue to write in favor of women's suffrage and Philippine independence and would go on to serve as editor and writer for multiple magazines promoting Philippine nationalism and suffrage, including *The Woman's Outlook* (1922-1930) and *The Woman's Home Journal* (1928-1934).[168]

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[166] On the discussion of the Golden Age of Filipina/o/x literature written in the Spanish language as a response to the American imposition of English, please see Jean Mansod, "The Spanish Colonial Past in the Writer's Memory: (Post)colonial Nostalgias in Enrique Fernández Lumba's Hispanofilia Filipina," *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, Vol. 6, No 2 (Fall 2016), http://dx.doi.org/10.5070/T462033554.

[167] The carnival was an event sponsored and supported by the American colonial government who believed that such a fete, one that celebrated "Filipino culture" and American influence in terms of introducing modernization. The carnival events were some of the first practices of Filipinization; " Filipinization had the effect of refashioning policy toward Filipino priorities" which included an emphasis on placing Filipino culture and priorities first while instructing on government policies, education, and infrastructure via American colonial oversight and tutelage. The end goal of Filipinization was to have produced a generation of Filipinas/os in American and western philosophies on civil service along with trades skills that Filipinas/os could take over the political reigns of the Philippines and become "deserving" of Philippine sovereignty and independence. One of the ways they could gradually acclimate the FIlipino into serving such revered positions of a democratic state was by allowing the capable few to be voted in and take positions of government during American occupation. Ian Morley, "The Filipinization of the American City Beautiful, 1916–1935," *Journal of Planning History*, Vol. 17, No 4 (2018): 251-280.

[168] *The Woman's Outlook* Magazine was the publication of the National Federation of Women's Clubs of the Philippines which Pura Villanueva Kalaw was also associated with as she served as the president of the Filipino Women's Club. The Filipino women's clubs that emerged in the direct aftermath of the Philippine American War addressed many of the social welfare needs of Filipino families and mothers and as part of the movement for Filipina suffrage, the women's clubs organized a conference to unify all of the clubs towards a nationalist front for the woman vote and thus the formation of the National Federation of Women's Clubs of the Philippines was established in 1921.

Eventually she married the famed anti-imperialist writer and lawyer Teodoro Kalaw, who supported and shared her values. To support her family, Pura alongside her peminist colleagues used their publications like the Woman's Outlook as a means of income while following her passions in supporting a peminist agenda and career.

In the October 1923 volume of *The Woman's Outlook,* Kalaw and her colleagues wrote on what they believed were the ideal attributes of the modern Filipina, arguing in more ways than one, that the New Filipina has surpassed even the most respected of the previous generations of Filipinas and were far more intellectually centered than the modern Filipino boy who they quote were "more fickle, with an egoistic materialism in everything he does and thinks." The Filipina of 1923, in Kalaw's eyes was a "decidedly desirable girl who is better educated, better cultured… better equipped to build a home and rear children; maintaining a standard of living; in foresight and serious mindedness; in consciousness of her civic duties and patriotism; and in being economically independent."[169] The *Woman's Outlook* magazine was the official publication of the National Federation of Women's Clubs that in similar fashion to American women's home magazines, promoted advice on how to maintain the home and which new products could help simplify a mother's day to day workload. What made Kalaw's magazine unique from traditional women's magazines of the period was its outright declarations of support in what they describe as "New Filipina Womanhood" which in their eyes, encapsulated the "essence of true feminism."[170] The New Filipina peminist praxis meant "to be a woman in every sense of the word, to be able to cope willingly with the sacred calling of wifehood and some motherhood, and at the same time to be resplendent with the glory of self-

[169] Trinidad Fernandez, Pura Villanueva De Kalaw, and Pedro Franco, "The Thinkers," *The Woman's Outlook: A Magazine for the Home*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1923): 4.
[170] Rosalia Aguinaldo, "Mrs. Rosario L. Aguinaldo editor of the Woman's Page," *The Woman's Outlook: A Magazine for the Home*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1923): 7.

expression, expansion, and individual achievement, no matter how humble or lowly." But most of all, "to do all that is within our power to improve our social and economic conditions, to love and tolerate one another in a sisterly way…all to try and be useful citizens and make our country proud."[171]

Like many peminist Filipinas of her generation, Kalaw believed that women's work was related to the home front. But for her, the home front meant more than domestic work catering to her family. It meant also maintaining the Philippines' political home front, and managing the way in which Filipino homes and families were perceived on the international stage. Kalaw did not want foreigners to see the Philippines as simply a colonial entity, its people little more than savages beholden to Spanish and American interests. Filipina/o historians who have written on the contributions of the early Filipina suffragists have argued that the New Filipinas did not attempt to counter the motherly and domestic persona ascribed to Filipinas under the Spanish system. Similar to the American women's rights wave model that describes the progression of the woman movement, traditional histories describe the American Era as a moment where Filipinas were purely concerned with suffrage, were "nonpolitical in nature" and thus were not necessarily attempting at all to counter the ideal Filipina feminine as purely domestic.[172] Rather, I argue that the New Filipina peminist was aware of the colonial surveillance and cultural expectations of her sex which limited the ways in which she could promote her radically peminist ideals. Instead, the New Filipina peminist found ways to utilize gendered language and platforms, like pageantry and domesticity, to create her own language of peminist politicking

[171] Aguinaldo, "Mrs. Rosario L. Aguinaldo editor of the Woman's Page," 7.
[172] Felina Reyes, *Filipino Women: Their Role in the Progress of Their Nation* (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1951), 6.

that could slip under the patriarchal order and surveillance accompanied by overt male judgment and harassment.

Kalaw, like other peminists, desired to be part of the nationalist endeavor to uplift the Philippines towards independence. Kalaw saw that the racist language and savage depictions of Filipino peoples as part of the colonial project were used to demote the Filipino and deny them their freedoms. For Kalaw, preventing such assumptions meant advertising Filipino families, culture, and their literary progress in a way that appealed to both Philippine and outside observers, which required expertise in and awareness of global affairs. [173] Even her smallest projects, like her 1918 pocket cookbook *Condimentos Indigenas* (Native Cooking and Condiments), was a peminist endeavor therefore decolonial, political, and personal in nature.[174]

Kalaw was well aware of the Philippines' dependence on expensive American canned foodstuffs. The effects of the global recession spurred on by World War I had also caused the tariffs on American imports to skyrocket. Kalaw, wanting to highlight Filipino local food and cultural cooking traditions, saw her project as an opportunity to promote and reinvigorate Philippine culture, provincial produce, and Filipinas' culinary knowledge of traditional Philippine foods from across the archipelago. Kalaw relied on other Filipinas to share their knowledge of local dishes amounting to a total of 154 recipes. Knowledge and jurisdiction of the

[173] One of the many articles found in the Philippine Republic Magazine that covered Pura Villanueva Kalaw's achievements dedicated a whole spread to Kalaw's contributions to Philippine nationalisms, suffrage, and the modern Filipina woman. The Philippine Republic Magazine was published in Washington D.C. and was a Filipino nationalist magazine that supported Philippine independence. Pura was praised both in the Philippines and in the United States for her social work and was seen as the ideal Filipina; someone who mastered the art of motherly responsibilities both to her family and country. Victoriano D. Diamonon, "Foremost Filipino Women," The Philippine Republic, February 1925. See Victoriano D. Diamonon, "Foremost Filipino Women," *The Philippine Republic Magazine*, February 1925 (Washington D.C.): 9, 15.

[174] Kalaw's husband at the time had recently recovered from a serious medical procedure that required his leg to be amputated. In an effort to help pay for her husband's medical needs, Kalaw, believed her publications could secure another means of income for the young couple. Claude Tayag, "The Biggest Little Filipino Cookbook," *The Philippine Star*, May 19, 2022.

Filipino household being deemed as part of the Filipina's responsibility therefore naturally became an entryway for Filipinas to participate in the nationalist agenda of proving the worth and competence of the Filipino people to westerners. Pensionadas/os especially were tasked with promoting the Filipino citizen as modern and multi-cultured. For many of the first educated Filipina peminists, the home front was redefined to refer to the entire Philippine archipelago's stability, sustainability, and well-being. What was traditionally seen as woman's work had thus become intertwined with the political sphere, as Filipinas like Kalaw politicized motherwork to advance their intertwined agenda of both Philippine independence and suffrage.

Many of the gendered tenants of the older Spanish gender system were maintained under the American occupation. Many Filipinas/os still revered and promoted the ideal Filipina as a woman who maintained her cultural pride, remained humble, and was demure and simple. Motherwork continued to be presumed as the ultimate pride and joy of a Filipina's life. With the introduction to American pop culture, fashion, consumer trends, education, and progressivism, Filipinas coming of age under the first half of the American occupation nonetheless were quick to tweak Rizal's famed Maria Clara image of the modest, mothering, and naive Filipina beauty. Rather than abandoning completely the imagery and values that spoke to cultural maternalism, early Filipina peminists opted instead to retweak such rhetoric ever so slightly into a form of maternalist nationalism; nationalist emphasis that was in favor of more paths towards expanding Filipinas' careers outside of the home while still maintaining the philosophy that Filipina labor will always benefit the home, family, and her people, so as not to push the Filipino patriarchal envelope too far.

In her 1910 high school graduation speech, the first Filipina mathematics professor at the University of the Philippines, Pilar Hidalgo, promoted Kalaw's interpretation of Filipina

affective labor as intrinsically dualistic in being both patriotic and quintessentially *Filipiniana* in nature.[175] Hidalgo was among the first generation of Filipinas to take full advantage of the public education system that America's Department of War's Bureau of Education implemented. A popular magazine at the time known as the *Filipino Teacher* (1907-1911) published Hidalgo's valedictorian speech, describing her young scholarly achievements as a window into the bright future for Filipina women who sought to pursue higher learning from the American system. Hidalgo addressed her graduating class, emphasizing that Filipinas must take full advantage of their new educational opportunities if they wish to be good, noble, and intelligent mothers and teachers for the generations to follow in their footsteps. To Hidalgo, whose youth saw first hand the violence of both the Spanish American War and the Philippine American War, an education for downtrodden Philippine youths was a means to paving a path towards success for struggling Filipinas/os ravaged by war, illness, and destitution. Hidalgo, having lived in Manila in her younger years, was well aware of the welfare and Red Cross work and efforts Filipinas of the local women's clubs committed to in their attempts to piece the city's families and communities back together after having suffered years of war and malnourishment.

Pilar, like many Filipinas of her generation, revered the Filipina club members who helped local families and children get back on their feet by providing them the essential food and resources. Pilar saw her degree and academic achievements as only possible because of the patriotic welfare work of Filipinas after the war. Thus Filipinas, according to Pilar, had a major responsibility to their people and country to be the caregivers, teachers, mentors, mothers, and

[175] *Filipiniana* can be in reference to many things associated with Philippine culture. Particularly from an aesthetic perspective, Filipiniana is in reference to the traditional dress of well-to-do Filipinas during the Spanish Era and is a modest but elaborately elegant dress made from the pineapple fibers or *pina*. *Filipiniana* therefore can imply traditional Filipino culture and dress primarily sparking the image of the Maria Clara and terno dress and demure nature of the Filipinas of that era.

healers to instruct the younger generation; to fulfill such a heavy responsibility was something only Filipinas could do. A new era was upon them in which they could be equally as helpful to their country as the men. "Times have changed; new fields of activity have been opened to women; the home life no longer suffices," their full potential and "ambition for a broader life has awakened in the bosoms of the Filipinas."[176]

Pilar's speech went on to argue that the Filipina's potential had "awakened":

> *"The Filipinas are taking advantage of every opportunity offered to them to acquire knowledge…Filipino women are serious when they lose, serious when they marry, and serious as mothers. They are preparing themselves carefully to be teachers, nurses, pharmacists, doctors, lawyers and good mothers. Today we see hundreds and hundreds of poor families living in filthy low houses where the sunshine, that purifier of nature, hardly penetrates, where the damp, stifling air remains from day to day finding no escape through the closed windows, where one child after another dies for lack of good care. This is the great field of work for women nurses, pharmacists and doctors. Filipina girls, a voice is calling us to the assistance of the poor, to the mission of spreading among the destitutes of fortune the doctrine of good honorable living. Let us respond to it and we shall find a noble life-work to do."*[177]

Pilar's speech was delivered in English, during a period where the majority of male Filipino nationalists advocated to communicate their agenda in Spanish as a way to undermine American authority. For some Filipinas whose education finally arrived in the hands of the colonizers, English became a means to outright challenge the Spanish-Filipino machismo handle over Philippine politics and authority. Filipinas like Pilar and Kalaw who were raised and came of age under all these influences of male paternalistic authority chose to master Spanish, English, Tagalog, and their native local dialects, switching from one language to the other as a means to assert their authority, know-how, and progressive peminist agendas in male dominated spaces.

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[176] Pilar Hidalgo, "The Influence of Woman," *The Filipino Teacher*, Vol. 4 (April 1910): 12, 13. The Filipino teacher. [Vol. 4, no. PI]_14.pdf.
[177] Hidalgo, "The Influence of Woman," 12, 13.

The Filipinas of the early American occupation era who paved this peminist agenda mastered a complicated dance of co-opting their colonial learning to undermine multiple layers of patriarchy stemming from the American system, Filipino culture, and the remnants of the Spanish Church's oversight. Asserting themselves as humble Filipinas seeking a profession and education with maternalist intentions, the early Filipina peminists were able to make their ideas more amenable by catering to the gendered preferences of the patriarchal spaces they interacted with.[178]

Echoing these sentiments was Trinidad Fernandez Legarda, stating that "Perhaps…it was a most natural transition [for Filipinas] after all—from private housekeeping to public housekeeping."[179] Maintaining a maternalist facade in the public sphere made Filipinas more personable to male leaders and proved their nationalist mettle, but simultaneously it stretched them thin to the extent that, despite their accomplishments, they became remembered principally for their social welfare projects as an extension of their domestic responsibilities rather than an act of Filipina political engagement. Despite their newly acquired academic credentials, work experience, and class standing, Filipinas and their labor were simply observed as the admirable social work of Filipina wives and mothers. Legarda was the first executive secretary of the

[178] Mina Roces argues that Filipinas interested in politics and advocating for suffrage were constantly concerned with how they could enter male dominated spaces without appearing overbearingly "modern" thus risking rejection for their suffrage bill among other pro-Filipina agenda items by male politicians. Adopting a maternalist platform promoted the idea that Filipinas had not abandoned the gendered nature of Philippine culture; rather women were seen as the bearers of tradition unofficially tasked with the role of teaching the next generation cultural norms, beliefs, and practices. To make themselves appear less offensive to Filipino politicians who did not agree with women taking positions in political spaces, Filipinas also incorporated politics of culture into how they dressed and presented themselves, often opting to wear the traditional *terno* and *paneulo* when attending formal and social welfare events. Roces argues that despite having to dress and perform their politics through a traditional facade that spoke to beauty, culture, and class (three aspects highly valued and expected of Filipinas), Filipina peminists and suffragists did show their contempt and rejection of more conservative notions of Filipina submissive femininity; for example, Pilar Hidalgo Lim, Josefa Llanes Escoda, Francisca Tirona Benitez all refused to wear the Maria Clara dress instead opting for the *terno* and *paneulo* to showcase their woman movement away from the cloistered Filipina. Mina Roces in "Is the suffragist an American colonial construct? Defining the Filipino Woman in colonial Philippines," as part of Louise Edwards and Mina Roces ed., *Women's Suffrage in Asia: Gender, Nationalism, and Democracy* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).

[179] Quijano de Manila, "Trinidad Legarda: Civic Leader of the Year, April 11, 1953," April 11, 1953.

Philippine Women's Club in 1912. She completed her degree in education and became a public-school teacher. She would become the Manila Carnival Queen winner (1924), and, like Pura Kalaw before her, she would use her queenly platform to continue organizing for Filipina suffrage by helping to establish the National Federation of Women's Clubs of the Philippines.

Motherhood for many of the first generation peminists did not mean an end to their political goals. Rather than seeing mother work as separate from Philippine politics, Filipinas coming of age in the American Era saw the limitations of women's social mobility as intrinsically tied to the politics of the homefront; and for the Filipina, her commitment to her family was the same as her commitment to her country. Though Legarda resigned from her club duties after marrying and having children but continued doing social work and cultural preservation projects in other ways alongside her role as a new mother. When World War II hit, she stayed in Manila and opened a convalescent home to house and treat war orphans, widows, and guerrilla soldiers. She then fundraised after the war to rebuild the National Federation of Women's Clubs building, open nurseries, teach and open domestic science courses for the public, open reading rooms for local youths, served as the First Lady Ambassador and Chief of Mission of the Philippine Republic, and would even run for the senate in 1949.[180] Much of Legarda's clubwork and charity projects were not paid labor, and her political motherwork as clubwork, continued to be deemed by Filipino society during the American Era as the humble work associated with the ideal Filipina.[181]

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[180] Legarda did not win the 1949 senatorial election as many Filipino voters did not agree with having a woman in the Senate; but she had won the popular polls and many scholars believe that she indeed had won the senate seat but purposeful miscounting had led to her losing the election.

[181] "Prewar beauty queens became symbols of the "modern" Filipino woman of their time, in contrast to the idealized Maria Clara of Rizal's "Noli me tangere" and the cheerful sun-lit rural maidens in the paintings of Fernando Amorsolo. These Carnival Queens were urban, highly educated, articulate in English, Spanish and their native languages. Comfortable both in American ways and in the old Hispanic Philippine customs they made the terno and pañuelo fashionable." As found in Ambeth R. Ocampo's "Beautiful with a Heart," *Philippine Daily*

Legarda along with the other "New Filipinas" trained by America's colonial education project had perhaps unknowingly set a high standard for Filipinas to pursue if they wanted to transform the gender politics of the Philippines. Peminist scholar Jeanne Frances I. Illo describes the first generation of New Filipina peminists as "elite women" who were recruited and thus handpicked as worthy, by "American suffragists into the struggle for women's right to vote" thus making peminist politics accessible only to a close circle of upper class American educated Filipinas.[182] Furthermore, Filipinas were expected to do all things private and public under the male colonial gaze, prove their patriotism to their Filipino peers by way of extreme cultural maternalism, and even with their social and academic standing, were not guaranteed the promise of suffrage or political power themselves. But the method of promoting a maternalist agenda as a way to enter and influence male political spaces did lend to Filipinas opening more opportunities to converse and negotiate with Filipino and American men in power. This "New Filipina" was a woman of high family standing, educated and influenced by American progressivism, who somehow balanced motherhood while a devoted social worker, who maintained cultural traditions, despite their seemingly gendered misgivings in order to prove her patriotic zeal, all became part of the new standard and template for the respectable Filipina of the 20th century.

The New Filipina peminists like Kalaw, Hidalgo, and Legarda believed that an education granted them an intellectually equal footing with Filipino men. Legarda argued this exact point in her suffrage piece "Philippine Women and the Vote " (1931) in the nationalist magazine *Philippine Magazine* whose readership consisted of majority men. Legarda is quick to name

Inquirer, February 7, 2018. Last modified February 2017, last accessed May 31, 2022, https://opinion.inquirer.net/101492/beautiful-with-a-heart.

[182] Jeanne Frances I. Illo (1996) Fair skin and sexy body: Imprints of colonialism and capitalism on the Filipina , Australian Feminist Studies, 11:24, 219-225, DOI: 10.1080/08164649.1996.9994820, 220.

authors, poets, and philosophers including Euripides, Lincoln, Shelley, and Chesterton in her attempt to showcase her literary bravado to male readers who did not believe women to be intellectually capable of understanding the privilege and responsibilities of the vote.

"A woman, above the accident of her sex, is, first of all a human being. Like every human being she is potentially heir to every human faculty and achievement. As attested to by an eminent psychologists, there is no mate and female mind anymore than there is a male and female lung or liver. Sex is merely a division of gender, not of intellect or capacity. Equality knows no difference of sex. The law of equal freedom necessarily applies to the whole race, female as well as male. As Plato said, "Either sex alone is but half itself." The human race, like the human body, can advance only by the joint motion of its limbs. We are classed as citizens of this country. We help in our country's struggle for economic freedom and for political liberty just as much as men do. There is no campaign, no demonstration, no undertaking for the motion and the welfare of our country that we have not gladly shared in with our men."[183]

With more Filipinas attending both Philippine and American universities to become medical professionals, lawyers, and educators, Legarda concluded that Filipinas had become intellectually capable as men, that sex had no bearing on one's capabilities of undertaking political responsibilities. Filipinas therefore had every right to be granted full citizenship, which could only be secured by suffrage. Other New Filipina peminists of Legarda's generation took her argument of Filipinas helping in the shared "economic struggle" even further to demonstrate quantitatively the value of all Filipinas as capable citizenry.

Trinidad Tarossa-Sabido was one of the first Filipina poets and linguists to write and publish in the English language. She was educated at the University of the Philippines, where she graduated *magna cum laude*. In 1954 she was commissioned to write a succinct and short history of Philippine feminism. Tarossa-Sabido argued that despite the origins of Filipina p/feminism

[183] Legarda, Trinidad F, "Philippine Women and the Vote," *Philippine Magazine*, Vol 28, No. 4, (1931), 163-165, 196-200.

being traced back to the pre-colonial Filipina, it was only through expanded opportunities through public education introduced during the American Era that Filipinas became more politically visible. Tarossa-Sabido described Filipina political visibility as a movement where peminists "willingly participated in the forms of education available to her" so as to "set about, to try to redeem their long-lost political, civil, economic, and social equality with men."[184] Tarossa-Sabido described the New Filipinas as a progressive coalition of intellectuals:

> *"They took advantage of every freedom granted by the American administration: the freedom to know, to speak out, to worship, to move freely, to associate, to criticize-using these basic civil liberties as springboards to more and more rights and privileges: the right to vote, the right to hold office, to equal pay for equal work, to equal dignity in the conjugal partnership, plus the privileges of favorable working conditions for reason of sex."*[185]

By taking advantage of the public education implemented by the American Department of War, the first wave of Filipina Feminists aimed to carve out a new civic status for themselves. To succeed in their goals for suffrage, the New Filipina would have to navigate the colonial terrain carefully, oftentimes performing a Janus dance of likeability to win the approval of both types of patriarchal surveillance that hovered over them, the colonial overseer and the Filipino patriot.

Filipinas educated under American instruction, also known as "popular education," were praised for their intellect, class, and social work. For American audiences the worldly and motherly Filipina was proof of the influence of American exceptionalism and justification of American colonialism. If the Filipina could be made into a modern upstanding citizen of the world who sought and demanded her own suffrage in similar fashion that American women

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[184] Tarrosa Subido, *The Feminist Movement In the Philippines: 1905-1955* (National Federation of Women's Clubs Publishers, 1955), 5

[185] Subido, *The Feminist Movement In the Philippines*, 5.

demanded suffrage, then the Philippines had indeed the potential in becoming independent. Filipinas who studied in the United States or took on a university education in Manila and other Philippine urban centers were also aware of America's praise and approval of progressive Filipina women and incorporated the traits and habits praised by Americans into their politics at home for the Filipina movement for suffrage.[186]

Some Filipinas, if they had the family and class background, could even apply and excel in public, civic, and academic settings. Encarnacion Alzona was one of those Filipina *pensionadas* who saw her education as an entryway to expand Filipina socio-political engagement within Filipino society under American oversight. But unlike some of her male peers who praised the American colonial education system, Alzona saw the "mixed blessings" that American cultural, political, and educational influences could bring.[187] Like the first handful of Filipinas to receive a college education during the American Era, Alzona weighed the benefits and losses of American colonization; one of the positive influences she weighed in on was women's access to education as a pathway towards suffrage.

[186] American newspapers regularly discussed the role of America in its success of acculturating their colonial subjects. During the 1910s when America and the United Kingdom especially experienced a boom in their economies and international markets due to the overproduction of imports from their Asian territories, major newspapers like the New-York Tribune had pages dedicated to the "progress" and "great influence" they were making in Asia. New-York tribune (New York [N.Y.]), September 21, 1919 Filipinas on Education, Library of Congress.

[187] In the edited volume *Mixed Blessing: The Impact of the American Colonial Experience On Politics and Society in the Philippines* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2013) the authors express the colonial transgressions that the United States exacted on the Philippine peoples culturally, environmentally, and politically. The colonial enterprise of course influenced multiple socio-economic dynamics in the Philippines that adhered to American values on race, class, infrastructure, and gender to name a few but there were also instances of progressive programs that the Philippines under Spain were not afforded including opportunities for a public education that supported Filipina intellectualism. Such mixed blessings of colonial influences in the Philippines are also examples of ironically progressive initiatives that Philippine peoples were able to take advantage of despite their nationalist appeal and efforts towards independence and sovereignty. Alzona's essays which were written at the turn of the twentieth century discusses the same mixed sentiments that McFerson and the other authors of *Mixed Blessing* (2013) the mixed blessings, or colonial opportunities, for an education, travel, and thus expansion in women's civil privileges afforded to Filipinas under American colonialism.

Encarnacion Alzona, the first *pensionada* to attend Columbia University and receive her PhD in the United States argued in her 1923 dissertation "The Filipino Woman: Her Social, Economic, and Political Status, 1565-1933" that Filipina labor was crucial to the livelihood of the Philippines as a fledgling nation. Alzona described how Filipinas made the bulk of the textile, farming, factory, education, and health industries in the Philippines long before the start of the American occupation. Alzona's conclusion as to why the woman question for Filipinas needed to be civically answered with the security of the vote was, for progressive thinkers at the time, a social, moral, economic, and politically logical decision if the Philippines wished to be a progressive nation. According to Alzona, the wealth of the Philippines as a colony was only possible due to the multiplicitous nature of Filipina labor viscerally visible in every major labor sector whose profits were the major imports that the United States both consumed and sold in the global market.[188]

The gender system reinforced under American oversight, despite the introduction of a co-ed national school system, continued to exploit Filipina labor. As noted in the previous chapter, Filipina domestic workers, seamstresses, farmworkers, and factory workers ensured the United States' a formidable position in the global market during the early twentieth century. Filipina labor in the tobacco industry alone from 1913-1922 raked in roughly $5-$8 million/year.[189]

[188] Encarnacion Alzona argued in her discussion of the value and worth of the Filipina laborer in the retail trade, meaning all textile and handicraft trades, that Filipinas should be placed as the leaders and heads of such lucrative businesses. "Women make up three labor categories; agricultural, factory, domestic; 730,102 Filipinas in the 1918 census were working in agricultural occupations; Other types of retail and selling industries Filipinas are head of traditionally also includes drying meats, husking, rice and sugar industries. The supreme court rejected a part of the 1923 Act No. #3071 that women should be compensated if they are new mothers or sick and should be allowed to come back to their original post or job after they recover." Encarnacion Alzona, PhD Dissertation, *The Filipino Woman: Her Social, Economic, and Political Status, 1565-1933*, Columbia University, 1933, second edition, 76,77.

[189] Please see footnote 137 for the total breakdown of Filipina wages during the 1910s-1920s and the exchange rate per product that involved Filipina labor.

Alzona commented that the full working day of Filipinas, both in the home and in the workplace, also secured Filipino men the freedom and privilege of leisure activities. Filipina mothers under the Spanish gender system were expected to serve as "the family treasurer and disbursing officer, and in her absence, either the father or the eldest daughter takes charge of the family finances. Women receive joint pay with their husbands, they manage the money earned collectively and give their husbands when they ask for money for their needs and leisure."[190] Filipino lawmakers, Alzona implied, took full advantage of the variety of women's labor, cheapening it by pricing the value of their labor with unlivable wages, refusing to ratify labor laws that "compensat[ed] if they are new mothers or [become] sick," as most factory and industrial workplaces that hired Filipinas did not "allow [women] to come back to their original post or job after they recover[ed] from illness or pregnancy."[191] Both peasant and working class Filipinas made the majority of the industrial labor that ballooned during the American Era. Without labor laws that ensured the safety and economic value of Filipina workers, and without suffrage, Filipinas had little to no bargaining power both in the home and in the workplace, therefore securing a capitalist-colonial-gender system that denied Filipinas socio-political clout.

As the Philippine American War began to wane, and as the American colonial presence secured its cultural influence and monopolized grip on Philippine exports (tobacco, textiles, and sugar especially), the peasant and working-class Filipina found herself involved in more economic pursuits. By 1918, nearly 700,000 Filipinas were counted as the number of women engaged in industrial work.[192] In that same year, over 730,000 Filipinas were counted as engaged in agricultural operations. Both of these numbers did not count the Filipinas of minor age who

[190] Encarnacion Alzona, *The Filipino Woman*, 86.
[191] Alzona, *The Filipino Woman*, 75.
[192] Alzona, *The Filipino Woman*, 76.

also made up either/or/both of these labor sects. As more women joined the workforce to supply America's wealth in the global market, Filipina workers began to join labor unions (tobacco, printing press, coconut, and embroidery mainly) and mutual aid societies to protect their wages and physical wellbeing in these new industrial worksites.[193] From the post war years, 1918 and well into the 1920s, Filipina workers became more involved with their respective unions, went on labor strikes alongside the men—particularly in Manila and other urban hubs like Iloilo. Of the 12,000 women employed in industry and shop work establishments (552 total) across the cities of Manila, Pasay, and Malabon during the early 1920s, the majority of the women, including girls, were six times more likely than male employees to be literate. Female minors outnumbered male minors in these industries, which the Philippine Bureau of Labor notes was due to youths forced to drop out of their public schooling due to many peasant and working class families having "hard circumstances."[194]

Such a thorough review detailing the United States' reliance on Filipina labor was essential to Alzona's argument that Philippine independence could only be made successful if Philippine suffrage was guaranteed alongside it. Alzona's critique of American colonialism and Philippine male political leadership as being the main hindrances to Filipinas experiencing substantial success was in no doubt inspired by her access to higher education in both the Philippines and abroad and exposure to the Woman Movement in the United States. Such pathways towards higher learning during the Progressive Era through colonial enterprises helped

[193] Labor strikes in Manila and other major port cities that women were involved with during the 1920s were mainly found in these major industries: printing and publishing, tobacco and cigar, textiles, clothing, leather, and agrarian. Bureau of Labor, *Labor: Quarterly Labor Bulletin* (Manila, 1922), 13-15. Alzona notes that the cities of Agusan, Manila, Albay, Tagalog Region, and Zamboanga all hosted labor unions and mutual aid societies that Filipinas participated in as full members. Alzona, *The Filipino Woman*, 82. For more information on the working class Filipina during the tail end of the nineteenth century and their socio-economic influence on the family and colonial economies, please see Maria Luisa T. Camagay's *Working Women of Manila of the Nineteenth Century* (University of the Philippines Press, 1995).

[194] *Labor: Quarterly Labor Bulletin* (Manila, 1922), 31.

to shape the peminist frameworks for the New Filipina. During this same period of increased employment in Filipina labor and labor organizing, more Filipinas from well-to-do families, like Alzona and Legarda, pursued opportunities for higher learning and women's social club organizing. From 1918-1923, Alzona completed her second master's degree in history and pursued a PhD program in Columbia University. During this same time Legarda and Kalaw successfully founded the National Federation of Filipino Women's Clubs (1921) as well as the publications of multiple women's journals and magazines. During this tumultuous interwar period came waves of Filipina energy and interests contributing to the economy, industries, societal and welfare reforms, and the intellectual body of a growing Philippine Republic.

Seeing and documenting these Filipina accomplishments and issues in their dissertations and national women's magazines during the tail end of the Progressive Era and Woman Movement, New Filipina peminists like Alzona and Kalaw saw male politicians' denial of Filipina suffrage as blatantly hypocritical to their goals in seeking to create a sovereign and democratic Philippines. According to Alzona in her second edition of her dissertation, "Filipinos who regard themselves as the true guardians of native traditions vigorously attacked the idea calling it a serious menace to the family and to society in general, and incompatible with the natural modesty and reserve of our women."[195] If women were expected to be the laborers in the fields, factories, and wet markets while also staying true to their assigned motherwork roles as caregivers, wives, and mothers for the next generation, then were Filipina women not already denied their "natural modesty and reserve" due to their outright exploitation by industry and familial obligations? Filipinas' multiple contributions to their families and nation, according to

[195] Alzona, *The Filipino Woman*, 62, 63.

Alzona, should alone warrant women the political responsibility and power of influencing the future of the Philippines as much, if not more, as Filipino men.

Alzona's reflection on the value of Filipina labor included how "Filipino women laborers join[ed] labor organizations for mutual protection and benefit. In the strikes which have occurred in the Philippines, women workers have taken part, showing their loyalty to their organizations and their consciousness of the need for cooperation in labor movements."[196] For Alzona, Filipina unionizing labor alone demonstrated the power of both Filipina organizing and politicking. Working class Filipinas and their dedication to democratic processes and their fortitude in uniting in worthy causes such as the labor movements under the American Era represented to elite peminists like Alzona that all Filipinas were more than ready, if not worthy, of wielding suffrage.

Alzona goes even further in her argument, stating that Filipinas should be the sole leaders and managers of all Philippine retail trade; not only did Filipinas make the bulk of the Philippines three main labor categories (agrarian, domestic, and factory), but Filipinas since the pre-colonial period served as the matriarchal financial officers of the family and larger barrio, even going so far as to proudly call Filipinas "small capitalists" and the ideal and most "conspicuous shop keeper."[197] The New Filipina Peminist generation argued in total that the Filipina's access to an education, her economic contributions, and her potential and dedication to motherwork were the essential attributes that were proof enough that Filipinas be included fully as active members of the political framework of the Philippines if the colony wished to survive and progress towards independence.

[196] Alzona, *The Filipino Woman*, 78-93.
[197] Alzona, *The Filipino Woman*, 74-77.

"The desire of Filipino women for their complete emancipation, political and civil, was the natural outcome of the educational policy of the American regime. As their culture advanced, women began to aspire for a wider sphere of activity than the space within the four walls of their homes and the church."[198]

Alzona concluded her history of the progressive Filipina with a practical advocation of Filipina suffrage that by denying women their political freedoms would mean to go against the progressive teaching of their modern American instructors, and ultimately proving American colonial suspicions to be true; that Filipino culture and society had indeed not advanced. The United States, much of Central, Northern, and Eastern Europe had all successfully passed suffrage bills before 1928. To be governed by American governors who were pro-suffrage and yet to have Filipino politicians who were educated abroad seemed to Alzona and her generation of peminists both absurd and hypocritical. Such regressive thinking by her male peers in office could only make the Philippine people appear all the more uncivilized to the outside world and thus still in need of American colonial oversight as Filipino leaders were "the bulwark of conservatism" and thus not in any stage prepared for a progressive movement towards Philippine independence.[199]

Alzona's dissertation initially was drafted and completed by 1920, the year after American women won the right to vote via the nineteenth amendment. Alzona who was attending Columbia at the time was much inspired by the woman movement environment. Her dissertation topic and research were funded by the Barbour Scholarship for Oriental Women, the most prestigious of scholarships afforded particularly to Asian women at the time. Thus, being exposed to the political fervor of the Woman Movement, being one of the select recipients of the

[198] Alzona, *The Filipino Woman*, 60.
[199] Encarnacion Alzona, "The Philippine Legislature, Bulwark of Conservatism ," The Tribune, September 19 , 1926.

Barbour program, while also serving as the political and cultural representative of her homeland as a *pensionada* (one of the first 10 Filipina *pensionadas*), peminists like Alzona experienced a new sense of empowerment that would shape the peminist politicking and intellectual foresight of the New Filipina. But, like the other peminists of her generation, Alzona was careful in crafting a maternalist or domestic edge to both her intellectual and political profiles in order to maintain the support of male leaders.

Peminist Maternalism as Response to *Machismo* Backlash to the New Filipina

Filipinos in both the United States and the Philippines responded to the white Woman Movement as unladylike in their demonstrations for equality. *The Filipino Student* magazine was a popular resource for many pensionados studying in the United States during the height of the Woman Movement. Many pensionado students contributed poems, short stories, and their opinions and experiences about living in America, often comparing food, culture, and even their observations of American women compared to Filipinas. For transnational Filipino critics, there were "separate spheres of action for man and woman" going so far as to quote English writer John Ruskin in their opinion piece on suffrage, "the woman's power is for rule not for battle- and her intellect is not for invention or creation but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision… Her great function is Praise."[200] Filipino magazines published in the United States and the Philippines such as *The Filipino* (for *pensionadas/os* abroad) and *The Philippine Republic* (a nationalist transpacific magazine) watched the Woman Movement in the United States closely and were quick to compare their ideal Filipina woman with the rabble-rousing white imperialist suffragette.

[200] "The Separate Spheres for Action Man and Woman," *The Filipino Student*, 1916: 12.

"The seed of the movement for woman suffrage has been sowed in the Philippines. Whether it will grow or die is hard to tell at present. We do not want to commit ourselves off-hand as to whether we favor or not to grant the ballot to our fair sex. But we wish in a very respectful manner to warn our mothers and sisters not to take example from their English and American elder sisters in breaking windows, mobbing public officials and disturbing meetings in order to get a hearing for their cause. If the Filipina women believe that they should be granted the ballot they ought to resort to reason and calm judgment."[201]

Filipino traditionalists saw the window breaking, protesting, marching, and flag waving by western women as destructive and unladylike. Such undesirable qualities in their women folk thus made suffrage even more unappealing.

Even just a decade prior, even some of the most radical Filipino nationalists who were anti-American spoke to the ideal Filipina, not as a political member of society, but rather a sweet black-haired beauty, or darling "bulaklak" (flower), who rejected the language of the colonizer and chose provincial Tagalog. Her frame is always poised, in her traditional terno dress, smiling innocently with a demeanor that is always described as tender hearted. "Reserved, modest, diligent, and intelligent"[202]

New Filipina peminists like Alzona and Legarda recognized this difficult task of creating and managing a likable suffragist persona in order to successfully ratify a suffrage bill for Filipinas. Alzona wrote on her reflections of the global suffrage movement, marking the distinction between the New Filipina's noble cause for suffrage as opposed to the supposed "noisy" white suffragettes.

"The noisy parades, waving of flags, picketing, and kindred methods of exerting pressure on a stubborn law-making body do not appeal to them [Filipinas]. Our legislators should rejoice that the women of this country are capable of such amazing patience and endurance which are

[201] Anonymous author, *The Filipino Student*, 1912, 16.
[202] Anonymous author by pen name Kapupot (Jasmine flower), "Sa Aklatang Bayan "Ang Mga Bulaklak"," *Renacimiento*, November 28, 1913: 833.

without parallel in other countries in the world. The militant spirit of the Occident was totally absent. We have had no window-breaking, noisy suffragettes."[203] Especially in this nationalist magazine, Filipinas are found throughout the pages always in the same stance and pose and being praised as real Filipina beauties who are more traditional and softer spoken as depicted in their poses and choice of the traditional bolero outfit. Such cultural and poise Filipina femininity for the authors and publishers of *Renacimiento* were the ideal embodiment of Philippine cultural nationalism.

Alzona described in her 1926 article in the *Philippine Review* and *Tribune* that the male only Philippine legislature during the American Era operated as a "bulwark of conservatism."[204] Filipino politicians argued against suffrage stating that Filipinas would neglect the home as they would be too busy trying to understand political issues, and thus society would fall to pieces without a doting mother to care for the next generation. Rather, Alzona argued that it was the Filipina's "love of home and family" that ignited her passion to politically participate so that she may better safeguard her nation which she argued was an extension of the home, her household, and thus her political jurisdiction as a Filipina mother.[205] By arguing that the New Filipina was distinctly different, if not better, than white suffragettes because of their inherent cultural maternalism and humbled and reserved nature, Encarnacion's promotion of Filipina suffrage met the standards many Filipino lawmakers preferred in Filipinas.

During the 1910s-1920s when multiple suffrage bills did make the congressional floor of debate, there did exist a male minority of Filipino politicians who supported the woman question. Alzona notes in her dissertation that a handful of Filipino politicians worked alongside Filipinas

[203] Encarnacion Alzona, "Woman Suffrage in the Philippines," in Maria Luisa T. Camagay, ed., *Encarnacion Alzona: An Anthology* (Quezon City: University of Philippines, 1996), 4, 61.
[204] Encarnacion Alzona, "Philippine Legislature, the Bulwark of Conservatism," *The Tribune*, September 1926.
[205] Encarnacion Alzona, Review of Women's Studies, Vol. I-II (University of the Philippines, 1990), 57.

to craft such bills including Senator Rafael Palma who "stirred that body with a brilliant speech on the desirability of enfranchising the Filipino women: "*There is no reason why suffrage should be a privilege of sex, considering that the duties of citizenship rest as heavily upon woman as upon men….Female suffrage spells justice and vindication for the modern woman and we must adopt it forthwith, without unnecessary delay and formalities*."[206] Despite such efforts, every bill for Filipina suffrage was vetoed prior to 1930. Such rejections continued to feed the movement for suffrage and from the 1910s-1930s, the Filipina movement intensified.

In many elite circles, the security of the woman vote was seen as a direct result of a progressive and modern nation. Majority of Filipina suffragists who received an American education outlined in their writings the connection between national progress and the Filipina vote. Despite such persuasive early peminist rhetoric, Filipino men during the American Era were not entirely supportive of the New Filipina that emerged from American influences and education, particularly in major cities like Manila. In *Transpacific Femininities: The Making of the Modern Filipina*, Denise Cruz describes how the Philippines was an historical transpacific node of relations during the early twentieth century, where intersections and domination of different empires existed. Within this transpacific space, multiple cultures, political entities, and social forces defined and redefined the formation of gender in the urban hubs of the Philippines. Where this transpacific phenomenon is most present and undergoes various transformations and contradictions, Cruz argues, is most visible in Filipina literature. Filipina authors at the turn of the twentieth century were one of the first to write in English in the Pacific. Yet they were the

[206] Although several suffrage bills were placed on the senate floor for discussion, multiple arguments to turn down suffrage arose amongst the all male members of the Philippine congress including the monetary investment and labor to count the other half of the populations' votes and above all, the philosophy that if Filipinas were given the responsibility to vote, they would then lose their gentle femininity having to be exposed to the "aggressive politics of men." The Sison bill was approved but the House of Representatives failed to pass it with the result that it did not become a law. Encarnacion Alzona, PhD Dissertation, "Second Edition of The Filipino Woman: Her Social, Economic, and Political Status, 1565-1933," 64.

most openly criticized for writing material that was deemed unfruitful, bland, and culturally traitorous as they borrowed "American values" and thus were labeled as prudes and conservative social climbers for even attempting both English and Philippine literature.[207] Americanized Filipinas were viewed as too left leaning and were labeled as "communists" or "Bolsheviks" by their male peers.[208] Such politically charged name calling demonstrated how Filipina intellectuals and peminists alike were deemed as a threat to Filipino machismo which was one of the cultural facets that undergirded Philippine nationalism.

Much of Cruz's historiographical narrative of Filipina intellectual growth during the American Era paints a trend of Filipina women taking advantage of their transpacific space and American cultural tools (the English language, dress, cinema) to empower themselves and claim a new sense of Filipina femininity. American imperialist institutions (university, military bases, embassies, businesses, theaters) provided new experiences and opportunities outside of the rigid folk-Catholic Filipino culture. In other words, Filipinas who wished to participate in the cultural and political growth and future of the Philippines were forced to tread the boundaries of Filipino culture and American colonial influences while being vulnerable to criticisms from both American and Philippine overseers. As I will later demonstrate, whereas Cruz outlines the processes that formed the modern Filipina, my research shows how some of these women, who I call the New Filipina Peminists, made use of this transformation to pursue more radical political and societal ends.

The New Filipina Peminists of Encarnacion's generation thus crafted a nationalist front that included cultural maternalism as their political framework, relying heavily on the teachings and opportunities a Thomasite education offered to Filipinas, as their means to find ways to

[207] Denise Cruz, *Transpacific Femininities: The Making of the Modern Filipina* (Duke university Press, 2012), 53.
[208] Cruz, *Transpacific Femininities*, 94.

participate in the political process as best she could. Filipinas as dedicated mothers and wives were the preferred gendered and cultural archetypes in Filipino literature, which greatly informed how Filipino male legislators confronted the suffrage question. The peminist of the Progressive Era, in her quest for suffrage and independence, thus crafted a maternalist cultural amalgamation that drew from the gentle hostess nature of the Maria Clara archetype but who was firm in her intellectual capabilities thus making her a valuable and dedicated citizen-mother for her nation.

Despite the *machismo* pushback Filipinas experienced, Filipinas consistently organized multiple clubs, national women's organizations, and regularly produced literature and critiques that fell in line with their needs and desires to participate as first class citizens in the Philippines.[209] From the Filipina Feminist Association (1905), the Manila Women's Club (1912), National Federation of Women's Clubs, Filipinas trained under American instruction were indeed making headway in transforming and expanding the Filipina political and civic engagement. Filipinas, if acknowledged by their male political counterparts and nationalist histories, had to act and serve maternalist personas and care work roles in their display of peminist nationalisms. And it is only in such roles of nationalist maternalism where the New Filipina was lauded for her "revolutionary" nature as her revolutionary motherwork safeguarded and nurtured her fledgling nation.

New Filipina Political Rhetoric in Transpacific Literature

The peminist fervor of the early twentieth century was fueled further by *pensionada* Filipinas, like Alzona, who helped to create the early networks and radical imaginings of what

[209] The "Woman's Page" was a regular spread in the *Filipino Teacher* (1907-1924) which was a monthly journal for Filipina/o public school teachers, majority of whom were trained by Thomasite teachers or abroad in the United States. See 1912 article by Felisa Aquino, "Woman's Page: Our Duties to Our Country," *The Filipino Teacher*, Vol. 4, no. PI, 1912: 11-13.

would become a Filipina/o/x diaspora. Transpacific Philippine newspapers that advocated for Philippine independence, such as *The Philippine Republic* which was published in Washington D.C. supported Filipina suffrage and saw Philippine suffrage as intertwined with the larger nationalist independence movement. Filipina *pensionadas* both in the Philippines and the United States were regular writers and contributors to the paper throughout the 1910s-1920s.

New Filipina intellectuals wrote regularly of their scholarly and civic accomplishments in the transpacific Fil-Am newspaper, *The Philippine Republic*. Asuncion Melliza was the youngest Filipina to pass the bar in the Philippines in 1924 with a law degree in ethics. In the *Philippine Republic*, she argued that American and Filipina suffrage were pathways towards fulfilling the ideals of both governments and nations. Philippine independence was a necessity and the United States, she continued, would be going against their own democratic philosophies and morals if they were not to give the Philippines their independence:

> *"America is too great and honorable to discredit her pledge of honor embodied in the Jones Law. Otherwise she would not long merit the leadership and confidence of mankind. The American people are so humane and honest that their conscience and morality will not tolerate any deception or disappointment of the Filipinos who believe them, and whose friendship and loyalty are unparalleled in the conduct of subject peoples. To deny us independence is to ignore their very example of 1776 as well as to admit the positive failure of American administration and system of education in the Philippines."*[210]

Melliza went on to tie universal suffrage as a sign of progressive nationhood:

> *"The equal rights movement of the American women has the genuine interest and sympathy of the Filipino women who see in its success the ultimate realization of their country's ideals: for such a worthy step towards real democracy, if given a broad and international application, would mean the equality and freedom of all peoples."*

[210] Miss Asuncion S. Melliza, pg 14, February 1924, *The Philippine Republic Magazine*.

Other *pensionadas* year after year during the 1920s would continue to fill the columns of the *Philippine Republic* as Philippine nationalist sentiments amongst Filipinas/os abroad increased. Filipinas in Washington D.C. were described as continuing the legacy of the Filipino women's *feminista association* who were known for their social work in the aftermath of the Philippine American War particularly in regards to helping orphaned children and single mothers. The New Filipinas highlighted in the *Philippine Republic* argued that through their studies, teaching, and social care work like their predecessors before them, that they were just as patriotic as the *pensionado* men who came back and were automatically granted civic leadership positions. One of the Filipina teachers highlighted in the 1925 issue, Maria Villa of Cebu, was the centerspread of the major column piece "Woman and Civilization" as a prime example of how Filipina American-trained teachers are responsible and capable of correcting all of the "misrepresentations of their homeland" in the United States and around the world by demonstrating their progressive and modern professions by committing themselves to a "greater service to their people."[211] The column spread concludes that Miss Maria Villa's training abroad as a teacher and care worker for deaf children is proof enough that Filipinas "are just as patriotic as the men" because their training and maternalist desire to help the next generation through education are the essence of Philippine nationalism; independence deserved based on merit, sacrifice, and modernization.

Conclusion

Pensionadas were an early example of what Cruz described as the transpacific Filipina. In this chapter, I drew from Cruz's formulation and historicization of the New Filipina and

[211] Miss Maria C. Lanzar, "Filipina in US Training to Teach Deaf Children," *The Philippine Republic*, newspaper, (March 1925): pg 8.

located the transpacific New Filipina and her peminist insight not only in the Philippine archives but also within the early Fil-Am literature and periodicals of the Progressive Era. What the traveling peminist intellectual wrote were found in the most politically radical and pro-independence papers during the earlier phase of the American Era. The New Filipina's saw intellectual movements for Philippine independence lacking if it did not include answering the woman question. The New Filipina crafted a particular persona that perpetuated some Spanish-Filipino ideals of womanhood yet also merged her newfound knowledge of American values and philosophy in democracy and progressivism. Thus, the New Filipina politicized intellectual vacillated quite carefully between both worldviews and in that process opened a unique pathway of resistance and survival to both the American and Filipino male dominated landscapes. Such peminist politicking became the main method of community survival that the next generation of Filipina immigrants to the United States would carry on as cultural matriarchs of what would become the early sites of Fil-Am communities and towns.

The *pensionada* transpacific literature produced during the American Occupation Era offers insight into the many ways the New Filipina crafted peminist interpretations of her political potential as a fully participating modern citizen of her fledgling nation. Having to combat the patriarchal nature of the Spanish-Filipino culture that undergirded daily and social life in the Philippines, the New Filipina intellectual organized her political agenda in such a way that catered to the gendered preferences and expectations placed upon her from interlocking governing spheres of influence and oversight; that of the American education systems implemented both in the Philippines and abroad and that of the criticisms of their Filipino pensionados and peers both abroad and at home. Filipina writers who wrote for *The Philippine Republic* magazine described themselves and other Filipinas with imagery that showcased the

New Filipina, despite western influences, still drew from her humble maternalist roots but now had a proper education that allowed her to reach her full potential in assisting her male peers in nation making. Her education, she argued, afforded her social and political recognition because she excelled at the same rate if not higher than her male peers. Described in both national and transnational journals and magazines like *The Filipino Teacher* (1898-1913), *The Philippine Republic Magazine* (1923-1928), and *The Filipino* (1906-1913), and *The Woman's Outlook* (1920s) were Filipinas' progress and gains that contributed to the wellbeing of the Philippines.

During the same time that these scholarly and social publications were distributed, the New Filipina was making headway through other avenues throughout the early years of the American Occupation Era. This included: the formation of the first girls school (*Instituto de Mujeres*) led and founded by Rosa Sevilla de Alvaro (1900), the establishment of the *Asociación Feminista Filipina* (1905) and *Asociación Feminista Illonga* (1906) and their first family care program (*Gota de Leche Manila*), the first drafts of the suffrage bill (1907), the formation of the Women's Club of Manila (1920), and the establishment of the National Federation of Women's Clubs of the Philippines and League of Women's Suffragettes (1921).[212] The New Filipina as Peminist Intellectual practiced with her like-minded sisters literary tones and politicized gestures in their writing where they, like Encarnacion Alzona argued, separated themselves from other "nations of the orient," adding that Filipinas were global leaders and the bastion of modern femininity in greater Asia.[213] By empowering one another through club work, intellectual correspondence and support through the literature they produced, the New Filipina during the

[212] Belinda A. Aquino, as delivered in *Women's Brown Bag Seminar, Office for Women's Research and the Women's Studies Program, University of Hawai'i Manoa*, May 7, 1993, printed as "Filipino Women and Political Engagement," Vol. 4, No. 1 (1994): 34, 35.

[213] Encarnacion Alzona, "The Filipino Woman: Her Social, Economic, and Political Status, 1565-1933," second edition, (1937), 4.

Progressive Era was formulating methods of sisterly community building and networking to build their national and transpacific agenda of suffrage. As one Filipina *pensionada* argued in her 1924 article for *The Philippine Republic* titled "Woman and Civilization," in order for Filipino women to participate in the global struggle of ending imperialism and oppression, they must first see that "the success of the world is more dependent on women than on men."[214] It was only then, argued Maria Lanzar who at the time was working towards her PhD in anti-imperialism studies at the University of Michigan, that Filipinas could step into their power and much-earned roles as political leaders and influencers of the modern world.

The Filipina Peminist thus saw herself as carrying multiple chips on her shoulders and representative of multiple movements towards liberation; as the potential mothers of their culture and nation they advocated for independence, the socio-political transformation of all Asian women, all of which could be guaranteed with the passing of suffrage. Filipinas had to maintain near to impossible high performances of cultural femininity to be acknowledged in political settings. Such criteria became the standard of Filipina patriotism that earned her notice and respectability amongst her community and male leaders. Because of the success garnered by such high standards of maternalist and civic Filipina performance, the gendered dance of Filipina nationalism were expected wherever Filipino communities settled or traveled to. The critical male gaze, or culture of surveillance as historian Dawn Mabalon describes it, would follow the New Filipinas who traveled alongside the Filipinos who would settle in California during the

[214] Maria Lanzar (1923) was the first Barbour Scholar to earn a doctoral degree, along with Yi-fang Wu, in 1928. Mariagraduated with a doctorate in Political Science in 1928. As the first Barbour Scholar from Manila, Lanzar studied the methods by which American sovereignty was exercised in the Philippines. For her dissertation, *The Anti-Imperialist League*, Maria obtained material from libraries in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, and also from personal files of American politicians and statesmen who had taken part in legislation regarding the Philippines. After receiving her Ph.D. she returned to Manila as a member of the faculty in political science and also served for several years as Dean of Women. Maria served as an active member of the Philippine Association of University Women and the Philippine Academy of Social Sciences.

Great Depression in response to America's colonial demand for exploitable Filipino farm labor. Filipina immigrants who found themselves starting afresh in the United States were also forced to contend with such high expectations of Filipina femininity and performance if they too wished to reshape the gendered politics of their new ethnic enclaves which would become the vanguard of the emerging Filipina/o/x Diaspora.

Chapter 3: Confronting Filipino Masculinities: Filipino Hubs of the Central Coast, 1927-1941

The New Filipina that emerged from the formative American Occupation Era was the embodiment of old-world cultural values and new colonial influences. Her heritage and devotion to family remained consistent and became both a gendered and cultural validation that the Filipina was deserving of suffrage as citizenship because of her new intellectual capacities and professional accomplishments. This cultural and intellectual process became a method of early peminist practice that secured a Filipina's social and political standing during the American Occupation Era if they wished to participate in both intertwined movements for Filipina suffrage and Philippine sovereignty. Renowned Filipina writer Paz Marquez Benitez is a prime example of this. She supported independence, believed that Philippine culture was disappearing with American instruction, recognized how English was overtaking the hegemonic mindsets of Filipinas/os, and wanted to ensure that Filipinas were also seen as logical creatures similar to Filipino men rather than as "creatures of emotion."[215]

Benitez established the Philippine Women's University, became an English professor, and used English as an opportunity to modernize and transform Philippine prose in short story writing and poetry. Benitez' contributions to women's advancement in Philippine society, culture, and politics was complicated by her advocacy for Philippine independence. Her

[215] Feminist Catholic nuns in the Philippines contributed both to the literary, intellectual, and physical movements against Martial Law in the Philippines. In their critiques of *machismo* and its effects on religious teachings and power structures within the Church, Filipina nuns used a feminist critique to express how gender and thus sexism informed and upheld the tenets of Marcos' martial law policies. For many feminist Filipina nuns in the 1970s-1990s, they expressed how gender functioned and operated in the visible and invisible, the cultural, and the religious institutions Filipino seminary studies participated in. Anthropologist Heather Claussen describes how male Filipino seminary studies instructors described the roles of men and women with a very particular gendered context where Filipino men think with their "head and women were emotional creatures governed by their heart" in order to explain and justify the domestic roles of Filipinas as caring and doting mothers therefore validating Filipino men's opportunities for infidelity. Heather L. Claussen, *Unconventional Sisterhood: Feminist Catholic Nuns in the Philippines* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 51.

daughter, Virginia Benitez Licuanan, who wrote a biography describing her mother's balancing act of maintaining Philippine culture while also forwarding her *pensionada* philosophy of advancing women's roles in politics as always in conflict with one another. Paz Benitez, as one of the first women to use English as a form of literary expression, also recognized how the dominating presence of English in the Philippine vernacular was also aiding in the erasure of Philippine culture and its many other dialects. Paz recalled her younger years as a transition for those born in the Spanish Era that survived the aftermath of the Philippine American War, which she described in her diaries as the "Empire Days."[216] As a New Filipina peminist transitioning from Spanish influences to surviving America's "empire days," Paz Benitez was able to forward her hopes for Philippine independence and suffrage by acting as a cultural broker vacillating between the American intellectual values she was taught and Philippine culture. Such gendered means of cultural brokerage for the New Filipina became the most successful method and practice that Filipinas used to shape and grow and expand on their peminist philosophies without receiving too much social and cultural surveillance and backlash from male peers who did not agree with suffrage.

The New Filipina's peminist politicking was the practice of balancing on her shoulders Philippine nationalist goals while maintaining the image of the *dalagang bukid* (provincial Filipina darling archetype). At the same time, these responsibilities and gendered expectations, although they secured Filipinas survival and entryway into Philippine politics and many other public realms, maintaining the new, modern, working, and politically involved Filipina became an excruciating ideal to maintain and would become a form of policing and surveillance for the working class pinoys who sought to lead and transform their small pocket Fil-Am communities

[216] Paz Marquez Benitez, Virginia Benitez Licuanan, *Paz Marquez Benitez: One Woman's Life, Letters, and Writings* (Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1995), 21.

into their ideal machismo sphere of influence; one that was denied to them due to the white hetero-patriarchal landscape of agrarian California. Filipinas who would immigrate to the United States, not as pensionadas but as laborers, daughters, and/or wives, from the 1920s-1930s would be held to such standards if they wished to have a positive influence and role in their new transplanted communities.

In this chapter, I draw on the work of Steffi San Buenaventura and Linda Espana Maram to argue that *machismo* and male suspicion drove the possessive surveillance of both patriarchal Philippine and American cultures, and that it would continue to follow Filipinas in America, or *pinays*, wherever they sought to explore new horizons, not just in the urban centers where *pinay* peminist club work was present as demonstrated in the previous chapter, but also in the United States as they tried to make new homes and livelihoods abroad.[217] In this chapter I will explain how Filipino machismo culture intensified, especially in isolated agrarian labor towns of the Central Coast, as Filipino laborers found themselves more socially isolated and racially segregated, thus forming their early ethnic hubs where they unified through hyper masculine Filipino cultural values. Filipinas who made the trek to California's Central Coast, the heart of America's major agrarian sector that relied the most on Filipina/o immigrant farm labor, regularly were confronted with the domineering male critical gaze, what Dawn Mabalon defines as the "culture of surveillance." Similar to the peminist *pensionada* generation before them,

[217] The term *pinay* officially became commonly used by Filipina/o/x immigrants during the late 1920s, which is when these smaller Fil-Am ethnic hubs started to take shape. In 1926, as found in the *Filipino Student Bulletin*, Pinay and Pinoy were used to describe Filipinas/os traveling to or living in the United States. In the phrasing and shortening of the word "Philippines," which phonetically is sounded out as "pilipinas," the shortening to "pinas" helps to explain where the term "pinay" stems from in referencing persons from the Philippines. Furthermore, the cultural fabric and cloth that are made from pineapple fibers, *pina*, also most likely had some cultural influence on the choice of "pinay/oy" to reference Filipinas/os abroad so that they knew through a sense of *kapwa*, that they were and felt in community with one another and culturally were of the same cloth. Furthermore, the addition of the -ay/-oy in "pinay/oy" is in reference most likely to the Tagalog ethnolinguistic habit of adding -ay/-oy at the end of words or names implying comradery, kinship, or familial close ties.

Filipina Americans, *pinays*, who labored on the greater Central Coast would have to tread carefully within the transplanted machismo informed spaces as both *pinoys* and *pinays* worked together to build and uplift Fil-Am communities during the racially and economically tumultuous period of the Depression Era.

The term *pinay* during the 1920s first became used to reference Filipinas in America written by *pensionados* who established the first periodicals of transpacific intellectual Filipino literature. The origins of the word *pinay* come much earlier and has particular emphasis and ties to working class "Native blooded" Filipinas. Thus, its common usage amongst the earlier Fil-Am communities of the 1930s saw the term as synonymous with Filipinas who were part of the immigrant wave of poor and working class Filipinas/os who followed the migrant labor season along California's coastline and in the rural agrarian communities. Peminist scholar, Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo, explains that the "narratives written by Filipino women were deconstructions of master narratives…chronicles of their individual lives through the eyes of women, whose position in society are different from men" which all speak to "glimpses into the world of Filipino women."[218] The *pinay* for contemporary Filipinas from a diasporic framework as Hidalgo emphasizes thus are all Filipinas of all backgrounds living and working away from the motherland yet still in constant conversation with her cultural self worth. For this chapter, I define the *pinay*, similar to Hidalgo and other peminist scholars, as a working class Filipina who is part of the second generation of Filipina peminists, those that followed after the *pensionada* intellectuals, who helped to establish the earliest community roots that the *manong* generation would rely on whilst simultaneously obsessively seek to control.

[218] Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo, *Pinay: Autobiographical Narratives by Women Writers, 1926-1998* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000), xxviii.

Early Asian America in Rural Central California: Immigrant Labor, 1860s-1930s

During the early to mid-twentieth century, California's agrarian Central Coast, from Monterey to Santa Barbara, offered economic opportunities for BIPOC communities through the ever lucrative and expanding food industries of the west coast. Despite limited economic opportunities during the Depression Era, California remained as one of the country's major suppliers of America's food market from canneries and fisheries to fruit orchards, and lettuce fields. The agrarian Central Coast especially attracted California's most ethnically diverse labor force from Okies in the Midwest leaving the dust bowl, African American farmers making the dangerous trek west to escape the bonds of tenant farming, and Chicanas/os/x and Native Americans who for generations called California their ancestral home.

Chinese immigrants and their children irrigated much of the Central Coast's wetlands and marshes establishing the first Chinatowns in rural Central Coast towns like Salinas, Monterey, and San Luis Obispo in the 1860s. Japanese farm workers who left the sugar and fruit plantations in Hawai'i to create their own opportunities as farm workers and business owners also contributed to the growing agrarian market found on the Central Coast. Japanese and Chinese agrarian and merchant class families contributed significantly to the economic success and settlement of flourishing rural towns like Arroyo Grande, San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay, Nipomo, and Pismo Beach. By 1940, 40% of the produce grown in California were grown by Japanese farmers.[219] The Central Coast boasted an intricate and growing network of Chinese and Japanese agrarian communities that were supported by their family farm industries, expanding within two to three generations prior to World War II and had created their own Japanese Growers Association, Buddhist Churches, groceries and markets, and little Chinatowns.

[219] Melanie Macdowell, "A Breath of Fresh Air with the Pismo Oceano Vegetable Exchange," *Edible San Luis Obispo*, (2020) https://ediblesanluisobispo.com/a-breath-of-fresh-air-with-the-pismo-oceano-vegetable-exchange/.

The success of American cannery and plantations in Hawai'i, the Philippines, and the American west coast allowed for further labor migration pathways to the mainland and particularly to the major migrant labor route of the Central Coast. Filipino immigrants responded to the high demands for farm hands to work Hawaii's plantations, laborers to ship to Alaska's canneries and fisheries, and as pickers for California's growing agribusinesses. Upon arrival to the mainland, poor and working-class Filipinas/os followed the same labor and migrant work patterns as the Asian immigrants a decade prior would also create and establish their own ethnic enclaves within the boundaries and borders of the Central Coast's Chinatowns and Little Tokyos.

Despite the socio-economic success of some Asian immigrant families and communities along the Central Coast, xenophobia and anti-Asian campaigns continued to plague the rural coast towns and increased dramatically during the Depression years. Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Filipino farm workers especially were seen as imported laborers who were taking jobs from Americans and were the cause of depressed wages in the fields. Rather, Filipino male laborers were overall paid significantly less than white field hands and because they were legally defined as racially Malay, they were ineligible for citizenship making them legally and socially vulnerable to the harassment and violence rooted in xenophobia, Anti-Asian sentiment, and white nationalisms.[220]

Anglo American and Japanese growers and shippers in California alone witnessed 150 labor strikes from 1930 through 1938 from their workers who protested against the multiple layers of exploitation they were vulnerable to because President FDR's Wagner Act did not

[220] Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race In America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 158.

protect all agricultural labor unions.[221] The lettuce and sugar beet industries of Salinas, similar to other commercialized crops in California, segregated their laborers based on race, thus reinforcing racial and class markers which further exacerbated racial tensions. Anglo American workers managed the packing labor in the sheds and their union, the Fruit and Vegetable Union (an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor), had more credibility and federal recognition. Ethnic minorities, on the other hand, like African Americans, Filipino immigrants, and Mexican immigrants who worked primarily as pickers, packers, and irrigation workers did not have similar layers of protection and labor rights as the Anglo shed workers.[222]

The mid 1930s, particularly the 1936 Lettuce Strike in Salinas, would represent an all-time low in regard to the Filipino laborer in America. The uptick in violence against Filipino farm workers coupled with poor wages and living and working conditions pushed many Filipino migrant laborers to also respond with violence to protect themselves and their communities. Articles in Anglo-American newspapers describing Filipino men as carrying knives, holding innocent victims at gunpoint, or retaliating to white vigilante justice race riots with violence, were common scenes depicted in both Fil-Am and American newspapers.

The Salinas Valley of the Central Coast was not a hospitable location for Filipino laborers. By 1946, Filipinos in the Salinas area numbered to a little over 4,000, the majority of male working in the lettuce and strawberry fields.[223] One particular event involved night raids on Filipino owned labor camps and community centers. On September 21st, 1934 Rufo Canete's

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[221] Susan Shillinglaw, *A Journey of Steinbeck's California* (Berkeley: Roaring Forties Press), 148. The Wagner Act of 19 and the Social Security Act of 1935 excluded both agricultural and domestic workers from receiving benefits from FDR's New Deal legislation. The Wagner Act of 1935, also known as the National Labor Relations Act, protected workers rights to join unions and that industries could not interfere in workers' rights to collective unionize, meet, and bargain. Those who were excluded from the protection and benefits of the Social Security Act and the Wagner Act were mainly ethnic minorities who also took on poor unskilled labor as domestic workers and agricultural laborers who also made up a bulk of the workforce of sharecroppers in the South and Midwest.

[222] some were able to work their way towards higher positions as foremen or labor contractors

[223] "Salinas Filipinos," *The Philippines Mail*, July 1946. Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, CA.

labor camp was barraged with bullets and set aflame by Anglo vigilantes. Rufo Canete, a prominent Filipino labor contractor and union organizer, and the *sakadas* he housed in his camp were attacked at night by drive by shooters who purposely had also cut the phone lines of the camp as they torched the bunkers in order to delay aid from local the firehouse and police. While Canete's camp was raided, the Salinas police also raided the Filipino Union Hall at 9 PM, arresting Filipinos (many of whom had already retired at nearby lodging and boarding hotels) near the vicinity on accounts that local Filipinos were guilty of illegally gathering and inciting a riot.[224] Miraculously, no one was killed but the vigilantes who set fire and gunned down the bunk were never caught and local Anglo news sources argued that jealous Filipino labor contractors competing with Canete were responsible for the attack on his camp. Local police and vigilantes who shared anti-Filipino sentiments regularly raided Filipino inhabited and owned establishments (pool halls, restaurants/cafes, community centers, dance halls, and labor camps) often using violence as means to terrorize and force out Filipino laborers along the Central Coast.

The Filipino immigrant pioneers of the 1910s-1930s were predominantly single males, ages on average ranging from 22-29 years, who came to the United States.[225] These young men came to America enticed by the chance to either attain an American college education or gain economic opportunities abroad. American agribusinesses who sent labor boosters, or scouts, in order to fill the much needed labor markets of California's agrarian sectors touted the attractive economic opportunities and possibilities available for single male youths if they crossed the Pacific and worked on American soil. By the 1930s, the Filipino immigrant population

[224] "Victims of Vigilante Attack Upon Filipino Labor Camp Tell Harrowing Experiences," *The Philippines Mail*, October 1, 1934, pg 1. Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, CA.

[225] Eugene Tettey-Fio and John W. Frazier, *Race, Ethnicity, and and Place in Changing America* (New York: Binghamton University, 2006), 272.

numbered 108,260 with 75% under the age of thirty.[226] Young Filipino bachelors traveled to the United States to fill the demand for unskilled labor in food processing industries like salmon canneries, fisheries and packing companies across the Pacific Northwest. The Central Coast was the heart of the migrant labor route because the crops, availability of jobs, and geographic location (being the halfway mark between San Francisco and Los Angeles) allowed for a diverse labor market throughout the year. Some of the earliest and oldest Fil-Am towns in California were established during the 1920s on the Central Coast. Filipino migrant laborers who stayed on the coast worked as cannery and fishery workers, packers, busboys, domestic workers, restaurant workers, gardeners, business owners, pickers, irrigation workers, or foremen for major growers and shippers sprouting up along the Central Coast.

The majority of the *pinoys* lived in labor camps (typically owned by growers and/or labor contractors) close to the seasonal crops they picked (Salinas crops during this era included strawberries, lettuce, onions, garlic, and carrots) or along the streets of Salinas' Chinatown in cheaper priced housing establishments such as hotels or boarding houses.[227] Earlier labor camps that housed Filipino pickers resembled shack-like structures that bunched sometimes as many as twenty men into barrack-like living quarters along the Salinas River.[228] Living conditions were unbearable, as in most cases, not only were shacks or tents vulnerable to the elements, but the laborers would also have to make their own outhouses (often ditches). Second generation pinoy,

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[226] H. Brett Melendy, *Asians in America: Filipinos, Koreans, and East Indians* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977). See also Yen Le Espiritu, *Filipino American Lives* Temple (University Press, 2010), 25. See also United States Committee on Education and Labor, *Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, Seventy-fourth Congress, Second Session[--Seventy-sixth Congress, Third Session] Pursuant to S. Res. 266, a Resolution to Investigate Violations of the Right of Free Speech and Assembly and Interference with the Right of Labor to Organize and Bargain Collectively · Volume 17, Parts 52-55* (University of Minnesota, 1940), 19857.

[227] Department of Commerce: Bureau of Census, "Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940," Salinas, Monterey County, April 1940, sheet 61B.

[228] Interview with Susan Aremas, Salinas CA, February 2018.

Joe Talaugon Sr. of Guadalupe, recalled the abandoned farmhouse he grew up in among all the bachelor Filipino farm workers and the dread of using the outhouse that everyone frequented, noting that once the outhouse pit was full, the men would have to find another spot in the field to dig to make as their new outhouse.

"There was no heat except for the old wood burning stove and no running water. Sometimes we would stuff rolled-up newspaper in the cracks of the walls (of the old farmhouse). If you had to take a dump, you were in trouble. One tried to do all their toilet action during the day time and hoped they could make it through the night. Pop and some devoted friends would move the outhouse to a different location because the hole was full. Always downwind. The outhouse was supplied with a Montgomery Ward catalog, a luxury we don't enjoy today in most cases."[229]

The pay as pickers or lettuce thinners was poor, with many earning as little as 15 cents/hour in the Salinas lettuce fields compared to Anglo American and European immigrant (Portuguese and Swede) shed workers who earned 40-45 cents/hour by 1933.[230] Much of the income Filipino workers earned went to their room, board, and travel fare (cargo and cattle ships en route to the United States or Hawaii from the Philippines), leaving them with little to send back to their families in the Philippines or to keep for themselves.

To combat the poor working and living conditions for Filipino pickers and lettuce thinners in Central California, the Filipino Labor Union (FLU) was established in Salinas to organize strikes and establish their own bargaining power in the lettuce fields. During the mid to late thirties, most independent Japanese growers and Anglo growers of the Vegetable Growers

[229] Joseph R. Talaugon Sr., *Mestizo: Through My Eyes* (Guadalupe: Cross Cultural Center, 2020), 17.
[230] "Cool Headedness and Caution Urged By Shellooe As Conditions in Sporadic Strikes of Lettuce Workers Grow Acute," *Philippines Mail*, February 1933, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas.

and Shippers Association of Monterey County refused to meet the demands of the FLU. Their demands included a 20 cent increase in hourly pay, an eight to ten hour work day, the abolishment of labor contractors, recognition of their union, and an end to racial discrimination in the hiring and management of pickers.[231] The Filipino Labor Union, headed by Filipino labor contractor Rufo Canete, led the Salinas Lettuce Strike of 1934. The association of Filipinos with radical labor strikes further sparked racial tensions in the already racially segregated and sensitive region of the Central Coast. By the late 1930s, Filipino *sakadas* represented forty percent of the total agrarian labor force on California farms but were paid significantly less than their Anglo American peers (mainly shed, packing, or sugar factory workers) and earned a mere thirty five cents/hour in the Salinas area.[232]

Sets of strikes throughout the 1930s (1934, 1936, 1937) in both Salinas and San Luis Obispo would be led by Filipino pickers (men and women) and labor contractors which would incite further racial tensions and violence against Filipino laborers by Anglo growers, laborers, and police. Despite their rising population and significant labor contribution to the success of the American agribusiness market, the exhausting agrarian landscape and the social climate of a hostile white dominated living and working space made any opportunity of establishing long term communities, or ethnic hubs, difficult for the *manong* generation to achieve. To survive

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[231] D.I. Marcuelo, "Salinas Filipino Workers Demand for a Decent Wage Should Command Admiration of Right-Thinking Men," *Philippines' Mail*, November 3,1931. Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas. Filipinos during the early 1930s were paid 15 cents/hour, Japanese laborers were paid 25 cents/hour, and Anglo American workers were paid 35 cents/hour. Rufo Canete, a labor contractor and labor camp owner eventually would argue for a more racially inclusive union in order to strengthen the cause towards ending unfair labor laws and treatment by California growers and shippers. The Salinas Lettuce Strike headed by the FLU successfully bargained for a 35 cents/hour pay for pickers and lettuce thinners but their progress and later triumphs were met with violent racial hostilities throughout the duration of the strike and thereafter and the FLU was forced to leave the Salinas Valley and regroup in a more tolerant environment to another agrarian Central Coast town, Guadalupe.

[232] Yen Le Espiritu, *Filipino American Lives* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 11. Census Records of Monterey County, Salinas City, 1940, https://1940census.archives.gov/search/?search.result_type=image&search.state=CA&search.county=Monterey+County&search.city=Salinas&search.street=#filename=m-t0627-00267-00220.tif&name=27-6&type=image&state=CA&index=1&pages=22&bm_all_text=Bookmark.

such violent rural living and working conditions, with the prospects of not making ends meet, *pinoys* rallied together to form their own self-reliant kinship and brotherly networks.

The Filipino Laborer and the Makings of Filipino *Machismo* On the Central Coast

Pinoy workers experienced much violence and destitution in the rural areas where they gathered and were regularly demonized by the white public as the "Filipino Problem" who were a sexual and brown menace to small town white communities.[233] Such hypersexual and violent interpretations of the Filipino as both foreigner and unwanted unassimilable laborer, although racist and orientalist in nature, when coupled with the hypermasculine nature of Filipino kinship networks that formed the backbone of these early Central Coast Fil-Am hubs, both patriarchal entities, one informed by orientalism and benevolent assimilation, the other informed by Spanish-Filipino cultural masculinities, in many ways validated and fed off one another therefore culminating in Fil-Am communities that preferred and thrived off the culture of masculine pride or *machismo*. As young bachelors far from home who were constantly vulnerable to weekly, if not daily, harassment by white vigilante mobs, Filipino farm workers relied on tight knit circles and small Filipino ethnic hubs that sprouted along the migrant labor route. Such tight knit circles normally congregated around taxi dance halls, gambling dens, cockfight rings, or even the labor camps themselves. Joseph Talaugon Sr. grew up in the Central Coast town of Guadalupe and remembers as fond as he was of the many *pinoy* farm workers whom he saw as his uncles and

[233] Some of the earliest descriptions of the Philippine peoples as part of a colonial burden or problem was described by Nicholas Roosevelt who felt that taking on the colonial endeavor of modernizing and managing the Philippines and its people was a "thankless burden" which speaks heavily in agreement with Rudyard Kipling's "white man's burden" concept that justified and morally validated European nations taking and controlling Asian nations. White labor unions would use the same rhetoric of calling Filipino immigrant workers a problem for the future of the United States, seeing Filipinos, Chinese, Japanese, South Asian Indians, and Mexican workers as a drain to America's economy and labor market. Nicholas Roosevelt, *The Philippines: A Treasure and a Problem* (New York: J. H. Shears and Company, 1926), 279.

extended family, like his uncle Takyo, some of the *pinoy* practices of building male comradery went a bit too far in the pool halls and restaurants.

"Takyo said, "Hey Sonny, you big boy now." I replied that I was 10 years old, "Oh you got *girl friend* already, who's your *girl friend*?" I blushed and tried to run out in the aisle again. He asked, "Are you *tole* (circumcised) already?" Then he grabbed me. "Let me see if you are *tole*." They had to find out if you are circumcised, that was a curious ritual. They always offered to circumcise you at their house with a big sharp butcher knife. Takyo would describe the whole ordeal in detail. Then he would finally let me go and proceed to laugh like hell. This was just another part of our lives back on the ranch."[234]

Joseph Talaugon described in both our *kwentuhans* and in his autobiography, *Mestizo Through My Eyes* (2021), that such jokes and male-to-male teasing were just a few of the *pinoy* practices that spoke to the hyper masculine cultural environment that formed within the rural Central Coast Fil-Am landscape. With little to no Filipinas in the fields where *pinoys* worked or in the towns they lived in during the migrant labor season, many of the young *pinoy* bachelor farm workers developed a youth culture that emphasized overt masculine pride in the form of hetero-cisgendered male sexual prowess that non-Filipino communities observed and used as racial stereotypes to further ostracize and other Filipino immigrants.

California's Greater Central Coast (Monterey County to Santa Barbara) during the 1930s is most well known and depicted in the words and films of John Steinbeck's gritty novels and short stories. These include the *Grapes of Wrath, Of Mice & Men*, and *East of Eden*, all of whose settings and backdrops are the Salinas Valley. Born and raised in the town of Salinas at the turn of the twentieth century, John Steinbeck's novels and short stories describe the desperate and deplorable living conditions, depressed wages, and unforgiving agrarian labor market in a similar vein to Upton Sinclair's muckraking 1906 novel *The Jungle*. Where Sinclair novelizes the Eastern and Central European immigrant labor experiences in the meat packing industries of

[234] Joseph Talaugon Sr., *Mestizo Through My Eyes* (Guadalupe: Cross Cultural Center, 2021), 16.

Chicago, Steinbeck's blatant criticisms of commercialized farming on the Central Coast emphasized mainly the white American laborer perspective.[235]

Steinbeck's fictional works like *Of Mice and Men* express the exploitation of male manual laborers from his own childhood experiences growing up in Salinas. As a Salinas native, Steinbeck was well aware of the racial tensions that aggravated existing labor disputes along the Central Coast. Although Asian immigrant laborers, particularly Filipino laborers and the Filipino Labor Union of Salinas, were central to the early stages of what would become the Farm Labor Movement, there is little to no mention of Filipino pickers, Japanese growers, or Chinese establishments referenced in Steinbeck's major novels despite the key roles these Asian American communities had in the establishment of the Salinas Valley.

Steinbeck's attention to the ethnic diversity that did represent the Depression Era agrarian labor force is most explicit in his muckraking journalist ventures. His pamphlet, *The Harvest Gypsies*, is an exposé on the exploitation of California's migrant laborers that details their destitute working and living conditions throughout California agrarian networks. Although the bulk of his interviews and focus is on Anglo Dust Bowl migrants, Steinbeck does offer a glimpse into the non-white labor camps. Steinbeck's "Article VI" describes Asian non-white laborers as "peon laborers" who live in a constant state of "terrorism, squalor, and starvation" and are cruelly punished when they come together to defend their terms and last bit of dignity by attempting to unionize.[236] Steinbeck comments on the Filipino immigrant laborers' as the final lot of imported foreign labor that would eventually be replaced by the droves of Anglo American Dust Bowl migrants. In his characterization, Steinbeck writes that the Filipino labor camps were maltreated bachelor communities of laborers who pooled their resources together to afford

[235] *Grapes of Wrath*, introduction, xx.
[236] John Steinbeck, *The Harvest Gypsies: Onto the Road to the Grapes of Wrath* (:,), 55, 56.

shared equipment and food. But their "reputation of immorality" for their affairs with white women that he highlights were the direct cause of the recurrent violent racial confrontations Filipinos experienced on a daily basis.[237] In an earlier short story titled "Fingers of Cloud,"(1924) Steinbeck describes a Filipino farm camp filled with labor gangs of single bachelors who live and work in poverty, yet are so transfixed on having romantic and sexual relations with local white women in Salinas. The main character is a white female youth by the name of Gertie who has a mental disability. She is easily taken advantage of by one of the Filipino field workers in the Spreckles camp who regularly beats her after coming home from work in the fields. Towards the end of the short story, Gertie comes to the realization that the abuse she witnesses is tied to the "blackness" that her husband represents to her; as both a stoop field hand laborer and as an immigrant man of color.[238] Local newspapers like the *Pacific Rural Press* regularly described the Filipino farm worker as unwanted foreigners, a menace, taking American jobs:

"When the sob sisters of America, particularly those of California, could not get rid of the Mexicans in any other way, the Filipino was brought in to displace him, the most worthless, unscrupulous, shiftless, diseased, semi-barbarian that has ever come to our shores."[239]

Other newspapers in Lompoc argued that the removal of Filipino men from their towns not only meant the opening of jobs to deserving white men but also as a means to protect white women:

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[237] Mention of the Filipino migrant laborer in *The Harvest Gypsies* as part of the broader exploitation of ethnic minorities and immigrant migrant laborers. The mention of specifically Filipinos of roughly two pages in the popular muckraking pamphlet describes their hardiness, low wage, and the stoup labor they perform.
[238] Michael J. Meyer ed., *The Essential Criticisms of John Steinbecks\'s Of Mice and Men* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 117.
[239] *The Farm Labor Problem Grows Acute*, *Pacific Rural Press*, May 9, 1936.

"The influx of these unassimilable aliens who work cheaper than white men are viewed with increasing disfavor. These islanders are very sensitive and touchy and inclined to give battle when they consider that they have been offended. Also being orientals their combative reactions trend toward the use of weapons. There are other reasons for objection to them on the grounds that because no Filipino women migrate the orientals pay persistent attention to white women."[240]

Such negative perceptions of the foreign womanizing Filipino laborer, compounded with exploitative working conditions within an economically depressed environment fueled many of the violent raids, labor strikes, and racial confrontations made by white vigilante justice squads along the Central Coast. The Watsonville Race Riot of 1930 and the bombing of Salinas Filipino labor camps in 1934 are just two of hundreds of examples of racialized violence Filipino farm workers experienced during the early 1930s.[241] Throughout the 1910s-1940s, Filipino farm workers were subjected to violence, racial segregation, and divide-and-conquer labor strategies practiced by many major California growers. From Salinas to Watsonville, Pismo Beach, Lompoc, and Santa Maria, race riots, mob violence, and "Anti-Filipino Wars" ousted Filipino men from the towns were regular scenes during the migrant labor seasons.[242] Such racialized, hypersexualized, and hypermasculine depictions and stereotypes of Filipino immigrant workers were used as social and legal justifications to harass, exploit, and eventually expel Filipino workers from the Central Coast. To protect themselves, many *pinoys* did indeed brandish

[240] San Luis Obispo County History Center, Filipino Files Archive, Anti-Filipino rhetoric in other agribusiness centered towns along the Central Coast like Lompoc, San Luis Obispo, Arroyo Grande, and Santa Maria were most vocal in the local papers such as San Luis Obispo county's the *Herald-Recorder*, circa. March 16 and June 15, 1934.
[241] "Victims of Vigilante Attack Upon Filipino Labor Camp Tell Harrowing Experiences," *Philippines Mail*, October 1, 1934, Salinas, John Steinbeck Public Library.
[242] Anti-Filipino rhetoric in other agribusiness centered towns along the Central Coast like Lompoc, San Luis Obispo, Arroyo Grande, and Santa Maria were most vocal in the local papers such as San Luis Obispo county's the *Herald-Recorder*, circa. March 16 and June 15, 1934.

weapons from pistols to knives often seeing aggression and violence as their only way to protect themselves from their cruel daily living and working conditions as immigrants in America. San Luis Obispo long time local, Pete Kelley, remembered that his mother in the 1960s had told him to steer clear of Filipinos downtown as they were, according to her, "up to no good" insinuating they would harm or pickpocket passersby.[243] Inadvertently, having such weapons on hand reinforced white Californians' prejudices of *pinoy* farm workers. Regular displays of aggression coupled with the brandishing of weapons to protect oneself also fed into Filipino interpretations of masculine honor, which became a common badge of cultural belonging amongst *pinoys* who relied on such brotherly bonds to survive the violent migrant labor seasons.

The *pinoy* culture that grew on California's Central Coast was born from very similar trends of brotherly bonding that Linda Espana Maram and Dawn Mabalon describe in Filipino-towns like Los Angeles and Stockton during the 1920s-1930s. Finding community along the migrant labor route and seasons normally was by building networks, clubs, fraternal organizations, or mutual aid associations that centered on shared ethnolinguistic backgrounds, provinces, or family-friend networks. Heriberto Delute, who had immigrated to California in 1928 and worked along the Central Coast, helped to start a men's mutual aid circle known as the Hinunangan Mutual Aid Association of California which was made up of *pinoys* who were all from the town of Hinunangan of Southern Leyte in the Philippines.[244] Together, their organization would help to chip in for medical costs, food, and other living costs or emergency expenses that the men might need as they worked the migrant labor seasons. Forming such strong cultural and brotherly bonds were essential towards many *pinoy*s' survival, mentally,

[243] *Kwentuhan* with Pete Kelley of the San Luis Obispo Historical Society conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2014, San Luis Obispo.
[244] *Kwentuhan* with Heriberto Delute Jr. and Nickie Delute conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2022, Seattle.

spiritually, and economically. The Delute family well into the 1960s would continue to meet and support the Hinunangan Association members, seeing each other as extended family members.

Mutual aid men's circles during the 1920s-1940s were a cultural reproduction of the "*kababayan* system" from the Philippines, also known as a "form of Brotherhood" according to the Talaugon family, one of the oldest Fil-Am families of Guadalupe and Santa Maria. Some of the most regular hangouts the early wave of *pinoy* farm workers gathered were in pool halls and restaurant-cafes that served the broader Asian community members and were normally located in Chinatowns or Asian immigrant operated districts. Many bachelor Filipino migrant workers gambled what little of their wages they had in pool halls, local boxing fights, cockfight circles, or illegal gambling dens, traditionally operated in Chinatowns or their own labor camps, in order to maximize their paychecks while running the greater risk of gambling all of it away. Oftentimes, pinoy spaces, like local boxing matches in Pismo Beach or gambling dens in Delano, would were regular hotspots for eruptions of male aggression. Newspapers describe how boxing matches where Filipino fighters lost or where *pinoys* in the pool halls lost major bets or owed another peer a great deal of money would time and again in damages to the properties, injuries, and even riots like that in Pismo Beach in 1933 when *pinoy* boxer, Kid Moro, was deemed by the referee as the loser that night on November 13th.[245] Poor living and working conditions in combination with receiving non-livable wages, amidst an overly masculine social environment with little opportunity for social mobility, made for a dreary, day-to-day survival-type working lifestyle for many disgruntled and overworked *pinoys*. In such extremely destitute and oftentimes culturally and socially isolating conditions, *pinoys* relied on their brotherly circles which in turn, had an adverse effect in producing hypermasculine spaces and cultural attitudes. To protect their own

[245] "Filipino In Near Riot At Boxfight," and "Boss Gambler to Face Damage Suit," *The Philippines Mail*, November 13, 1933, Salinas, Steinbeck Public Library.

friends and extended family of brothers, *pinoys* buckled down on their *machismo* performance as an act of bravado to demonstrate that they were indeed capable of bearing their own weight in rural white California and could protect not only themselves but their own new communities.

Filipino bachelors, although never assured a stable or fixed income, used much of their wages on leisure activities and forms of entertainment that reflected their interpretation of the ideal well-to-do man or "well attired man of good time": one decked in style, opulence, and full of charm to win over any potential lady in their midst.[246] In the taxi dance halls and pool halls, *pinoy* youths donned their masculinity in their choice of dapper McIntosh tailored suits often resembling what Espana-Maram described as the Hollywood movie star lifestyle. Many *pinoys* frequented the cinema to watch both Philippine and American films (Stockton and Salinas both had movie theaters that catered specifically to Filipino audiences). For many *pinoys* who worked as busboys, Hollywood extras, and domestic workers in Los Angeles and Hollywood during the lulls of the migrant labor season, they regularly were witness to the extravagance of the Hollywood and Los Angeles elite. Filipino-Spanish cultural masculinities that emphasize men's sophistication and attraction through fashion complimented *pinoys'* exposure to Hollywood culture through menswear. Furthermore, Espana-Maram argues that Filipino laborers also improvised their social standing in Fil-Am society through their purchasing power; buying snappy personally-tailored McIntosh suits, and then zoot suits in the 1940s, that matched the opulence of Hollywood's male actors meant they had made it in America because they not only matched the cultural fashions of white America, but they also were formulating their own unique Fil-Am cultural production through dress.[247] Joseph Talaugon Sr. recalls the pride the young

[246] Linda Espana-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles's Little Manila: Working Class Filipinos and Popular Culture, 1920s-1950s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 112-113.
[247] Espana-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles's Little Manila*, 126, 139.

pinoys, who would become known as the *manongs*, exuded when dressed in their zoot suits while gambling and dining in Guadalupe's Filipino owned pool hall known as Ungsang's.[248] The Filipino men would request "Hollywood hairstyle" updos at the Filipino owned barber shop, get their suits tailored with their special requests, and fearlessly gamble their earnings away in high stakes ways earning honorary nicknames from their *pinoy* brothers.[249]

Oftentimes, *pinoys* would pool their incomes to purchase used cars that they would share to head into town for Filipino dance parties or to carpool across the highway to attend other Filipino fetes in Fil-Am hubs like Salinas, San Jose, Pismo Beach, or Stockton. Driving into town and the Filipino community centers with their new cars and suits and dancing with both Filipina and non-Filipina women at these events, social boxes, and weekly dance hall gatherings were regular sightings and performances of Filipino *pinoy* culture that not only solidified *pinoy* brotherhood but became outlets for Filipino bachelors to vent and practice their masculinities. Filipino farm workers, similar to Chinese and Japanese men, were treated as miscreants and in orientalist fashion at the time, were villainized as oversexed beasts of burden in the fields or were deemed highly effeminate, two very polar opposite stereotypes of Asian men that taken together, both are meant to emasculate non-white Asian men as means to "other" and diminish their standing in society compared to white men. Thus this emphasis on vocalizing the epitome of masculinity through fashion and leisure consumption became a major component of pinoy culture and pinoy communities. Even during their most serious and tense strikes, the Filipinas/os of the Filipino Labor Union (FLU) stood their ground picketing, wearing their finest

[248] Nieves Catahan Villamin, Rosalie Salutan Marquez, Joe T. Talaugon, *Tomorrow's Stories: An Ocean and a Dream Away* (Bloomington: Aurthorhouse, 2020), 228.
[249] Joe R. Talaugon Sr., *Mestizo: Through My Eyes* (2020), 17-20.

three piece suits, in the Oriental District of Salinas knowing very well that at any moment they could be harassed by white vigilante justice squads.[250]

Such emphasis on *pinoy* dandy masculinity as a means of cultural survival and community formation did not allow *pinays*, who inhabited these same community spaces and ethnic hubs, to exercise their own interpretations of *pinayhood* with the same type of cultural pride their male peers exuded. Rather, the overt cultural masculinities performed by *pinoys* in these rural towns especially on the Central Coast, made the early Fil-Am hubs feel territorial in nature where in true *machismo* fashion, Filipino men saw themselves as the social proprietors and overseers of their entire community. The formation and reproduction of *machismo* cultural practices in the early Fil-Am communities of rural California, although a major component that helped to establish *pinoy* mutual aid and brotherly networks, were also problematic. Filipina, *pinay*, community members found the bonds and practices of *pinoy* brotherhood and oversight especially patronizing and domineering.

Pinoy leaders who led many of the earliest Fil-Am organizations from the 1920s-1930s exuded the quintessence of Filipino masculinity and became cultural icons of *pinoy* manhood in California. In 1925 Hilario Moncado founded one of the most popular and widespread mutual aid organizations, the Filipino Federation of America, in Los Angeles. The Federation operated as a Christian fellowship and self-help mechanism for bachelor *pinoys*. As a way to support inter-ethnic relations, Philippine nationalism, and independence abroad, one of Moncado's major tenets for members of the Federation was to promote Filipino culture and mannerisms as

[250] Photographs of Filipino pickers and labor contractors during their strike in Salinas' Chinatown area, also known as the Lettuce Strike of 1934, are shown walking out and standing in solidarity with one another in their finest three piece suits, *The Philippines Mail*, Circa. October 1, 1934, Salinas, CA, courtesy of the Steinbeck Public Library."Salinas Lake Street on the Second Day of the Big Strike," *The Philippines Mail*, Circa. October 1, 1934, Salinas, CA, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, CA.

outwardly friendly and accepting of others. According to Moncado, Filipino men especially were the cultural icons and conduits of their country whose role was to promote a reputation that Filipinos were Christian, modern, and thus well behaved people who were deserving of independence. Historian Steffi San Buenaventura described Moncado as being well known by members of his social circles as boasting many of the *pinoy* star qualities that merged Hollywood masculine glamor and Filipino gentlemanly bravado. The veneration of Jose Rizal, and his mimicking of his likeness and speech, was part of the masculine energy that Moncado also used to cement his role as the founder and leader of the Filipino Federation.[251] The Federation's cultural events that Moncado founded such as Rizal Day and Flag Day parades became so popular in Los Angeles that the annual events became mainstay Fil-Am events well into the 1940s across the state. The Federation became so popular that Moncado grew other successful branches in other parts of California like Stockton, Oakland, Fresno, San Fernando, Pasadena, Santa Maria, Salinas, Sacramento, San Diego, Honolulu and Hilo.[252]

Many of Moncado's followers viewed him as the *pinoy* standard of masculine charm and confidence that one needed to perform in order to survive in America as a Filipino. Moncado's observations and treatment of *pinays* in his circles would also set the precedent of how *pinoys* treated their female peers as they saw Moncado as a prime example of male leadership to exude in their own communities. Moncado in many of his publications boasted about his many degrees in religion, philosophy, and politics, which San Buenaventura argues were inaccurate embellishments that helped secure his overall charismatic and worldly persona. Securing a higher education, for many lower and working class Filipinas/os both in the Philippines and

[251] Steffi San Buenaventura, *Nativism and Ethnicity In A Filipino-American Experience* (Ann Arbor UMI Dissertation Services, 1990), 91.
[252] San Buenaventura, *Nativism and Ethnicity In A Filipino-American Experience*, 175, 181.

abroad, was a symbol of wealth and admiration. Moncado regularly used such embellishments to appeal to Filipinas in rather cloying and inappropriate ways. In the same year Moncado founded the Filipino Federation, he also published his book *Divinity of Woman* and distributed it in both California and Mindanao. Members of the federation would argue and promote *Divinity of Woman* as if it was doctrine and truth. In his book, Moncado described himself as a messiah and predicted that women would rule the world because of their natural abilities gifted by God to lead as mothers and wives. Men, he argued, were too overcome and full of sensibilities that spoke to war while women inherently understood cleanliness and were apt to teaching men virtues as "infants to until they reached manhood."[253] Seeing women, particularly Filipina women, as the embodiment of purity akin to the Virgin Mary, Moncado concluded that women were the better, purer, and lighter sex and in true *machismo* fashion, both patronized and objectified women, labeling them as the "superior delicacy" as a form of a compliment to his female readers.[254]

Moncado regularly attended events and social gatherings promoted by Filipina clubs and organizations in Hawai'i and California. Similar to the *pinoy* circles Moncado was a part of, many of these early *pinay* social circles were made up of working and lower class Filipinas and their families. Many found both his *machismo* charm and "promotion" of the Filipina attractive because the cultural and religious imagery he used to depict women as essential in her community as a doting mother, honest lover, and caring teacher, were all roles the *pinay* generation valued, if not were conditioned to perform. Moncado's doctrine recognized women's care work roles in their communities and family. His influence in the formative years of the working class Fil-Am communities was notable and he was invited to major events including

[253] Hilario Moncado, *Divinity of Woman* (Los Angeles: Filipino Federation of America, 1925), 22.
[254] Moncado, *Divinity of Woman*, 24.

Filipina centered major gatherings like the Filipino Women's Club meeting in Honolulu that honored the women delegates of the Pan Pacific Congress in 1928.[255] Although he received praise at the time, his commentary on the Filipina's social worth limited Filipina merit to the confines of the household leaving their social and civic agency primarily tied only to their husbands.

Similar to the experiences of the New Filipina peminist generation before them, the *machismo* attitudes transplanted and reproduced in Fil-Am spaces proved to be more a hindrance to the intellectual and community oriented work Filipinas wanted to put forward. And like the peminist generation a decade prior, *pinays* would also walk a precarious tightrope where they balanced Filipino expectations of femininity and cultural motherwork with their club and community work in order to be taken seriously as peers and active community members in their new homes along California's Central Coast.

<u>*Pinoy* Expectations: The *Dalagang Bukid* and the Working Class *Pinay*</u>

By 1930, Filipino men in California numbered at 28,625 while Filipinas numbered at 1,845.[256] Filipina women despite their small numbers could be found involved in multiple endeavors in support of their communities, families, and their own livelihoods. Filipinas on the Central Coast went beyond traditional Filipino family-oriented gender expectations and exercised their voices and energies alongside *pinoys,* rallying behind issues and concerns regarding demands for fair labor. One of the first national Filipino self-published and owned newspapers based out of Salinas, *The Philippines Mail*, described on a weekly basis throughout

[255] *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, August 10, 1928, 7. See also San Buenaventura, *Nativism and Ethnicity In A Filipino-American Experience*, 185.
[256] Wilma Mankiller, *The Reader's Companion to U.S. Women's History* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998), 231.

the early labor movement of the 1930s the active roles and prominence of Filipinas on the Central Coast.[257] As respected mothers, wives, and dutiful daughters, the activism of the first generation of Filipina immigrants in Salinas especially reveals how they performed exemplary forms of agency under the guise of being revered cultural matriarchs and proponents of Filipina femininity. Taking inspiration from the early Philippine women's clubwork, the Filipino Women's Club established in Salinas in the late 1920s took on multiple responsibilities, lending their hands and voices towards anchoring their broader communities as cultural matriarchs and caregivers who labored in multifaceted ways to support their fellow Filipino *sakadas*.

The first major wave of Filipinas to immigrate to California (1903-1934), whether as *pensionadas*, wives, or daughters accompanying their male kin to work in the United States, had their own interpretations and expectations of their new lives in the United States as colonial subjects. Like their male peers they also advocated for Philippine independence, holding similarly high hopes for the islands that they left. Such sentiments encouraged them to work hard to pursue their dream of being successful in the United States. But such political opinions were not always appreciated or vocalized beyond the boundaries of the home, as the working and social spheres of these emerging small ethnic hubs were overseen by *pinoys*. If *pinays* wanted to extend their voices and opinions into the political, let alone the daily *pinoy* dominated arena of transnational politics, they would have to do so with a particular tone that resonated with the Maria Clara archetype made popular through Filipino literature.

[257] *The Philippines Mail* was a Filipino periodical founded in the early 1930s and continued publication through the 1980s. One of only four Filipino owned periodicals on the Central Coast, circulation of the weekly, to eventually monthly paper, reached as far north as Sacramento to as far south as the Los Angeles area. The paper was originally titled *The Philippine Independent News* but by 1933, the official title changed to *The Philippines Mail*. The founders and editors of *The Philippines Mail* were Luis Agudo & Delfin Cruz based out of Salinas, CA. Original copies are located at the Monterey County Historical Society based in Salinas, the microfilm can be found at the Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, CA.

Maria Clara is the main female character and love interest in Jose Rizal's *Noli Mi Tangere*. Rizal is esteemed as the male national hero who embodied the intellectual backbone of the Philippine Revolution against the Spanish colonial establishment during the late nineteenth century. Rizal's female lead, Maria Clara, is described as a lighter skinned, mixed race, upper class, Filipina urbanite who is humble, modest, docile, and pure in the Catholic sense. Her character would lose her love to the revolution and was sent to a nunnery, where she died in obscurity having lost her purpose without a husband or partner. The sweet and innocent martyr for love that Maria Clara represented during the late nineteenth century continued to be held as a cultural icon as the prime example of Filipina femininity that Filipino men valued and preferred. Her character would become the epitome of Filipina femininity not only during the revolutionary period but well into the twentieth century. The New Filipinas of the Progressive Era, in order to be respected by their male peers, found themselves still having to perform aspects of the Maria Clara archetype as well-mannered women who were modest, and loyal to her family, husband, and country.

But as the New Filipina began to transform and produce her own peminist intellectual persona that drifted from the Maria Clara trope, Filipino *machismo* culture sought another muse for their ideal non-political Filipina. Throughout the inter-war era (1918-1940) in art and film, as seen in the 1919 Filipino film, *Dalagang Bukid*, the emergence of Filipino media culture began to craft and idolize a different kind of Filipina who was a counter image to the urbanite New Filipina peminist.[258] *Dalagang bukid*, meaning a simple countryside Filipina beauty or country maiden, would evoke the same affection for traditional Filipina femininity that Maria Clara

[258] The first Filipino film ever produced titled "*Dalagang Bukid*" (1919) which centered on the themes of Filipina femininity and purity. It was first performed as a stage play and then was produced as a film. The popular pre war film "*Dalagang Filipina*" further popularized the themes of Filipina beauty standards, filial piety, the simplicity of country life, and Philippine romance ballads.

embodied, was also inspired by Spanish Catholic virtues that resonated with provincial and rural communities. Philippine artist Fernando Amorsolo's most famous 1937 painting, "Dalagang Bukid," depicted a Filipina beauty, with basket and bandana in hand in front of a backdrop of trees and fields of the Philippine province. From short stories, stage productions known as *zarzuelas,* films and artwork that exalted the *dalagang bukid*, the homely Filipina country girl became the culmination and representation of the forgotten beauty of the Philippine barrio and countryside during a time when the Philippines was modernizing rapidly under American instruction.[259]

The country maiden embodied the *machismo* nostalgia for traditional values that the New Filipina no longer practiced fully. Through artistic retellings of the *dalagang bukid*, the Maria Clara persona would no longer be reserved merely for the gendered expectations of the upper- and middle-class *mestiza* Filipinas that Maria Clara hailed from, but would also be accessible and expected of the lower and working class everyday Filipina. Majority of the *pinoys* who immigrated to California were lower class young men who were not cityfolk but were raised in the provinces and barrios of the Visayas and Ilocos Sur regions. The *dalagang bukid* archetype for many of the *pinoys* who worked along the Central Coast's migrant labor route thus was the ideal Filipina persona that *pinoys* sought and expected from the *pinays* they shared community with.

[259] On the topic of "dalagang Filipina" as epitomized through the first national(ist) Filipino painter Fernando Amorsolo's paintings, Jameica Viray describes how "The "Dalagang Bukid" or the maiden in the rice field shows a medium brown-skinned woman portraying the Maria Clara image…Hence, her shoulder gave emphasis on the way women dressed which attempted to depict Filipino conservative demeanor that every Filipina must possess during the American colonial period. Thus this portrait created a narrative that life in the province is merely agricultural, that life was good and that the ideal Filipino woman must be conservative, beautiful, and happily serving her family and doing reproductive jobs such as taking care of the house chores and of upbringing the children given her gentle and warm demeanor." Jamaica Viray, "An Analysis on Fernando Amorsolo's Dalagang Bukid," *Jamaica Viray Blog: Welcome To My World*, Last Modified July 16, 2020, Last Accessed June 20, 2022, https://jameicav.wordpress.com/2020/07/16/an-analysis-on-fernando-amorsolos-dalagang-bukid/.

In 1932, a Filipina immigrant to the United States known only as "Mrs. Quirno" referred to the *dalagang* to encourage Filipino laborers via *The Philippines Mail*. Not only did she speak to gendered notions about how Filipinas should act, she also reinforced the idea that Filipinos in the United States were still tied to the culture and politics of the Philippines:

> *"'Mrs. Quirino, typical Filipina, wife of Elipidio Quirino, arrived with her husband, who is a member of the independence mission. Having a message of greeting and good wishes to all Filipinos in the United States, Mrs. Quirino expresses them through the Philippines Mail... Among other things Mrs. Quirino says: 'All my fellow countrymen, who are doing great things here for their country, are worthy of high commendation. But I want them to bear in their minds that they must not forget their folks in the homeland. There is no better place than home. Think of those beautiful "dalagas," who are anxiously waiting for your happy return.'"*[260]

Quirino, like her husband, was an avid and vocal supporter of Philippine independence. Rather than highlighting her own nationalist fervor, *The Philippines Mail* paints Quirno as someone who is simply supporting her husband's political view. From the perspective of the U.S. based Filipino newspaper, Mrs. Quirno was most recognized for her social welfare work in the Philippines, whereas her husband was associated with political activism, even though her social work and favoring of Philippine independence spoke to her own efforts to affect political change. Indeed, in speaking to and encouraging Filipino workers to work hard so that they can proudly return to their "anxious Filipinas" in waiting, Quirino tried to both fulfill the gendered role of a supportive *dalagang* Filipina wife while also rallying Filipinos in the U.S. to work hard and return to the Philippines and achieve the political agenda she supported. But because of the invocation of the *dalagang*, Quirno's political work was subsumed under that of her husband's.

[260] E. Quirino, "Good Will Message Brought From Isles By Mrs. E. Quirino," The Philippine Mail, 25 December 1932. Following the article written by Quirino, she goes on to mention "Miss Quirino was born in Vigan, Ilocos Sur. She is a member of the wealthy Sy Quia family. Since her teens she has been a religious worker among her sex in the populous town of Vigan " as a way to meet gendered expectations that her independence work is related to her domestic and sisterly duties in the Philippines.

Like the work conducted by the previous generation's Filipina Feminist Association, Quirino's work was gendered so as to never be conceived as political in nature. And when she spoke to Filipinos in the United States, and had her story recounted by *The Philippines Mail*, the gendered expectations and limitations about Filipina political agency were both perpetuated and maintained.

Not all Filipina immigrants of the interwar period would adhere to the limitations of the ideal Filipina that *pinoys* preferred. For the working-class Filipinas who immigrated during the 1920s, California served as an opportune landscape to break free from cultural and gendered obligations that spoke to filial piety and maternalism. Elena Jurado, the first Filipina to make it big as a Hollywood star during the silent film era, was one such *pinay* that served as a catalyst to the transformation of the Filipina on American shores. By 1921, Jurado had already been in the United States for two years and had yet found a stable income. Her husband, an American soldier 20 years her senior, married her when she was thirteen years old through an arranged marriage. Elena herself was half American, her father who had abandoned her and her mother was also a white American soldier.[261] Fulfilling her gendered obligations to both her mother and her new husband, Elena followed her spouse to San Francisco, first to work in a gold mining camp, and then back to the foggy golden city of the bay.

In her attempt to find work, Elena attended school to be credentialed in wire transfer technology to work as a radio operator, but there were no jobs available for Filipinas in that position. Hoping to find work to help support her husband, Elena regularly found herself

[261] Elena Jurado was born in 1901 to an American soldier and a Filipina woman in Sibonga, Cebu. She would grow up in one of the early American military camps in the Philippines called Camp Jossman, her father had another wife in the United States and left both Elena and her mother when she was twelve. Elena's husband, Ira Jones, also had an American wife and child in the United States. See also Isidra Reyes, "The first Filipino movie star in Hollywood is a woman," *ABS-CBN*, last modified November 19, 2019, last accessed April 16, 2023, https://news.abs-cbn.com/ancx/culture/spotlight/11/25/19/the-first-filipino-movie-star-in-hollywood-is-a-woman?mibextid=Zxz2cZ.

walking through the streets of San Francisco looking for any type of job that would hire a Filipina. She eventually stumbled on a movie advertisement looking for an "Arab dancer" for the film *White Hands* which was being filmed in San Mateo. She auditioned and won the part thus beginning her new career in Hollywood.

A *pinoy* journalist named Venerando Gonzales interviewed Jurado for the *Philippine Independent News* asking her opinion on the headway she had made for Filipinas in America to which Jurado replied: "Personally, I have nothing to be proud of. The fact that I am the first Filipina to enter the moving picture profession simply demonstrates that the Filipino women, like their sisters of the Caucasian race, will rise up from obscurity to limelight if they are given (the) opportunity. I believe more freedom of education for our women will largely contribute to the realization of their claim for a higher level of social position."[262]

Jurado's language and upliftment of Filipinas spoke very much in line with the peminist politicking of the New Filipina Generation before her. And similar to the peminist generation, Jurado was vocal in her abilities to serve as an example for Filipina liberation. She actively negotiated her wages, her time on the silver screen, thus defining her economic and social worth both in Filipino and American society. But prior to her cultural transformation into a Filipina American, Jurado like many *dalagang* Filipinas followed her filial obligations to her mother and family by marrying the American soldier chosen for her by her family. By going to California with her husband to mine for gold, she fulfilled her role as his wife and as a filial daughter by supporting both her husband and family economically through her modest physical labor. But

[262] Isidra Reyes, "The first Filipino movie star in Hollywood is a woman," *ABS-CBN*, last modified November 19, 2019, last accessed April 16, 2023, https://news.abs-cbn.com/ancx/culture/spotlight/11/25/19/the-first-filipino-movie-star-in-hollywood-is-a-woman?mibextid=Zxz2cZ.

when she left her husband, Jurado completely broke from Filipino gendered expectations of honoring her obligations as a supportive wife.

Rather, by finding an alternative opportunity to make a living, Jurado's financial independence granted her a break from her family and her husband. The characters on the silver screen she chose to play indeed spoke to orientalist fetishizations coupled with the *dalagang bukid* persona both Filipino men and white male Hollywood producers preferred. Such roles secured her a stable income and popularity. By becoming a successful actress, Jurado gained enough confidence to petition for her own self-worth by legally bargaining for her wages to white Hollywood without the oversight or input of her husband or family. By the early 1940s, Jurado would remarry another American military officer, had one son, and became an elementary school teacher. She never returned to the Philippines and passed away in 1974 in her beloved Los Angeles where she made her career. According to her biographer and acclaimed Filipino writer, Wilfredo Pascual, Jurado's gravemarker did not at all speak to her trailblazing Hollywood career. Rather, her headstone reads "Mother, Elena Wingate, 1901-1974," a nod instead to her *dalagang* Filipina roots and culturally respected and honored role as mother.[263]

In her films she portrayed the exotic Asian woman and although the white soldiers fiend for her and lust for her, it is always the white woman lead who naturally gains both the affection and loyalty of the white male officer. Hollywood media titled her as the "Island Cinderella."[264] In both her films and in her immigrant narrative, Jurado's status and experiences as a colonial subject, a woman of color, and foreigner was the embodiment of multiple systems of gender and

[263] Isidra Reyes, "The first Filipino movie star in Hollywood is a woman," *ABS-CBN*, last modified November 19, 2019, last accessed April 16, 2023, https://news.abs-cbn.com/ancx/culture/spotlight/11/25/19/the-first-filipino-movie-star-in-hollywood-is-a-woman?mibextid=Zxz2cZ. See also Wilfredo Pascual's biographical show that captures the life of Elena Jurado as the first Filipino Hollywood actor, "Finding Elena," *Archivo*, last modified November 27, 2019, https://www.archivo1984.com/exhibition-finding-elena.

[264] "Filipino Princess of Film Awakes from Dream of Stardom, Sues for $2261," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 26, 1923. See also the Film Development Council of the Philippines.

racism weighing on how she was viewed, treated, and valued in the world. But it would also be those same pressures and social forces that would also force Elena to create her own pathways of survival and resistance thus signaling a new era of Filipina p/feminist politicization. The *pinay* that Jurado, perhaps unknowingly created and became, challenged, co-opted, and confronted multiple spheres of influences as a means to survive and make her own way in California. Although her marriage and migration to California appeared uncertain and at times unstable, California for Jurado proved to be an opportune pathway for the working class generation of Filipinas who would follow after the wins and achievements of the New Filipina peminist generation.

Conclusion

Elena Jurado's story can be seen as the launching point for the emergence of the *Pinay* Generation and the many possible futures and transformations they represented as Filipina immigrants who merged their interpretations of what it meant to be a Filipina in America and a Filipina in her Fil-Am community. The pioneer *pinays*, their balancing of *pinoy* and other cultural expectations and filial obligations and how their economic agency on the Central Coast earned them their own political community platform, in many ways, both counters and adds to the dominant historiography of the *Manong* Generation that the interwar era in Asian American Studies literature speaks to. Jurado's story represents a new shift in Filipina identities and subjectivities in the quickly forming Filipina/o/x diaspora under empire leaving the New Filipina peminist relegated to the political realm of the Philippines while the humble *dalagang bukid* Filipina immigrant carries some of her motherwork politicking crafted by the peminist generation as her bargaining tool as she navigated California.

The pioneer *pinays* who settled in the United States prior to World War II were expected to serve their affective obligations as mothers and obedient wives. Even before their arrival to the Central Coast, Filipinas were expected to look and act like the Filipinas of the famed *zarzuelas* that idolized the "*dalagang bukid*."[265] This image of the ideal Filipina represented Filipina femininity but would also serve as the preferred culturally maternal persona of the Filipina. If she were to represent her country as a colonial subject, she must do so in a demure and elegant manner representative of the preferred steady role she was allowed in her nation that was itself undergoing multiple transformations; she had to remain steadfast as a supportive wife and mother whose humble origins were that of the working-class provincial Filipina thus adding an innocent submissive charm that *pinoys* preferred. With the domestic maternal as her persona, the Filipina could transgress into her new surroundings with less judgment and criticism from her male peers. As demonstrated by the interview piece of Mrs. Quirno, Filipinas in the United States were balancing multiple gendered expectations; but if they did wish to speak on their political and individual beliefs and philosophies, their actions and words would need to be carefully crafted with the tone of the domestic maternal. And it would be the Filipino Women's Club and Central Coast *pinays* that would carry and practice this gendered-kinship-political dance in their communities, crafting cultural maternalist values into a powerful enough platform where they could finally engage with the civic and political spheres of their ethnic hubs under the guise of matriarchs of the community. Similar to the peminist generation before them, Filipina

[265] "Pretty Filipina with a pitcher" a *zarzuela* and then adapted into a film in 1919, the first film produced and directed by a FIlipino. There would be another film produced in 1940 titled "Dalagang Filipina' which would highlight similar themes of Filipina femininity. The themes of both films and cultural takes on Filipina beauty and demeanor would eventually culminate in multiple paintings created by the famed Filipino artist by the name of Fernando Amorsolo from the 1930s-1950s. Dalagang has many interpretations in relation to Filipina femininity. She is caring, sweet, often provincial, hardworking, yet dainty in her mannerisms. Dalagang implies the need to fall in love while also reserving one's feelings or need to completely express love for someone so innocently beautiful or quaint.

immigrants utilized similar motherwork rhetoric as the New Filipinas in order to appease the *machismo pinoy* gaze while carving out enough community merit and presence to transform themselves from "*dalagang* Filipina" into their interpretation of the *pinay*; a Filipina making her own way in America.

Chapter 4: *Pinay* Motherwork: The Filipino Women's Club in the Heart of the Fil-Am Central Coast Community, 1928-1941

Pinoys throughout the 1930s were labeled by white communities as a violent, unassimilable, and radical brown menace.[266] Such a derogatory association pushed Filipino pocket communities and organizations like the Filipino Federation of America to put their energies towards building reputations that spoke to respectability and good manners in order to appeal to California's white majority. The role of cultural broker and social mediator between the Filipina/o and white communities fell on the shoulders of the Filipina immigrant women, in part due to the constant movement of *pinoys* who regularly had to follow the crop seasons while *pinay* wives tended their new homes in these small emerging Fil-Am hubs on the rural coast.

Hilario Moncado, whose philosophy of women drew heavily from traditional Filipino-Catholic gender values, saw Filipinas as the most apt to "hosting" and negotiating both communities' needs, arguing that women have "the gift of speech, a natural and tactful art…and that women excel man in the faculty of speech, whereas man himself chiefly excels as a brute."[267] Indeed, the Filipinos who oversaw and carried out Moncado's annual Flag and Rizal Day parades and events throughout the 1930s-1940s were usually Filipinas. *Pinays* in the Salinas Valley and broader Monterey County of the Central Coast quickly became the center and faces of their community, often labeled by both white and Filipino locals as queens and benevolent hostesses who operated as major anchors for their hubs. Filipina women, despite the

[266] San Luis Obispo County History Center, Filipino Files Archive, Anti-Filipino rhetoric in other agribusiness centered towns along the Central Coast like Lompoc, San Luis Obispo, Arroyo Grande, and Santa Maria were most vocal in the local papers such as San Luis Obispo counties the *Herald-Recorder*. Newspaper Headline, "Anti-Filipino War Brews in Lompoc," *The Herald-Recorder*, June 15, 1934, Filipino Files, History Center of San Luis Obispo County, San Luis Obispo, California.

[267] Hilario Moncado, *Divinity of Woman* (Los Angeles: Filipino Federation of America, 1925), 30-32.

20 *pinoys* :1 *pinay* gender ratio, managed to muster enough influence to forge community organizations, networks, and support systems for their marginalized ethnic districts throughout the Central Coast. Through its many accomplishments, the Salinas Filipino Women's Club (FWC), the oldest Filipina association in California, represented their community's cultural pride and success, serving as the networking agents for their town and families. Filipina clubwomen set the standard of hospitality, cultural pride, and decorum, emulating the gendered expectations of both traditional Filipino culture and *pinoy* surveillance culture. Although their services were considered community work and outreach, the FWC women nonetheless gathered enough financial support from donations derived from the various events they hosted to provide for the financial security, safety, and overall well-being of the Salinas Valley's Filipino community during the Great Depression.

FWC *pinays* epitomized the ultimate standards of Filipina femininity. Their goodwill efforts, although valuable to their ethnic hub's survival, also reflects the limited labor sphere granted to women by the "culture of surveillance." The FWC's community organizing, though a tremendous responsibility, left little space for Filipinas to operate beyond the traditional roles of mother, wife, and caregiver. *The Philippines Mail*'s coverage of women's activities in the 1930s only highlights the community outreach and mothering culture of the Salinas community matriarchs. As Filipinas were uncommon sights for *pinoy* communities in California, their scarcity elevated their value and individual presence in their ethnic circles, but also resulted in elevated expectations and standards of female productivity, which Salinas Filipinas were especially beholden to under *pinoy* supervision.

Depression Era Filipina daughters, like their mothers, were under constant observation and scrutiny, having to remain consistent with their studies and extracurricular activities all while

honoring the reputation of their families. The rarity of Filipina wives and girlfriends made all Filipinas in California a source of cultural obsession during the 1920s-1930s. In many instances, as covered by *The Philippines Mail*, both single and married women (ages ranging from 10-30s) were kidnapped for marriage, harassed, and in the most extreme cases, murdered by jealous *pinoy* suitors. Some were even forced to enter into arranged marriages at the behest of their parents. Thus Filipinas along the Central Coast, under the constant surveillance of traditional Filipino fathers and elders, oftentimes experienced a lack of social agency and were subject to cruel fates at the hands of *machismo pinoys* in their communities.[268]

Many Filipino fathers were determined to protect their daughters' purity from the nearby labor camps full of bachelor *pinoys*, both out of fatherly love and to safeguard their family's reputation. Newsreports found in local white and Filipino American papers described monthly occurrences of kidnappings (*coboy-coboy*), suicidal love-sick *pinoys*, and violent brawls between men over Filipinas.[269] The most extreme cases involved murder committed by local *pinoys* who desperately tried to win the attention of the rare Filipinas in their community. Such violent events over Filipinas made headline news in *The Philippines Mail*. Women of the FWC were also vulnerable to the aggressive attention of unwanted male suitors. FWC club member Marian Malvas experienced physical harassment after refusing the public advances of a local *pinoy* by the name of Marcelino Recelistrino. Recelistrino threatened to kill Malvas if she told her

[268] Headlines that made *The Philippines Mail* during the 1930s include titles and headlines such as "Lovesick Suitors," "Tragic Lovers," "Kidnapping Local Japanese Girls," etc.

[269] Japanese American and Filipino articles on couples committing suicide to be together against the girl's parents wishes during the 1920s-1930s was unfortunately a common theme in the first decade of *The Philippines Mail* publications (1930s). Newspaper Article, "Two Hearts Meet Beyond," *The Philippines Mail*, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

husband, a prominent Filipino in nearby Gonzales, of his alleged advances. Malvas informed the police and had Recelistrino arrested in fear of him acting on his threats.[270]

One of the most infamous crimes committed by "lovesick" *pinoys* in Salinas that made headlines throughout the Fil-Am community of California was the murder of a *pinay* by the name of Carmen de la Pena. In the Spring of 1934 in the Filipino district of Salinas' Chinatown, teenage Filipina American, Carmen de la Pena was shot to death. A jealous and vengeful *pinoy* by the name of Ramos was so enraged after he was refused by Carmen after months of courting and providing her and her family with gifts. Ramos entered Carmen's restaurant and fatally shot de la Pena on the spot. Her father, who tried to protect his daughter from the gunman, was also injured. The suitor in turn immediately took a knife he had on hand and slashed at himself to commit suicide but failed and was taken to the hospital and sent to jail after his recovery.[271] The funeral of the young Filipina, an amateur actress, trained radio singer, and major breadwinner of her family, was attended by over 3,000 individuals of the extended Filipino community on the Central Coast and southern California. The headline coverage, and well-attended nature of the funeral service, reveals not only the extent of the networks produced by Salinas' Filipino hub, but also showcases how treasured the rare and sought after *pinay* was during the pre-war era.[272]

Working-class Filipinas on the Central Coast regularly experienced sexist oversight from their male dominated communities. In order to interject their own civic engagement to their new fledgling ethnic hubs, *pinays* on the Central Coast in nearly identical ways to the New Filipina

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[270] Newspaper Headline, "Laborer Jailed on Girl's Complaint," *The Philippines Mail*, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[271] Newspaper Headline, "Popular Young Girl Killed by Elderly Suitor," *The Philippines Mail*, May 14, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[272] Newspaper Headline, "Victim of Assassin's Bullet," *The Philippines Mail*, May 14th, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California. See Appendix A for further information regarding *The Philippines Mail* coverage of the event.

Generation prior, formed women's clubs as their medium to engage with the cultural and social politics of their new communities. Where the New Filipina peminist generation used clubwork as their platform to discuss independence and suffrage, the first California Filipino Women's Club in Salinas argued their motherwork was essential to more than one household; their own family and their extended family that was the networks of Fil-Am communities of the Central Coast. This chapter will describe what Filipina working class immigrant clubworking looked like and how *pinays* used the same methods of peminist politicking of the New Filipina Generation to support their new Fil-am communities that they took upon themselves to nurture and grow as matriarchs and what Dawn Mabalon describes as "pillars of their community." *Pinays* in their motherwork endeavors to grow and safeguard their communities nonetheless came across *pinoy* concerns that such *pinay* civic engagement was oftentimes moving too far beyond her role as dutiful wife and mother. And similar to the peminist generation only a decade prior, Central Coast *pinays* also used the written word in local Fil-Am media to both formulate their political positions as mothers of the community to challenge the critiques of *pinoy* naysayers.

As both *pinays* and *pinoys* actively participated in the creation and grounding of these early Fil-Am hubs of the Central Coast, *pinays* in their confrontations with *pinoy machismo* culture, found themselves similar to the New Filipina Generation before them also ardently preserving their own political self-worth as a form of resistance to the *pinoy* surveillance culture that loomed over their communities and families. Thus, this chapter illuminates how *pinay* clubwomen and their daughters through their civic and cultural care work, substantiated their potential as leaders alongside fellow *pinoys* therefore demonstrating how peminist politicking helped to inform and establish the emerging Filipina/o/x diaspora; one built on community and Filipina political resistance to colonial and cultural patriarchies.

Pinay Respectability Politics as Tools for Community Stability

"The Filipino Women's Club's Objectives are to cultivate and promote friendliness, cooperation, and understanding among themselves; to contribute to worthy charitable organizations; to encourage their children to pursue higher education by awarding scholarships to deserving graduates; and to preserve and disseminate their Filipino cultural heritage."[273]

-Mission Statement of the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas

The original Filipino Women's Clubs were established by the New Filipina Generation during the early 1920s whose central goal was to secure Philippine suffrage. The branches of the Manila Women's Club and its auxiliary groups that followed promoted solutions for women's issues including family-planning health programs, girls and women's public education, reforms for women and child labor laws, all of which went collectively towards building opportunities for women's civic and political engagement. Their success in prison and labor reform, Red Cross initiatives, food and domestic science programs, increase in their roles in education and university administration, and popular production of women's publications, all undergirded the significance and strengths that Filipina collective organizing could accomplish not only for Filipinas but the betterment of their modernizing island nation. The Filipino Women's Club (FWC) of Salinas (Monterey County) was founded in 1930 and shared many of the goals and methods of civic engagement that the peminist generation initiated.[274] As the oldest Filipina American organization in California established and led by an immigrant, all-women, council,

[273] Filipino Women's Club Mission Statement, "Filipino Women's Club of Salinas Program," 2019.

[274] Susan Aremas and Alex Fabros Jr. shared the only known photograph of the original cohort of Filipinas that founded the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas. The only surviving photograph of the Salinas Filipino Women's Club founders in their *mestiza* Maria Clara gowns, Salinas, early 1930s. Long time community members could only name two of the women photographed; Marina Malbas who served as FWC president from 1944-1948, top right standing in the back row, in a pink *mestiza* gown and Paulina Morales who served as FWC president from 1951-1952, back row standing third from the left in a green *mestiza* gown. The variety in dress designs depicted in this picture speaks to the ethnolinguistic and regional backgrounds of the Filipina club members. Photograph, "The Filipino Women's Club of Salinas," Alex Fabros Jr. Personal Collection, circa. 1930, Salinas, California.

Salinas *pinays* during the Great Depression serve as a prime example that Filipinas despite their small numbers, were an active and visible component of these early Asian American ethnic enclaves despite their absence in Carlos Bulosan's famed semi-autobiographical novel, *America Is In the Heart* (1946), which as a primary resource continues to serve as a window to this time period in Asian American history and literature.

By 1928, Fil-Am communities along the Central Coast had created their own hubs within their local Chinatown districts. In San Luis Obispo's Chinatown, Salinas' Chinatown, Pismo Beach's Asian market area, and Guadalupe's Main Street to name a few, Filipino communities were visible in the markets, pool halls, cafes, restaurants, and barbershops that shared street space with other Chinese and Japanese families and their businesses. But of the many growing agrarian communities and towns, Salinas was the first farming town to have a large enough *pinay* population (at least ten to thirteen married *pinays*) to warrant their own club. By 1928, some of the more established Filipino families in the Salinas-Monterey area were already considering an organization that would help provide a "support system" that was community and charity facing.[275] The FWC of Salinas was initially the idea of the owner and publisher of *The Philippines Mail*, Luis Agudo, who was a popular *pinoy* face and leader of the Central Coast similar to the prominence and recognition of Hilario Moncado of Los Angeles. According to current lifetime members of the Salinas Filipino Women's Club, the first *pinay* president in 1930 was Nora De Asis. Under her guidance, the first ten members of the FWC raised money to help "poor and sick Filipinos with food, clothing, medicine, and hospitalizations" as many *pinoy* farm workers relied on the local *pinays* in the labor camps (sometimes pitched tent communities along the riverside or in the Spreckles camp bunkers) as their nurses because they were often denied

[275] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas, president of the Filipino Women's Club, conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2021.

medical help at the local white hospitals.[276] In true likeness to the original Philippine women's organizations, like the *Asociacion Feminista Filipina* (1905) and *Gota de Leche* (1905) Manila organizations and the Filipino Women's Club branches that evolved from them in Manila, Ilocos Sur, and Samar in 1922, the Salinas FWC's main purpose in its founding carried the same intentions as their predecessors; to "help indigent Filipinos" by providing them with the basic necessities to survive, but this time, in another colonial enterprise that was the unforgiving landscape of California's migrant labor industries.

Traditional Filipino gender roles place the responsibility of family caregiver as women's labor, particularly reserved for the eldest son's wife of the family.[277] As Filipina women were sparse in California, the Filipino Women's Club fully embodied the "culture of obligation" and took on the responsibilities and persona of the dutiful daughter in-laws, acting as the main caregivers to their extended family, the aging *manongs*.[278] The FWC president of 1952, the late Effie Barnachi, was well known. She worked specifically in the Filipino labor camps to help feed the malnourished and underpaid *manongs*, particularly in the Boronda area of West Salinas from the 1930s-1950s.[279] The late Mrs. A.P. Borja also held a major FWC board position as the 1934 assistant treasurer. As a co-owner of one of the handful of Filipino labor camps in the city of Salinas, she was instrumental in the advocacy for the *pinoy* welfare cause. Borja's full time responsibilities outside of the FWC and her own family went to housing and caring for the local

[276] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas and Sherry Aremas conducted by Stacey Salinas, Salinas, 2020. See also Filipino Women's Club, "The Filipino Women's Club of Salinas, Monterey County, Program: In Honor of Our Mothers," Monterey Bay, (March 2023): 4.

[277] Glenda Tibe Bonifacio, *Pinay on the Prairies: Filipino Women and Transnational Identities* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013) 35-38.

[278] According to sociology and Asian studies scholar Glenda T. Bonifacio, the "culture of obligation" is the unsaid agreement that the oldest sister of Filipino families sacrifice their income and time to embrace the maternal obligation of caring for family members in need, typically siblings, extended family such as in laws, and the elderly. Bonifacio, *Pinay on the Prairies: Filipino Women and Transnational Identities*, 36.

[279] FWC Salinas, *Filipino Women's Club 82nd Anniversary Ceremony: Installation of Officers & Initiation of the New Members, 2012-2014* (Monterey: Filipino Women's Club of Salinas in Monterey County), 2-8.

pinoys, who had worked alongside her husband, Adrian Borja, a respected Filipino labor contractor.[280]

Salinas' first-generation Filipina immigrants were hands-on community members and leaders who exemplified the ideal Filipina cultural matriarch. Filipino Women's Club members took on the role of public caregiver by providing proto-welfare to some of the older *pinoys* (ages 45 and older) by pooling their own resources and networks to find suitable housing and work for local Filipino elders who could no longer work in the fields or packing sheds.[281] Club women mothered their extended families, and the broader Central Coast Filipino community, by organizing and managing multiple Filipino community events and bookkeeping via their tireless fundraising. In a similar vein to Mabalon's description of the female community organizers of Stockton, the FWC *pinays* of Salinas, in all their public appearances during the pre-war era, were the matriarchal pillars of the pioneer Fil-Am community of the greater Central Coast.

As social administrators and engineers of local dances, plays, fetes, and parade floats that emphasized themes of *Filipiniana Kultura* (Filipino-Spanish material and public displays of culture), the board members of the first cohorts of the FWC embodied what Hilario Moncado had hoped Filipinas/os in America would come to represent, as modern, cultured, and gracious representatives of their country and people. The FWC *pinays* oversaw the wellbeing of the growing 1.5 and second generation of Filipina/o youths by holding annual college scholarship events, organizing student band ensembles, and managing youth traveling sports teams. One of the original founding members of the FWC, and later their president from 1951-1952, organized

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[280] Hyung-Chan Kim & Cynthia C. Mejia, *Filipinos in America: 1898-1974, A Chronology & Fact Book* (Oceania Publications, 1976), 16. "Christmas Greetings from the Filipino Women's Club," *The Philippines Mail*, December 25, 1932. Newspaper Ads, "Labor Contractor List," *The Philippines Mail*, May 15, 1933, microfilm, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[281] Snippets of short spreads found in *The Philippines Mail* covering the welfare agenda and community volunteer work of the Filipino Women's Club during the Depression Era. See Appendix A for more articles pertaining to the FWC community outreach.

and taught the Filipino Youth Drum and Bugle Corps, which under her guidance, became a marching, singing, and dancing band and troup. She would go on to transform the Filipino Youth Drum and Bugle Corps into a youth-centered space where she taught courses on Filipino cooking, Philippine languages, music and folk songs, and other traditional dances from the islands so that the next generation "would not forget their roots."[282]

Education was deemed by all *pinays* and *pinoys* as both essential and a privilege and thus an opportunity for social mobility Filipinas/os both in the Philippines and the United States. Hence the scholarship program and the Filipino youth programming offered by the early cohorts of the FWC became one of their major fundraising venues, and still is to this day. Prominent members of the FWC would regularly host visiting *pensionadas/os* who were studying in San Francisco, Berkeley, and the local junior colleges and trade schools. FWC club members and the *pensionadas/os* saw education as an opportunity to "increase awareness and knowledge about the Philippines" in a positive light to American society while also encouraging *pinay/oy* youths to esteem for a life and career beyond the drudgery and instability of farm work.[283] As community matriarchs, FWC members annually promoted the local scholarships they offered and the many accomplishments of the young Filipinas/os attending university in Fil-Am newspapers across the state while also helping to fundraise to keep the college youth Filipino club activities going throughout the Depression years and even during the war.[284]

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[282] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas and Sherry Aremas conducted by Stacey Salinas, Salinas, 2019.

[283] Albert A. Acena, "'Invisible Minority' No More: Filipino Americans in San Mateo County," *La Peninsula: The Journal of the San Mateo Historical Society*, Vol xxxvvii, No 1 (2008): 8.

[284] The Filipino Club appears in most of the yearbooks from 1929 to 1937. "School boys" or "Fountain Boys" were the names that were given to pensionados prior to the 1940s. San Mateo County. "the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934…it is likely that many of the Filipino students attending local high schools from the late 1930s on were children of first-generation Filipino immigrants and probably the same could be said for Filipinos attending the junior college from the 1940s onwards, until the immigration patterns changed in the later 1960s." https://historysmc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/La-Peninsula-Filipino-Summer-2008.pdf. 8-11.

By helping the *pensionadas/os* and Bridge Generation (the second generation, *pinays/oys* born in the United States during the 1930s-1950s) in their scholarly finances, the FWC matriarchs fulfilled multiple roles of expected affective labor approved by the *pinoy machismo* culture that dominated these early Fil-Am hubs. The women of the FWC epitomized the ideal Filipina mother and teacher. As Moncado argued in his philosophical text *The Divinity of Woman*, women were the natural teachers to their families and countrymen.[285] His gendered philosophy on women's work very much fell in line with America's Thomasite and domestic science education which instructed and organized Filipinas to take on a primary education particularly for Filipina girls that would set them on the path of becoming public school teachers and administrators. Women, as described in the previous chapters, according to America's department of war who crafted these early educational programs in the Philippines, were the most naturally inclined to have the emotional stamina and best kind of teaching, one that blended mothering and diligent oversight, for the fledgling Philippine Republic. Such motherwork in their community's education in the greater Monterey County was seen and understood as part of the FWC's roles in the Fil-Am network along the Central Coast and they took it upon themselves to serve as diligent mother-instructors who instilled in their new community Filipino values and traditions. And similar to the Filipina Feminist Association and original Filipino Women's Club branches in the Philippines who also took it upon themselves to teach health, family planning, and reading programs to youths in the provinces and barrios who did not have access to the city public schools, the FWC members crafted their own youth clubs and after school programming to help their community thrive. Such civic motherwork helped to establish a respectable status for local Filipinas/os in rural Central Coast California through their tireless clubwork. Through

[285] Moncado, *Divinity of Woman*, 22, 33.

the FWC's leadership, "mothering," and supervision of the ethnic hub of the Salinas Valley, the first-generation Filipinas of Salinas laid the foundation upon which the earliest Filipino American centers and communities would emerge.

How female leadership was ultimately decided during the formative years of these early clubs and women's groups that the FWC founding members established during the early 1930s was very much in part based on traditional Philippine cultural practices of kinship and marriage relations, what Filipina historian and Southeast Asian Women's Studies scholar, Mina Roces defines as "kinship politics," where a Filipina's unofficial power was guaranteed due to her romantic and/or marriage relations to men of power, both political and economic.[286] Although such kinship politics continue to be undervalued in Philippine society and often sneered at or used as a means to criticize Filipinas in positions of power, Filipina leaders and business owners since the Spanish period have made headway in gaining political leverage due to such informal kinship-political relations.[287] The value and emphasis placed on one's marriage and tribal name and ancestry were the marks of social and cultural capital that the founding FWC members had. Within kinship-political relationships, Filipino men hold visible political power, whereas women as wives, sisters, mothers, daughters, and mistresses also can hold power in relation to politic-making. Such reliances on kinship networks, as Roces explains, had ties to the early Spanish period, as Filipino women were no longer socially allowed the same marriage power as men (like during the precolonial era) and thus were forced to rely on their sexual relations with men to survive the imbalanced gender dynamics under Spanish hetero-patriachal settler colonialism.[288]

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[286] Mina Roces, *Women, Power, and Kinship Politics: Female Power in Post-War Philippines* (Manila: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2000), 30.
[287] Mina Roces, *Women, Power, and Kinship Politics: Female Power in Post-War Philippines* (Manila: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2000), 214.
[288] Roces, *Women, Power, and Kinship Politics*, 7.

As Roces argues "women through kinship networks thus were as political agents, not less significant, but harder to map" which also explains why, from Carlos Bulosan's perspective during the 1930s as he was crafting his semi-autobiographical novel, Filipinas are absent in his storytelling of the Fil-Am experience during the Great Depression.[289]

Roces also describes other older Asian diasporic cultural practices that Filipinas utilized to enter male dominated spaces to ensure their survival. Women exercised great power as "outside symbols of power," a status unique to Southeast Asian bilateral kinship/marriage relationships allowing women a higher status within non-legal spaces such as their communities and households. In this sense, Filipinas even prior to the colonial period were operating their own political power as a support system in kinship politics, and were the unofficial go-between and behind-the-scenes actors that, through kinship relations, "relegated unofficial power rather than official power."[290] Thus, by applying a diasporic and Third World feminist lens to the sometimes invisible and subversive ways Filipinas entered historically male dominated spaces, like that of the early Fil-Am hubs of the Central Coast, through their kinship and sexual relations with male leaders, both the New Filipina peminist generation and the *pinay* FWC members practiced alternative ways through women's club and motherwork to secure their positions and in turn, secure the survival of their communities under empire across the emerging Filipina/o/x diaspora during the first half the twentieth century.

FWC club members' public and socio-economic reputations were directly informed by their husbands' higher labor status as contractors, foremen, or business owners.[291] Charter

[289] Roces, *Women, Power, and Kinship Politics*, 2.
[290] Mina Roces, *Kinship Politics in Postwar Philippines: The Lopez Family, 1946-2000* (De La Salle University Press, 2001), 13.
[291] The labor camps operated based off a social hierarchy according to one's occupation in the field (labor camp owner/labor contractor held the highest wage and position, camp cooks and camp caretakers were next in wage and

member and 1950 club president of the FWC, Paulina Morales, was the wife of Clemente Morales, a popular labor contractor in Monterey County. Not only was she one of the original charter members of the Filipino Women's Club, but was instrumental in the community projects that the club hosted. She served as the community's traditional cultural dance and music teacher, was the lead representative of the Filipino Community Church, and was a matron sponsor and representative for the *Caballeros de Dimas Alang*, a major *pinoy* fraternal organization recognized statewide and in the Philippines from 1906-1960s.[292] Titled as the "Queen of the Club," Morales is still remembered by FWC current president, Susan Aremas, as a "beautiful hostess, very friendly, highly respected, very dignified, and upped the scale on the presentation of the Filipino Women's Club."[293]

Other FWC influential club members include Mrs. Valentina Reyes whose husband, Ernesto Reyes, also held a prominent role in Salinas' Filipino community as a labor contractor. Valentina's leadership, similar to Mrs. Paulina Morales, directly correlated with her husband's labor status. With her husband's reputation to help boost her own distinction, Valentina was voted in and served as a FWC president during the earlier years of the club's founding. Valentina and her husband co-owned a labor camp located on Salinas' Sun Street, two blocks away from Chinatown. There, Mrs. Reyes was the representative face and center of the camp, acting as both house manager and mother to the Filipino field workers under her roof who ranged from ages 16-60.[294] Valentina provided the cooking and cleaning, managed the bookkeeping of

seniority, and the last, largest group were irrigation workers, pickers, and lettuce thinners). FWC board members also followed a hierarchy of authority based on their husband's labor status.

[292] FWC Salinas, *Filipino Women's Club 82nd Anniversary Ceremony, 2012-2014*, 2.

[293] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas conducted by Stacey Salinas, Salinas, April 8th, 2018.

[294] See Salinas Monterey County Census Records, "Filipino Camp On Sun Street," *Department of Commerce-Bureau of the Census*, 1940, 8. Many of the lettuce thinners who live at the Filipino labor camp on Sun Street are well into their 40s and 50s.

the establishment, and looked after the bachelor *pinoys* her camp housed who were far from their families in the Philippines checking in on them as a surrogate sister or mother.[295] When Valentina's husband passed away during the late 1950s, she continued the upkeep of the camp, and even provided educational opportunities to the older *pinoy* laborers till the camp buildings were forced to be shut down, cleared out, and demolished due to urban renewal projects of the 1960s.[296]

Salinas Filipina women amidst the labor disputes of the 1930s were consistent support systems for the *pinoy* farm workers. The Filipino Women's Club (FWC) members, in many ways, served as social workers for the Filipino camp laborers often as caregivers to the older Filipino workers. Other *pinays* like Angeles Monrayo were camp cooks and assistants who helped to prepare the meals and rooms that the *manongs* stayed at throughout the migrant labor seasons. Monrayo and her husband (Alejandro Salvador Raymundo) beginning in 1930 travelled the Central Coast, following the migrant labor crops; Monrayo worked in the kitchen and camps, feeding and looking after small Filipino farm crews, while her husband, who was a jack of all trades, sold tailored suits, and worked as both a labor crew leader and electrician thus having a very prominent role in the labor camps they worked in.[297]

Monrayo eventually became the head cook at a Delano labor camp earning only one dollar ($20.29/day) a day along with meals for her two children and herself, while her husband paid for his meals through his own wages at the camp. Not only did Monrayo's domestic and affective labor contribute significantly to her family's income, but it also helped to boost the morale of the Filipino bachelors who saw *pinays* in the United States as their surrogate sisters

[295] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas and Sherry Aremas conducted by Stacey Salinas, April 8th, 2018, Salinas.
[296] Interview with Susan Aremas, April 8th, 2018. Salinas. Paul H. Caswell, *The Need for Urban Renewal in Salinas: a Pictorial Essay* (Salinas: The Salinas Californian,1957).
[297] Angeles Monrayo, 4-6.

and family. Monrayo thus was part of some of the major familial dynamics relied upon in *pinoy* dominated spaces like the labor camps. She was part of a power couple team, one managing the rest area and emotional needs for the Filipino farm workers while her husband was a trusted *pare* (male bosom friend) crewmember in the fields. The gendered labor and social influence *pinays* like Monrayo performed in the early Fil-Am bachelor sites were rarely credited in the formation of Little Manilas in Bulosan's *America Is In the Heart* especially in rural areas like the Central Coast. Monrayo and her family would move again in the late 1930s following the migrant crop seasons. But again, once there, Monrayo would work in the fields alongside her two children and like the handful of Filipinas in the Salinas Valley, she too would join and contribute to the Filipino Women's Club using yet again the influence of her marriage to her influential husband to contribute to the social networks and needs of the Fil-Am communities she engaged with.

Like many other *pinays* in agrarian labor spaces, they were outnumbered by Filipino men. Filipinas, similar to Japanese and Chinese American women during the early twentieth century, could not work outside of their community hubs for higher paid "skilled" jobs due to racial prejudices and segregation. Being in their own community hub meant that *pinays* were constantly subjected to *machismo* attitudes about women's roles as caregivers and domestic workers. Although they served a crucial component of the labor camps as caregivers and cooks, *pinays* were criticized for wanting to perform other jobs within the camps. Women's work in the fields, if available, paid significantly less, often less than half the rate that men earned. Men earned twenty five cents an hour for thinning lettuce, whereas the women and children were relegated to pulling weeds for ten cents an hour. Monrayo argued with the camp boss to let the women thin the lettuce so that she could earn the same as the men. The camp boss responded to her suggestion that women should not be working in men's spaces. Monrayo suggested that the

Filipinas also wear baggy men's clothes so as not to distract or catch the attention of the farmer and landowners who were very strict in maintaining the gendered segregated workspace so as to preserve the wage gap secured by the assigned men and women's labor roles. Monrayo and her fellow Filipinas donned men's clothing and soon caught up with the rhythm of thinning lettuce. Monrayo recalled, "We showed them we were as good as the men. We kept up with the men."[298] Monrayo and her crew were eventually caught for impersonating as men, but they proved the camp boss wrong and he gave in to letting pinays work as thinners alongside the men for the same wage. Monrayo Thus the Filipino Club Women, and more broadly speaking, *pinays* who would be remembered fondly as the *manang* generation, were multifaceted in their skill sets, were major income providers, and contributed to the growth of their pocket Fil-Am communities while challenging and gradually transforming rigid cultural gender norms.

Pinay Power: Reproducing and Negotiating Filipino Politics of Marriage

Although many of the first group of *pinays* to settle on the Central Coast were of working class backgrounds, not at all like the elite Filipinas who made up all of the committees of the original women's clubs in the Philippines, their marriages to *pinoy* leaders in their communities and labor camps (often they were wives of foremen, labor camp managers/owners, or business owners in Salinas' Chinatown) afforded them social capital amongst Monterey County community members. A Filipina's power and prominence was traditionally tied to her family, if not her husband's, and in some cases her lover's, name. Such relationships that spoke to kinship-power were reproduced in the early Fil-Am hubs like that of Salinas and became one of the cultural kinship practices that continued to invoke one's social prominence. These values

[298] Angeles Monrayo, *Tomorrow's MemoriesA Diary 1924-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 10.

placed on marriage was how power was understood, transplanted, and reproduced in America that Filipina/o immigrants were familiar with and could thus use as their foundation for building their communities in California similar to what they had known in the Philippines.

The leaders of the older New Filipina Peminist Generation who helped establish the first women's clubs in the Philippines from 1906-1922 indeed also had the social capital guaranteed to them not only through wealth granted to them because many were of the landed elite, but most importantly because of the socio-political weight the names of their husbands had during the American Occupation Era. Madame Sofia De Veyra, for example, was the first Filipina dean of the Philippine Normal University in 1906, co-founded the first nursing school in Iloilo in 1907, was one of the central faces of Filipina suffrage alongside Pura Villanueva Kalaw who traveled regularly to the White House to advocate for Philippine suffrage and independence during the 1910s, and would become one of the most notable presidents of the Manila National Federation of Women's Club in 1921.

Both Pura Villanueva Kalaw and De Veyra were married to very powerful men (Kalaw was married to Teodoro Kalaw, prominent nationalist publisher and lawyer, and eventual secretary to serve under the Philippine Assembly Majority Floor Party leader, and later Philippine President, Manuel Quezon) which culturally substantiated and without question or criticism, supported and naturally led to their leadership positions within their own female circles. Sofia De Veyra who despite her own family inheritance and education was known to Manila elite as a community advocate and social worker. But once she was married to Jaime C. De Veyra, the Resident Commissioner of the Philippines Islands in America's 65th-67th Congresses and premier leader of the *Nacionalista* Party of the Philippines, her influence only grew further both at a national and international level allowing her to advocate and enact more

women's programming at the social and civic levels thus granting herself unofficial socio-cultural power through the tradition of kinship politics.

Filipinas in both the Philippines and in the United States through kinship politics were able to advocate and negotiate for multiple needs that they saw their communities were in want of. With their unofficial positions of power, persuasion, and motherwork advocacy, both New Filipina peminists and *pinays* who continued the cultural and gendered practices of kinship politics, Filipinas were then naturally what Moncado envisioned as the most apt to manage delicately the social and cultural politics that Filipino men were stereotyped and assumed to be too aggressive to oversee.

Amidst the labor disputes of the 1930s, Salinas Filipinas created support systems for Filipino migrant laborers of the Salinas Valley. They also acted as representatives and middle-(wo)men for the Filipino farm workers during highly charged moments of labor disputes, strikes, and riots that ensued in the 1930s in the broader Monterey County.[299] The FWC founders and committee members, in matching the ideal Filipina image as mother, nurturer, and humble hostess, operated as key mediators between the *pinoy* union members and white labor bosses and planters during the Central Coast's violent period of the antecedents of what would eventually become the Farm Labor Movement. Under Thomasite schooling as described in the previous chapters, the domestic science courses made available to Filipinas instilled a gendered rhetoric of implying that women, Filipinas, were naturally inclined due to their being of the patient and fairer sex, to serve as mother-like figures who embodied the responsibility of rearing and mentoring the next generation of obedient colonial subjects by teaching them values that spoke

[299]Article Headlines, "Club Women and Contractors Sit at Festal Board," & "The F.L.U. Dance," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1933 & February 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California. See Appendix A for further article information.

to Christian moral authority, and thus the tenets that made up American democracy. Eiichiro Azum also describes a similar gendered caretaker and motherwork role that Japanese American women during this same period took on for their ethnic hubs in California. Japanese women who were part of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and Society of American Friends of Japanese Women (Yu Ai Kai) in their Little Tokyo districts, similar to the *pinay* generation also donned the intertwined roles of moral authority figures and cultural matriarchs. In that role as cultural bridges, brokers, and teachers, Issei and Nisei women also helped in mediating farm labor disputes between Japanese growers, Filipino growers, and white planters. By helping to build bridges of communication amongst every tier of the labor hierarchy in the agribusiness industry of the Salinas Valley, the Filipino Women's Club became a symbol of goodwill to the larger Filipino farm laborer workforce of Monterey County.[300]

Filipino-American owned and distributed newspapers in Salinas, like the *Ilocano News* and *The Philippines Mail*, which covered the Watsonville race riot (1930), the bombing of Filipino labor camps in Salinas, and the labor disputes of the 1930s (wages, labor contractor/foremen and grower frictions, strikebreakers, etc.), described the Salinas Filipino Women's Club as central to the fight for improved labor conditions. Indeed, the FWC consistently advocated for *pinoy* worker benefits and compensation. From fundraising for welfare programs for the older *pinoys*, arguing for improved health services, housing, retirement, and hosting events where the conversation for better pay for Filipino pickers was gently brought to the negotiations table. In 1933, FWC members held a town event where labor bosses, planters, and Filipino workers were all honored for their contribution to the agrarian industry that was

[300] Newspaper Article, "Highlights at Grower Dinner Confab," *The Philippines Mail*, 1934, microfilm, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

growing in the Salinas Valley. By honoring and acknowledging all tiers of the labor hierarchy of the farming community, Filipinas were able to momentarily appease all of the major male egos and leaders that represented the farming industry in Salinas even going so far as having the FWC president at the time, Mrs. Morales, served as the "chair(wo)man of the evening's gathering" so that the men would not directly have to butt heads as they did when on strike.[301] At a 1934 "grower confab" dinner, FWC members including Mrs. Rosita Flores and Mrs. F. Malbas were given an encore and lauded for their honorable roles as hostesses and entertainers. FWC *pinays* successfully accomplished two goals at the confab dinner: Firstly, being able to use their positions in the Monterey County community to gather local Filipina/o talents (like the Fil-Am jazz bands including the Mai Blues and Malayan Syncopators) to entertain at the dinner making the event a cultural celebration, but also secondly, to ease racial and class tensions between white growers and Filipino farm workers. At the dinner, where the white Salinas mayor, growers, labor bosses, and Filipino pickers were present, the FWC's performance of Filipino folk songs and dance, in combination with their role as courteous hosts and cultural brokers, made the front-page news of *The Philippines Mail* and was described as surprisingly a "very enjoyable gathering" where community members let go for one evening racial tensions and animosities as they danced, shared meals, and enjoyed the cultural heritage and traditions of the local Fil-Am communities.[302]

Even if only for one night, *pinays* used simultaneously their kinship politics ensured by their successful marriages and their emphasis on their inherent "gentle nature" to negotiate and

[301] Unknown Authors, "Club Women and Contractors Sit at Festal Board," & "The F.L.U. Dance," Article headlines of the *Philippines Mail* praising the Filipino Women's Club role with local laborers, circa. February 1933 & February 1934. Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas CA.

[302] "The F.L.U. Dance," Article headlines of the *Philippines Mail* praising the Filipino Women's Club role with local laborers, circa. February 1933 & February 1934. Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas CA.

host male egos that held the reins of the agrarian industry that *pinoy* laborers depended on for their livelihoods. Such dinners were small, but valuable, successes in both easing labor and race relations in particularly racially charged times. The FWC was so successful in these events, that they would continue to host annual Salinas town events, not just Fil-Am celebrations. Thus, the early Salinas Fil-Am community relied on *pinay* negotiations and cultural broker practices to survive which in turn also reinforced misogynistic interpretations of *pinay* femininity; that the gentle mother-like Filipina was the ideal cultural broker that could naturally calm the natural response of hypermasculine *pinoy* pride that regularly violently resisted, and rightly so, their dominant white male bosses and overseers.

Filipinas of the FWC built a positive reputation for the Fil-Am community during a time where Filipinos were scapegoated partially for the economic slump and moral ruin of the United States. In the aftermath of the violent Salinas labor riots of 1934 and 1937, during WWII, and well into present day Fil-Am events in Salinas, the mayors of Salinas continued to attend the annual anniversaries of FWC's founding as honored guests where they served as keynote speakers who praised the *pinays* as both perfect hostesses and valued community members of the Salinas Valley.[303] Tensions between Filipino farmhands and Mexican labor groups were also high during the 1930s, as white planters tended to hire one over the other depending on which group was striking during the season. The FWC also hosted meetings in the Salinas Valley inviting both Mexican labor organizers and Filipino unions members to discuss potential joint strikes, serving again as cultural brokers to both racially marginalized communities.[304] The FWC women therefore were crucial liaisons between the radical Filipino laborers of Monterey County

[303] Newspaper Article, "Highlights at Grower Dinner Confab," *The Philippines Mail*, 1934.
[304] Newspaper Headline, "Goodwill is Motto at Meet Vegetable Kings," *The Philippines Mail*, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

and the broader multi-ethnic Salinas community. Their middle-(wo)men efforts helped to lessen racial tensions between the white and Filipino communities and improved, even if momentarily, the reputation of their *pinoy* dominated community.[305]

Other Asian American communities similarly utilized the female caregiver roles to bolster racial and labor relations. Japanese American women played crucial roles in forging alliances between white planters, Japanese growers, and non-union Filipino pickers during the 1930s. The traditional interpretation of femininity, what Eiichiro Azuma describes as seemingly "nonpolitical, nonthreatening, and incapable of scheming, rendered Japanese American women as far more effective at public relations than any man."[306] The juxtaposition of the colonial fetishization and depiction of the Filipina as meek and obedient in contrast to the hypermasculine union aggressor that *pinoys* were regularly associated with, allowed Filipinas opportunities to negotiate on behalf of their *pinoy* peers to white planters. Although Filipinas were limited to the "feminized realm of family and culture," Filipinas on the Central Coast were able to expand their social power both within and beyond their ethnic hubs.[307] Through their "goodwill" and other community efforts under the guise of women's social events and club work, the FWC defined and reified the priorities and propriety expected of a Filipina in America.[308] Through their social club work, *pinays* were able to establish their community's cultural legitimacy to white

[305] Newspaper Headline, "Highlights at Grower-Labor Dinner Confab," *The Philippines Mail*, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[306] Eiichiro Azuma on Japanese women as cultural brokers and moral reform leaders, Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 200, 201.

[307] Eiichiro Azuma on Japanese women as cultural brokers and moral reform leaders, Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 143.

[308] "Goodwill is Motto at Meet Vegetable Kings," *The Philippines Mail*, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

audiences on the Central Coast which ultimately became a major tenet of *pinay* intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic politics through World War II.

Pushback to Pinay Success and Leadership

But despite the value and respect given to *pinay* club members for their gendered labor as caretakers and caregivers for their communities, *pinoy machismo* cultural tendencies and desire to be the fathers and heads of their extended households (which was the Fil-Am community) grew stronger as *pinay* social power also grew. Thus, capping *pinay* political agency within their communities became a vocal and visible signifier that the cultural and unofficial political influence of *pinays* was indeed growing and expanding beyond the borders of their ethnic hubs. If *pinoys* could not control how white America treated, stereotyped, and ostracized them as a brown oversexed menace, then they could at least manage and stroke their *machismo* cultural power by controlling their *pinay* community members.

Seeing Filipinas as delicate community treasures to protect and oversee, *pinoys* on the Central Coast went to extreme measures to protect "vulnerable" Filipinas. Some *pinoy* fathers took on too conservative a stance in raising their daughters in agrarian California. Guadalupe Fil-Am native, Margie Talaugon, recalled her grandfather never allowed his daughters to attend any social gatherings sponsored by the Fil-Am community.[309] Her stern grandfather strongly handled his daughters under the traditional colonial Spanish upbringing "of breaking the spirit of a child

[309]Oral History Interview, "Margie Talaugon on the Spanish Influence on Family Dynamics and Eloping," *Re/Collection Project: An Ethnic Studies Memory Project of California's Central Coast*, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Special Collections and Archives at the Robert E. Kennedy Library. Interview conducted May 21st, 2013. The Re/Collecting Project. California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

to make them obedient."[310] He confined his daughters to the home and they "were not allowed to go to dances and parties."[311]

Upon hearing from a fellow neighbor that Margie's mother, Margaret Lopez, had plans to elope with her future husband, a local *pinoy* in Alton, California by the name of Serapio Cabatuan, Margie's grandfather waited for Serapio to sneak into their home in the dead of night. When Serapio entered the back door, Serapio and his new bride were immediately chased by Margie's grandfather who held a machete in hand.[312] The young couple ran across a levy and narrowly escaped with the help of a friend who drove them to a chapel to be married.[313] Margie's aunts also would elope and run away from their father's strict household. Her parents would eventually settle in Guadalupe, another Filipino agrarian hub that in 1935 would house the headquarters and fourth branch of the Filipino Labor Union originally founded in Salinas.[314]

Other *pinays* like Angeles Monrayo recalled that her own father had threatened his daughters with guns if they chose husbands not to his liking. "...An angry Tatay (father) had been waiting for them at the (labor) camp with a gun. (Monrayo) believes he would have shot them, remembering how violent he was when he beat up Nanay (grandmother) and went looking

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[310] Oral History Interview, "Margie Talaugon on the Spanish Influence on Family Dynamics and Eloping," *Re/Collection Project: An Ethnic Studies Memory Project of California's Central Coast*, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Special Collections and Archives at the Robert E. Kennedy Library. Interview conducted May 21st, 2013. The Re/Collecting Project. California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

[311] "Margie Talaugon on the Spanish Influence on Family Dynamics and Eloping," *Re/Collection Project: An Ethnic Studies Memory Project of California's Central Coast*, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Special Collections and Archives at the Robert E. Kennedy Library. Interview conducted May 21st, 2013. The Re/Collecting Project. California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

[312] A machete is a thick metal blade that is traditionally used to cut sugar cane in the Philippines. Many Filipino migrant workers carried such blades using them both in the sugar cane fields of Hawaii and as weapons for defense. Margie Talaugon's mother's family would first sail to Hawaii for plantation work and would eventually settle in the Central Coast of California.

[313] "Margie Talaugon on the Spanish Influence on Family Dynamics and Eloping," *Re/Collection Project: An Ethnic Studies Memory Project of California's Central Coast*, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Special Collections and Archives at the Robert E. Kennedy Library. May 21st, 2013.

[314] Stuart Marshal Jamieson. "Labor unionism in the American agriculture." Wisconsin: Arno Press Inc. 1979.

for them with a gun."[315] The strict households Filipina American women experienced and often were held hostage in during the Depression Era speaks to the transplanting of traditional Filipino *machismo* family dynamics. Filipino households became far more conservative in American environments as a direct response to not only the gender ratio imbalance and Fil-Am obsession with its women, but also as an alternative extreme measure to salvage Filipino men's masculine pride and power in a foreign landscape where Filipino men were devalued by American society.

Male obsessive attention towards Central Coast *pinays* was performed in many ways. Though much of it was unwanted and outright dangerous, there are also many examples of their presence being celebrated by the men in their community. Indeed, *The Philippines' Mail* covered every topic pertaining to Filipinas in California, all of which was relayed to the greater Filipinx American diaspora, including states like Louisiana, Washington, and New York. Everything about *pinays* was covered in the news, including their birthdays, baptisms, pageants, high school and college graduations, weddings, and, in some instances, even their bouts with the common cold.[316] But such immense adoration only led to further protective measures. Thus, it was due both to unwanted advances and an outpouring of public adoration from their *pinoy* peers that Filipinas on the Central Coast were subjected to constant inspection, surveillance, and public criticism.

The Philippines Mail, for the first decade (1930s) of its weekly publications, dedicated one page of its eight-page spread to *pinay* issues and interests. A Q&A column titled "Ask Aunt Drearie" headed by a Salinas Filipina author by the pen name of "Aunt Drearie" operated as a

[315] Angeles Monrayo, *Tomorrow's Memories: A Diary, 1924-1928*. 5.
[316] Newspaper Article, "Young Wife of Filipino Dies," *The Philippines Mail*, February 27, 1933, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California. Newspaper Article, "Divorce Asked by Salinas Filipino," *The Philippines Mail*, September 24, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

social forum where Filipinas/os from all over California could ask about love, family, courting, and other tips concerning Filipina/o social norms. Other sections found on the women's page include short love stories, love poems written by heartbroken and homesick *pinoys*, and a gossip column. The gossip column, titled "Spotter," managed by a Filipina with the pen name of "Miss Spotter," highlighted the social events of the Salinas Filipina/o elite, rumors of Filipina/o locals' love interests and hearsay of public displays of flirting seen at dance halls, restaurants, the Asian movie theater, and other establishments. *The Mail's* attention and coverage to its local *pinays'* public outings and performances insinuate how careful Filipinas had to be in demonstrating appropriate self-conduct as they were subject to the constant gaze of their community.

The largest sections of the women's page exhibited monthly opinion pieces as to how Filipina women beyond the broader Monterey County should conduct themselves in public and in their own homes. Aunt Drearie on a weekly, to later monthly, basis from 1933-1937 answered questions primarily regarding appropriate Filipina/o behavior in courtship and marriage. The advice expert was keen to warn *pinays* to "be on guard" with Filipino men, avoid appearing too eager and flirty otherwise risk tarnishing their social reputation.[317] Aunt Drearie also suggested to many of her concerned Filipina housewives, like Mrs. Nellie G. who believed *pinoy* husbands preferred younger prettier Filipinas, that the well to do *pinoys* preferred simple loyal wives as their ideal Filipina mate.[318] In her 1933 November column, Aunt Drearie described the ideal Filipina as, "a little woman working at home possesses more lasting beauty and endearing

[317] Newspaper Column, Aunt Drearie, "In the Valley of the Moonstruck," *The Philippines Mail*, November 1933, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.
[318] Newspaper Column, Aunt Drearie, "In the Valley of the Moonstruck," *The Philippines Mail*, February 12, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

charms than all the rest [of the girls] put together" which in turn confirmed and supported the traditional expectations of Filipina femininity that *pinoy machismo* culture preferred.[319]

Aunt Drearie's column throughout the 1930s answered letters from worried Filipina mothers trying to rein in their husband's loving attention, wanderlust *pinay* daughters who wanted to break away from their strict households, and lovesick obsessive *pinoys*. Many of the letters addressed to Aunt Drearie came from different towns that stretched beyond the Fil-Am community of Salinas. Her love advice on a weekly basis reached readers throughout Northern and Central California, including towns like Vallejo, Stockton, Merced, Reedley, Dinuba, Marysville, Gonzales, Watsonville, San Francisco, Guadalupe, and Bakersfield. Her column's regional stretch thus showcased the growing presence of a *pinay* community network, but most importantly, that the larger Fil-Am community of California also were plagued by *pinoy* obsessiveness, or what Dawn Mabalon describes as the "culture of surveillance," of Filipinas.[320]

Similarly in Stockton's Little Manila, *pinays* experienced regular scrutiny from their community members, from both *pinay* and *pinoy* townsfolk. In the case of Cecilia Navarro, a *pinay* Stockton resident, after spurning the affections of a local *pinoy* farm worker by the name of Pablo Bustamante, she was violently beaten and buried alive by *pinay* community members who followed the orders of the *pinoy* leader Navarro had rejected.[321] Despite Navarro being known to other community and family members as a loyal wife and dutiful mother, the opinions, false slander, and *machismo* sway of Bustamante was enough for Stockton *pinays* to turn on

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[319] Newspaper Column, Aunt Drearie, "Ask Aunt Drearie" *The Philippines Mail*, November 27, 1933, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[320] Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, *Little Manila Is In the Heart: The Making of the Filipina/o American Community in Stockton* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 160.

[321] "Witnesses Relate Inside Facts About Burial Woman Reported Beaten and Tortured by Men and Women Before Cast Alive Into Grave Wrathful Filipino Lodge Sisters Impose Terrible Penalty On Member Accused of Indiscretions By Persistent Male Gossiping Tatler," *The Philippines Mail*, April 10, 1933, courtesy of Alex Fabros Jr.'s Personal Collection.

Navarro in order to uphold the patriarchal power dynamics of their growing Fil-Am community. Similar to the violent and obsessive nature *pinays* were witness to on the Central Coast, including the murder of Carmen de la Pena in Salinas, Filipinas had to constantly be on their guard and careful of their interactions with their male peers, lest town members and the broader Filipino coastal community find out their social missteps via gossip and the weekly well received Filipino-American columns found in *The Philippines Mail.*

Aunt Drearie's helpful hints on how to behave like a "proper and respectable Filipina" in America confirmed the surveillant presence of a *pinoy* critical gaze that regularly spewed patriarchal rhetoric aimed at the small trove of Filipinas of the *pinay* generation during the interwar era. Male criticisms of *pinays* deemed as not meeting the ideal Maria Clara standard were common topics in *The Philippines Mail.* Editor of *The Mail*, Luis Agudo, warned on his front-page column in January of 1934 that Filipinas out in public, who sought to act as independently as men, undoubtedly neglected their other larger responsibilities as mother, daughter, and domestic housekeeper. If Filipinas acted too politically active, he continued, "they will forget their responsibilities" as to the upkeep of their home, family, and the rearing of their children.[322]

At the same time Agudo's column was released, the Filipino Labor Union's popularity and increasing activity and strike momentum had already rallied many local Filipina and Filipino locals to participate in their cause for fair wages. Pinays like the FWC members were also participating in union politics, particularly as middle (wo)men. Their presence at union and other civic engagements in Salinas for pinoys like Agudo threatened the social power dynamics expected of *pinays*. Agudo publicly criticized how *pinays* "dragged their female family members

[322] Newspaper Column, Luis Agudo, "Bamboo Breezes: Chaperones Wanted," *The Philippines Mail*, January 8, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

to public and political spaces" in the Filipino community.[323] Politically aware *pinays* according to Agudo indulged far too much in themselves rather than their family, that they relished the idea of being noticed out and about in public in male spaces. Agudo joked that Filipinas who entered "men's affairs" believed themselves independent of their husbands and therefore, in the eyes of the rest of the Fil-Am community, neglected their obligations of motherhood. According to Agudo, politically active *pinays* would only incur "debt upon their husbands" as their actions of being "out in society" could only make feminine creatures feel even more self-conscious and thus inclined to want for more "dresses and facial treatments."[324] Such women, Agudo commented, required "chaperones" who could keep a watchful eye, and scold them if necessary to avoid disappointment, disapproval, and oversight of their familial responsibilities.[325]

The opinions of male society critics like Agudo were common and their criticisms and observations of local Filipinas in other cases resulted in very severe condemnations of the Filipina American woman. Filipinas according to Miguel Ignacio, a *Mail* reporter, in his column "Squints" described Filipina women broadly as rather "unreasonable, incompatible" when engaging in political and highbrow conversations.[326] Another columnist by the name of A. Q. Arellano described Filipinas, in a similar aggressive tone, as individuals prone to snobbery because of the spotlight attention Filipinas received for their rarity on the Central Coast.[327] Arellano shared Ignacio's opinion on women as simple minded, and unfit for life outside of the

[323] Agudo, "Bamboo Breezes: Chaperones Wanted," *The Philippines Mail*, January 8, 1934.
[324] Agudo, "Bamboo Breezes: Chaperones Wanted," *The Philippines Mail*, January 8, 1934.
[325] Agudo, "Bamboo Breezes: Chaperones Wanted," *The Philippines Mail*, January 8, 1934.
[326] Newspaper Articles & Columns, Miguel Ignacio, "Squints," *The Philippines Mail*, November 1933, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.
[327] Newspaper Articles & Columns, A.Q. Arellano, "Sidelines," *The Philippines Mail*, November 1933, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

household, and relayed to his Filipina/o audiences that " [Filipina] Girls are a funny race, and there is no end for them except to get married."[328]

The compounded issues of an imbalanced gender ratio, white criticisms of the Filipino communities as an economic drain and sexual brown menace, and the pressures of adhering to traditional Filipino-Catholic informed gender responsibilities made Fil-Am society a very critical and gendered space to tread for the *pinay* generation despite their community care work and contributions as club organizers. Of course, the *pinay* generation did find *pinoy* allies, although rare. Renowned and respected pinoy poet of Salinas's Chinatown district, Gregoria S. San Diego used his regular column for short stories and poems to support pinays who simply wanted to participate in community politics. The early 1930s was a very scary social terrain for pinays to navigate. In the Philippines during this same period, the ballot for Filipina suffrage was also on the table and minds of Filipino congress members. As discussed in the previous chapters, the New Filipina Generation received similar misogynistic critiques from Filipino leaders. With the recent murders of *pinays* at the hands of their *pinoy* peers and community members in rural California, the noticeable rise in the culture of surveillance looming over the growing Fil-Am towns of California, and with Filipina suffrage a topic closely followed by the growing Filipina/o/x diaspora, the support of even a handful pinoys was enough to transform, even if a smidge, the power dynamics within the Little Manila communities to allow pinays some opportunity to take on official leadership positions.

In his short piece, Gregorio S. San Diego explains how "nothing is so absurd as the seemingly moral tirades which denounce the grant of suffrage to our Maria Clara. To surmise with gloomy partiality the future effect of woman suffrage upon Filipina womanhood, is to shirk

[328]Arellano, "Sidelines," *The Philippines Mail*, November 1933.

at the politically important development that should, of course, take place in favor of our women. We are a nation whose political growth has proceeded via imitation of the American system; and if our tendency is to absorb properly the best that we can possibly learn from the American people, then let us not bewail the recent enactment of the bill. It is a change that we should hail with a happy feeling of impartiality. We who don't believe in the mere saintliness of a homely modest life, and those who abhor the assumption that motherhood and the home are the only concerns of women, must understand that the right to vote, as well as the opportunity to share the folly and eccentricities of public life, is as much a right of women as it is a monopoly of our politicians to bicker and indulge in factional quarrels about Philippine independence. Some of our educated *pinays* have talked about freedom, and now they should have it."[329]

Gregorio half-jokingly explained to his *pinoy* audience members who were concerned that Filipinas would lose their propriety and motherlike qualities that *pinoys* instead should be concerned with their own regular lack of decorum, as their *machismo* antics are what indeed has become the shame of their own communities including *pinoy* husbands who were "mad at her [Filipina] masquerades and public flirtations, goes over to his compadre's house in order to gossip; or during his somber moments he may console himself like an American philosopher who once said, "Now we cannot beat them (women) any more, they will not cook for us any more, they will not even stay with us an evening. Instead of worrying about our sins, they are busy with their own; they have acquired souls--and votes too."[330]

The gendered critiques of Central Coast *pinoys* was a pandora's box of multiple power dynamics and colonial ideologies at work. For many of these *pinoys*, they saw their lives in America as an opportunity to uplift their economic standing in the Philippines by earning the

[329] Gregorio S. San Diego, "Woman and Suffrage," *The Philippines Mail*, 30 April 1934, 2.
[330] Gregorio S. San Diego, April 1934.

American dollar. But upon realizing the harsh reality that getting that dollar meant existing as colonial subjects and immigrant men of color transplanted to xenophobic America, they too missed their homeland even more. This cultural and nationalist nostalgia for the Philippines was also applied to Filipinas. In the Philippines, the bachelor *pinoys* saw and practiced a gender power dynamic where men held power as the leader of the family and socio-political spaces. In the United States, with their lives so dependent on low wage migrant labor and the unsteady nature of their environments as brown men, having power over *pinays* guaranteed them both a sense of cultural nostalgia and a steady relationship of power.

Among white men, *pinoys* were stereotyped and criticized as savage hypersexual boys whose labor was cheap and exploitable; thus, white men held power over Filipino nationals. Laying claim to Filipinas and dictating their agency offered *pinoys* some power in the ethnic hubs they sought refuge in, and which they ardently constructed and transformed to meet their ideal image of the Philippines as a home away from home, what Rick Bonus calls a "cultural reproduction" that answered *pinoy* desires to ameliorate their own "cultural nostalgia."[331] Filipino American politics, like the gendered politics of Salinas and the Central Coast, were a direct response to their exclusion.

[331] Rick Bonus, *Locating Filipino Americans : Ethnicity and Cultural Politics of Space*, Bonus describes the more recent (1990s) Fil-Am history of San Diego and addresses 1. the community formation, 2. cultural practices, and 3. How Fil-Am community members have formulated their own ethnic identity as Filipino Americans. Similar to Yen Le Espiritu, Bonus argues that being Filipino in America is a combination of borrowing to become more American while also disliking American cultural practices because of its racist implications and assumptions. Being Filipino is important to the San Diego Fil-Am community, it is something that they do not forget and instead value the cultural heritage, work ethic, and bayanihan spirit which reminds them proudly of being Filipino in America. But there is no one way of being Filipino, or Filipino essentialism. And instead Bonus, looks at how Fil-Ams in San Diego reproduce what they believe to be Filipino American culture. Cultural reproduction centers including "Oriental" stores, community centers, and community newspapers as key sites that have historically helped to maintain and cultivate a Fil-Am cultural identity. Bonus argues that the stores involve "marking difference" and "marketing difference." Store ownership is viewed as a cultural form of "talking back" to a social and historical backdrop that has largely prevented an entrepreneurial class of Filipino Americans from emerging until quite recently

Whereas Bonus locates the 1990's San Diego Fil-Am community and describes cultural reproduction as made into reality through their community centers—where they would hold political discussions as one would in the *palengke* or wet market in the Philippines—the *pinoys* of Salinas reproduced these male political spaces through the columns of male dominated newspapers like the *Philippines Mail*.[332] *Pinoy* machismo politics, through the open criticisms of *pinays* in the *Philippines Mail*, thus was a way for earlier Fil-Am communities that precede Bonus' case study of San Diego to create a Filipino American politics meant to form a sense of "self reliance [that] helps with community development," or at least what the *pinoys* imagined their ethnic rural hubs needed in order to be self-reliant macho spaces that fed their desire for a sense of cultural nostalgia in America.

This longing for the mother-nation Philippines and the safety and security guaranteed from the gendered power dynamics of Filipino-Spanish culture became articulated and was culturally reproduced through the excessive surveillance and critiques of *pinays* along the Central Coast. Through the critique and culture of surveillance that Filipino men acted on, they created a gendered diasporic consciousness, a desire to return to the homeland or imagining of the homeland, by projecting their desire for male authority onto local *pinays*. Thus, their obsession with controlling the Filipina in America became an outlet for disgruntled *pinoys* to recreate the Philippine power dynamics and cultural spaces they found comfort in.

The Philippines Mail's gossip and social columns specifically were designed to inform the broader statewide Filipinx communities on every Filipino gathering so as to form a sense of ethnic and cultural community in California's highly racialized landscape. Thus, even small personal events like baptisms and weddings, as well as the minute details of social gatherings

[332] Bonus, *Locating Filipino Americans*, 94-97.

like dances, dinners, and pageants where Filipinas were "out in society" became centers of public scrutiny for women that became published on a weekly basis through *The Mail.* Their actions were always visible and vulnerable to the broader, statewide, Filipinx community, thus making the "culture of surveillance" an intrinsic attribute of the pre-1965 Fil-Am experience.

The placement of Filipinas in such high regard and status in their communities left them little room to afford any social faux pas without the attention of their elders and nosy neighbors. Acts of adultery, runaway wives, and overly gossiping Filipinas made front page headlines. With Philippine suffrage on the horizon, California *pinays* reconfigured their own methods of Filipina politicking to safeguard their new homes and extended family in rural California.

The Queen Contests: Fundraising Displays of *Pinay* Femininity

Despite the critiques of their *pinoy* peers, the Fil-Am communities of the Central Coast owed a great deal of their economic security to the *pinay* organizations that established community activities that creatively secured the much-needed leisure time for overworked *pinoy* farm workers while also serving as fundraising opportunities for community needs. One of their most popular and regular fundraising events were the social box and pageant queen contests. The FWC had transformed, if not retooled, the colonial practice of the "carnival queen contests" in Manila, originally overseen and implemented by the American military, into a community building phenomenon; one that sustained cultural connections to the homeland while supporting the financial infrastructure and growth of the Fil-Am community in the United States, transforming their once mobile migrant communities into stable and grounded hubs. The social boxes (social dances with the added benefit of voting for the best *pinay* youths to dance with), the parades and floats that showcased the winning queens and runner ups, were the most successful and economically lucrative leisure events that Fil-Ams during this period invested in

the most. The queen and social box contests were heavily attended and collected enough tickets that one queen contest could go towards the construction of a Filipino Community Center or town hall that could be shared by multiple Fil-Am communities within the same county.

Pinoy migrant laborers earned 8-12 cents per hour in the fields (representing some of the lowest wages during the Depression).[333] Each queen, or "sweetheart", contestants could rake in anywhere from 100 to 30,000 votes, some voting contests involved individual tickets ranging from a few cents to as high as twenty dollars. A smaller scale queen contest held in Salinas in 1940 raised a little over $3000 on tickets alone.[334] At the onset of the Depression, the FWC used the fundraising wins to pay for welfare programs specifically directed at providing better housing and medical resources for the pinoys living in the rundown labor camps of Salinas.[335] Despite their low wages, *pinoys* were the majority of the attendees who paid for both their entry tickets for these events and their ticket-votes for their pageant queen of choice, therefore contributing their hard earned wages to a major facet of community fundraising that doubled as part of their leisure expenses.[336] *Pinays* and FWC members would also sell their homemade Filipino delicacies, hire band ensembles, or have the local Fil-Am youth clubs participate or perform as part of the social event. Therefore, unpaid *pinay* club organizing labor helped to plant stable community roots, while creating reliable economic resources and funds for many Filipino migrant workers who previously only had fraternal organizations to rely on in times of need.

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[333] *Philippines Mail*, "Bawling Out, Coming Up," Salinas, CA, November 3, 1931.

[334] To put the capital earned from these contests into perspective, $3000 was enough to purchase a building or new home in 1940 which could either serve as a community center or as a new home for Fil-Ams living in the labor camps to move into, therefore propelling community members out of labor camp poverty. See also Unknown Author, "Welfare Home Planned by Women," *The Philippines Mail*, June 11, 1934, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas.

[335] "Filipino Elite of Central Coast Area Scintillates Mail's Presentation Dance," *The Philippines Mail*, June 12, 1933, Steinbeck Public Library.

[336] *Philippines Mail*, "Contest Activity Takes Switch to Salinas Vicinity," Salinas, CA, 1941.

The Filipino Women's Club of Salinas was one of the first to organize such pageantry into a statewide Fil-Am phenomenon. One pageant could be dragged on for an entire season and spread out into a series of social benefit dances bringing in *pinays* from as far as Sacramento, Stockton, Los Angeles, Fresno, and the Central Coast. Rufina Gee who grew up in Stockton and then moved to Sacramento remembers how the local *pinay* youths would travel from labor camp to labor camp to meet the *pinoy* farm workers and win their votes with their charms, pretty dresses and songs. When she was recruited by women's club members for an upcoming contest, Rufina's mother, Bienvenida Dawang, kindly refused their offer to train her daughter as she did not like the idea of her daughter regularly going to men's labor camps chaperoned without her.[337] Some of the other *pinays* who participated in these contests in Monterey County, like Lillian Fabros, recalled how uncomfortable such dances were as they were surrounded by majority *pinoys* who, on the whole, were much older than they were.[338] The youngest contestants at these contests were sometimes as young as 9 years old.[339] Despite the success of the queen contests that the Filipino Women's Club helped to orchestrate all year round, the popularity that such a cultural event received was indeed at the expense of reinvigorating and commercializing traditional Filipino standards of p/femininity. Similar to the Carnival Queen contests in Manila during the formative years of the American Occupation Era, Filipina queen contestants were expected to be highly educated, come from the most prominent families, were well versed in Philippine culture and traditions, but also were prim, proper, good Christian daughters, and well-spoken in both English and their native dialect. Such standards of demure Filipina femininity

[337] *Kwentuhan* with Rufina Gee and her mother Bienvenida Dawang conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2019, Sacramento.
[338] *Kwentuhan with Lillian Fabros conducted by Stacey Salinas, Delano, April 2019.*
[339] "Filipino Elite of Central Coast Area Scintillates Mail's Presentation Dance," *The Philippines Mail*, June 12, 1933, Steinbeck Public Library.

were expected of the working-class Filipina Americans who participated in the FWC queen contests on the Central Coast.[340] The *pinay* contestants Jean Vengua, Salinas local, who participated in the social boxes recalled how much pressure there was to perform and meet the expectations of the Filipina leaders and her own mother:

"Sometimes I liked the attention, sometimes I hated it. I felt like there was a lot of pressure to perform. During one social box, I fought with my mom over something petty over the lipstick color! All the other aunties were in the room and they had to calm us down. I was really feeling the pressure and I felt really pushed into the situation. My mother was an intense person. She had a strong personality. If she really wanted something it was hard to push back on that. The whole community had expectations about what you should do. I rebelled after that."[341]

To reproduce a sense of cultural belonging, the pageant or queen contest was one of the many fundraisers that Filipinas/os practiced in the United States. The queen contests were common annual and seasonal sights in the Philippines after the American military introduced it in Manila in order to build friendly relations between Filipinos and the American colonial regime.[342] The carnival queen contests that the *pinay* pioneers reinvented in their ethnic hubs are productions akin to what Asian American historian Shirley Lim describes as Asian American women's contributions to "public culture."[343] Asian American youth culture during the prewar era often straddled a fine line between adhering to cultural traditions of their parents and elders and redefining their interpretation of what it meant to be Asian in America during an era of racial

[340] "Vote for Miss Muzar," *The Philippines Mail*, 1933, microfilm, Steinbeck Public Library.
[341] *Kwentuhan* with Jean Vengua conducted by Stacey Salinas via zoom, June 16, 2022.
[342] See Genevieve Clutario, "Chapter 13 Pageant Politics: Tensions of Power, Empire, and Nationalism in Manila Carnival Queen Contests," as seen in Catherine Ceniza Choy and Judy Tzu-Chun Wu ed., *Gendering the Transpacific World* (Leiden: Brill, 207).
[343] Shirley Lim, *A Feeling of Belonging: Asian American Women's Public Culture, 1930-1960* (New York: New York University Press, 2006),

segregation and ostracization. The *pinay* generation were socially tasked with the gendered role as the cultural matriarchs and bearers of their Philippine heritage for the next generation of Fil-Ams. Cultural values that the carnival contests represented include Filipina beauty standards, the importance of a queenly aura including upstanding family lineage, and socio-economic standing made visible by a *pinay's* level of education and family name. Being that most *pinays* who immigrated to the United States were of working-class background, the colonial class caste system had to be adjusted to accommodate the proud working class *pinay*. Thus, the carnival contests of the Philippines were transformed by the *pinay* FWC generation so as to evolve and adjust to the Filipina American woman's lifestyle in rural California. The Manila Carnival Queen thus was creatively reimagined into the Pinay Queen Contest; a *pinay* reworking of what would become a mainstream Filipino American cultural practice and "feeling of belonging" during the xenophobic interwar era when anti-Filipino hate ran rampant, but community solidarity strengthened due to the unpaid labor and kinship political power of *pinays*.[344]

FWC hosted events such as social dances, Filipino plays and musicals, and themed dinners all represented fundraising opportunities that directly went to the aid of the *pinoys* and other local needs to help the community thrive and maintain a broader positive reputation in the greater Salinas area. Susan Aremas, a second-generation Filipina American and former 2012 president of the FWC, recalls the members of the FWC as incredibly "multi-talented and caring women" who went to great lengths to help the aging *pinoys* in the labor camps that she grew up in. "Club members and [Filipina] wives would help the *manongs* do their taxes, acted as

[344] Shirley Lim, *A Feeling of Belonging*, on the conversation of how Asian American women reworked cultural practices to create their own sense of belonging as both Asian and American women in a period where women of Asian descent, particularly Chinese and Japanese women were vilified as dragon ladies or oriental paper dolls in the midst of anti-immigrant policies and racial segregation.

matchmakers for the single men, and were their best nurses! They would take care of them when they were too ill from their work on the farms because they were overworked and exposed to DDT. The *manongs* couldn't afford to go to the hospital and the women acted as their nurse, sister, and even mother to them."[345] The *pinay* generation of the FWC continued to provide the much needed emotional, social, and physical support to the *pinoys* of the Central Coast well into the 1970s. The FWC *pinays* of the interwar period thus proved to be an essential, stabilizing, and consistent force in California's older Fil-Am communities, despite the criticisms, and machismo surveillance of their peers.

Conclusion

Pinays in Salinas and greater Central Coast who participated in the FWC practiced and carried over other kinship cultural politics in order to secure the economic survival of their fledgling ethnic hubs. Such gendered political praxis of kinship politics that the FWC members carried over from the Philippines became the standard of *pinay* community organizing and networking that would help ground these early Fil-Am ethnic enclaves changing them from what Rudy Gueverra describes as "mobile communities" along the migrant labor route during the 1920s, into stable hubs that would eventually take on the affectionate and cultural moniker of "Little Manilas."[346]

By 1934, Filipino communities became even more tight knit as immigration was stalled and merely a trickle of 50 persons per year as quota were allowed to enter the mainland. Pinoys relied on the tight knit community hubs that Filipina motherwork in the form of club organizing

[345]Susan Aremas, (Bridge Generation Filipina American, primary school teacher, daughter of *manong* generation), interviewed by Stacey Salinas, January - April 2018.

[346] Rudy P. Guevarra Jr., *Becoming Mexipino: Multiethnic Identities and Communities in San Diego* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 68.

helped to ground as racial restrictions, prejudices, and xenophobia continued to rise during an unnerving historical decade of economic crisis. For the few pensionados who were the national pride and joy of the Philippines, the migrant labor farm workers without family, and the ailing elders of the earlier wave of Filipino *sakadas* who ended up on the Central Coast by the 1930s, the *pinay* generation served as the mothers and "community pillars" for their hubs. Dedicated mothers and wives, the FWC acted on their cultural gender roles as their method of securing community growth, respectability, but most of all, as means to secure their community's survival.

Despite their efforts, *pinays* in rural California were subjected to the same gendered critiques of their sisters, the New Filipinas in the motherland. In both situations, the harsh criticisms and gendered expectations Filipinas experienced during the 1920s-1930s spoke to the anxieties of Asian male rule in both the family and in social spaces as American colonial oversight and masculinity sought to emasculate the Filipino. Thus, the anxieties Filipino men threw at working Filipinas in this new transpacific era of the interwar era reveals just how essential Filipina labor was not just in keeping their fledgling communities alive and rooted, but also in terms of guaranteeing *pinoy* patriarchy. A Filipina wife meant: a man's status in his community, that he had domestic work guaranteed due to his wife's unpaid care work, she represented additional income if she labored in the fields, and most importantly, having a *pinay* wife meant respectability in both American and Fil-Am society.

The money collected from the social dances, Central Coast fetes, and queen pageants managed by the FWC were added to the Filipino Salinas community welfare pot.[347] Popular

[347] Queen pageants were monthly and annual events that celebrated the Filipina in America. Local Filipina women would compete for the queen title, either at a local or regional scale, and the proceeds and funding they would receive through such popularity contests would often go towards the larger Filipino community's welfare pot. The

events like Flag Day, the "Miss Charity" pageant, and Christmas plays like "Jose Rizal," were all FWC-led social events.[348] The individual caregiving efforts of FWC members and the groups' collective funds raised from their special events, according to 1934 FWC president C.C. Morales in a 1934 interview with *The Philippines Mail,* was a direct indication of the Fil-Am community's reputation in Salinas as a self-sufficient, generous, family oriented, and tightly knit Filipino collective.[349]

In the winter of 1935, *pinay* teenager Helen Rillera wrote an open letter titled "Ambition in the Filipina," published in *The Philippines Mail.* In her letter, Rillera expressed to her Filipina American sisters her pride in her ethnic heritage and the humbling responsibilities of a *pinay* growing into her womanhood.[350] Rillera conveyed that Filipina American women were a rare and treasured sight in their *pinoy* dominated communities. And yet, despite the admiration and adoration Filipinas regularly received as treasured members of their Fil-Am communities, Rillera recounted just how quickly *pinays* could also be ostracized by the Filipino community if they showed any sense of ingenuity or ambition. Filipinas in Filipino American society, as outnumbered as they were, were expected to support their *pinoy* brothers and fathers in "pretty"

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pageants were therefore an opportunity for Filipino social gatherings, fundraising for community funds, and an event to honor and admire the rare Filipina presence in the United States.

[348] The Flag Day event was created by Filipino Federation of America founder, HIlario Moncado, in order to celebrate Philippine hero Jose Rizal. This event also promoted Philippine independence. Hilario Moncado, *The Divinity of Women* (Los Angeles: Filipino Federation of America, 1927), 13.

[349] Newspaper Headline, "Drive is Launched for Welfare Funds By Leaders of Filipino Women's Club," *The Philippines Mail*, July 10, 1933, microfilm, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[350] Filipina/o: The terms Filipina/Pinay translates specifically to a woman of Philippine heritage whereas Filipino/Pinoy broadly translates to a male individual of Philippine heritage or also can mean one's Philippine cultural identity or ethnic heritage i.e. "I am Filipino." This paper uses the terms Filipina/o, Pinay/Pinoy, and Filipinx (Filipinx specifically promotes a historical Asian American narrative of genderqueer, mixed race, and intergenerational inclusivity) to discuss gender, race, and labor relations within the larger Filipino-American (Fil-Am) ethnic enclaves of the early to mid-twentieth century. Joyce Del Rosario, "Can There Be a Postcolonial Theology When Living in the Colonizer's House," in *Christianity Next Winter* 2018, ed. Young Lee Hertig (Los Angeles: ChristianityNext Publishing, 2018), pg 39-41.

ways, being bestowed admiration only if they excelled in conforming to the traditional expectations for Filipinas of "settling down and living happily ever after."[351]

"In California alone, we know of many lovely girls, not without promise of brilliant futures. All over the United States, I feel that there is intellectual power in our Filipino girls. Yet, very few, if any at all, ever come out; very few are developed and used. There are so few of us here. Can't we be representatives of our real worth and our desire to add to the glories of our beloved Filipinas?"[352]

Rillera's concerns for the intellectual well-being of her Filipina sisters speaks to the gendered and anxiety-ridden environment *pinays* faced throughout the Great Depression leading up to World War II. The *pinays* of Rillera's generation were an uncommon spectacle during the early twentieth century, numbering some 13,451 individuals by 1935 when Rillera wrote this personal letter to *The Philippines Mail*. In that same year, Filipino male counterparts totaled 94,753 individuals.[353] Rillera's concerns for her fellow *pinays*, considering the violent and obsessive tendencies of the *pinoys* who surveilled the cultural dynamics of their small fil-Am hubs, were well placed. Her empathetic tone in her writing in her asking *pinoys* to meet their *pinay* sisters halfway, to see Filipinas wholeheartedly as equals within their shared communities, also spoke to the diplomatic roles and gracious rhetoric *pinays* took on as arbiters of their ethnic hubs. Such judicious qualities of matriarchal goodwill and leadership became essential and crucial to the survival of the Fil-Am communities once war broke out and *pinoys* in droves volunteered for the war, leaving many social and economic roles not available to *pinays* before the war, open for the first time to Filipinas to fill and manage. In another letter published in *The Philippines Mail* in the summer of 1934, Rillera again expressed her pride in being Filipina

[351] Newspaper Article, Helen Rillera, "Ambition in the Filipina," *The Philippines Mail*, Feb. 4, 1935, microfilm, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California, http://www.commonwealthcafe.info/editorials-and-essays.
[352] Rillera, "Ambition in the Filipina,"Feb. 4, 1935, http://www.commonwealthcafe.info/editorials-and-essays.
[353] U.S. Census of Population: 1930, https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0076/twps0076.html.

but her disappointment in her *pinoy* peers. Rillera's humble ask to her *pinoy* peers was in essence that they understand how their criticisms and surveillance hurt *pinays* and relegated their worth only to that as unattainable queens, dolls even. Rillera wanted to be seen as an equal, asking *pinoys* to meet her halfway:

"I am a Filipina, and I want to make my Filipino brothers know me and understand me for what I am.This is an appeal to you, Filipino brothers. Your Filipino sisters want you to treat them as your real sisters- be protective instead of injurious- be considerate instead of fault-finding. They want to be able to speak of you with their heads held high. They'll suffer much for your cause; and all they ask is your going hand-in-hand with them; understanding, sympathizing, protecting."[354]

Such gracious and accommodating personalities that *pinay* care work represented became essential in the type of leadership that the Fil-Am communities would need and would come to rely on when the men left to fight the war in the Pacific Theater on December 7th, 1941.

[354] Helen Rillera "The Filipina In Filipino Society," *The Philippines Mail*, August 1934, Steinbeck Public Library, microfilm, Salinas.

Chapter 5: Wartime Pinays: Soldiers, Writers, and Leaders

Within ten hours of the attack on Pearl Harbor, both Guam and the Philippines were under siege by Imperial Japan's military forces. American and Philippine forces stationed in Luzon defended against the invasion for three months before surrendering, leading to Japan's three-year occupation of the Philippine Commonwealth. Upon hearing news of the attacks on Luzon, Filipino farm workers in both Hawai'i and the mainland volunteered for the war, many leaving their work in the fields to train at Fort Ord and Camp San Luis Obispo before being deployed to the Pacific Theater. The departure of *pinoy* farm workers across California left many vacancies within the civic, fraternal, union, and community organizations that *pinoys* had dominated for nearly twenty years. The abrupt shift to an absence of *pinoy* community members meant Filipinas had to take it upon themselves to step into those roles. Thus, World War II became a transformative period where *pinays* would again step beyond their roles as cultural matriarchs and become the sole political faces of their communities on the Central Coast.

In the shipyards of Richmond and Vallejo's Mare Island, *pinays* earned new wages as welders, burners, or office workers. The *pinay* generation and their daughters (the Bridge Generation) wanted to take advantage of the new higher paid work opportunities and continue proving their merit as Filipina Americans by defending and supporting the multiple fronts they called home: the Philippines, the United States, and their own household economy. West Oakland *pinay* Evangeline Canonizado Buell remembers her grandmother as a Filipina "Rosie the Riveter" who, every morning, put on her blue suspenders and "tied a small red and white bandanna around her head."[355] Throughout the 1930s-1940s, Evangeline's grandmother was

[355] Evangeline Canonizado Buell, *Twenty-Five Chickens and a Pig for a Bride* (T'Boli Publishing, 2006), 57-61.

constantly harassed by her white neighbors, often being called "Jap" or "chink." Like many Filipinas of the *pinay* generation, Grandma Roberta, as Evangeline would call her, was determined to work multiple roles, both within and outside of her household, to support her family and community as the Depression and World War II hovered over them.

Being a Filipina American patriot became another role *pinays* inhabited that offered new opportunities for their socio-economic agency, while also serving as another platform for *pinoy* surveillance to criticize. Grandma Roberta previously had mainly tended to her granddaughters' upbringing, handling the housework and caring for her family. But with the new income from her welding work, *pinays* like her gained more work opportunities, enabling them to match their male peers. Their new roles as breadwinners challenged Filipino gender norms and the *dalagang bukid* expectation forced onto *pinays*. Evangeline Buell's grandmother, as part of the *pinay* generation, experienced and participated in a new shift and transformation of the Filipina in America as a response to the war. With her helmet, suspenders, and "powdered face and lipstick painted lips" Filipina Americans were again coming into their own, ever the more "formidable and intimidating, almost like a man."[356] *Pinoy* criticism of Filipinas stepping out of the Maria Clara and *dalagang bukid* persona carried over into World War II. They criticized Filipinas for "becoming more masculine" and for turning into what some *pinoys* joked as a "Mario Claro," a gendered inversion of their ideal Maria Clara, as they became breadwinners and community leaders.[357] But as the Depression transitioned into the war, *pinoys* found themselves dependent on the extra earnings of their *pinay* peers.

This chapter will discuss the gendered transformation of the cultural dynamic of the Fil-Am hubs on the Central Coast. With many Filipino farm workers joining the war effort, *pinays*

[356] Buell, *Twenty-Five Chickens and a Pig for a Bride*, 59-61.
[357] Gregorio S. San Diego, "Woman and Suffrage," *The Philippines Mail*, 30 April 1934, 2.

filled community leadership positions and other paid work throughout the Central Coast, becoming wartime breadwinners in their families and ethnic enclaves. They would manage their husband's businesses, the labor camps, and create more women's organizations, all of which would fundraise money for both the Fil-Am Community and the war effort abroad. Despite their efforts, Filipino men remaining in these communities continued to critique *pinay* attempts at inhabiting roles previously reserved for powerful males, assuming that women should be relegated to social work. And yet *pinays* persisted, using previously developed methods of peminist politicking in the form of social work and women's club work to fully serve in their new leadership roles.

The impact of World War II on Central Coast Filipinx communities was felt in a multitude of ways. Wages for cannery workers, pickers, and lettuce thinners more than doubled from thirty cents to seventy-five cents as demand for foodstuffs to feed the American military skyrocketed.[358] Despite the high wage increase, many Filipino immigrants still chose to leave the Salinas Valley to join the war on promises that they would receive American citizenship for their services and a chance to protect their motherland. Joining the military also served as another opportunity to work alongside familiar faces and replicate the same hyper-*pinoy barkada* comradery felt in the farm labor camps.[359] Susan Aremas recalled when she was younger about a conversation she had with her father Ricardo Aremas, a Filipino migrant worker and World War II veteran, about why he volunteered for the war. Ricardo's response to his daughter was "because it was a way to be around friends, *kababayans,* who spoke the same dialect, had known

[358] Newspaper Article, "Shortage of Fieldworkers," *The Philippines Mail*, August 31, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[359] *Barkada* in Tagalog translates to group of close knit friends, normally from the same school or barrio, and speaks to good-time-friends type of relationship. *Kababayan* in Tagalog translates to compatriot, fellow citizen of the Philippines who is in support of the nation and cultural values; can also be used in reference to Filipinas/os/x greeting or acknowledging one another in the diaspora.

one another either from the Philippines, or because they had worked and struggled together with one another in Salinas."[360] Ricardo and his *kababayans* believed that signing up for the war meant a secure job and place to live; a type of protection because, according to Susan, "the work was managed by the U.S. Army and he preferred that over seasonal work."[361]

Soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Ricardo and his friends signed on for the war and trained at Fort Ord and Camp Roberts as part of the Filipino First and Second Infantry Regiments. These training facilities were perfectly situated along the Filipino *pinoy* agrarian hubs of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties and became well known destinations with local Filipino circles, making it easy for them to join the war effort. By 1942, more than 10,000 Filipinos would leave California farm work to join the American military and other defense industries.[362]

As more *pinoys* left the labor camps to serve in the Pacific Theater under the First and Second Infantry Regiments, the "culture of surveillance" placed on *pinays* was slightly assuaged by the abrupt absence of men. Filipinas assumed positions in their communities held previously by their male peers, and used their new social and economic platforms to act on and voice their own opinions on topics they were traditionally excluded from. *Pinays* gained new forms of income and economic prestige through the availability of new labor positions, including manual factory labor (i.e., smelting, riveting, engineering) and as direct ground support (secretarial, nursing, medical volunteers, delivering supply units, etc.) for the war.

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[360] Susan Aremas (Bridge Generation Filipina American, primary school teacher, daughter of *manong* generation), interviewed by Stacey Salinas at Salinas, January 2018.

[361] Susan Aremas (Bridge Generation Filipina American, primary school teacher, daughter of *manong* generation), interviewed by Stacey Salinas at Salinas, January - April 2018.

[362] Xiaojian Zhao and Edward Park ed., *Asian America: An Encyclopedia of Social, Cultural, Economic, and Political History* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2013), 406-408.

1.5 and second-generation Filipina daughters joined the ranks of American women who flocked to Washington D.C. to take on positions as typists and secretaries.[363] Others like Jessie Javier, who served as the society editor of *The Philippines Mail* during the early years of the war, desired a secretarial position in Washington D.C. in order to join the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1943.[364] Other Central Coast *pinays* supported the war in their own communities by joining the Victory Crew that worked in the Salinas Valley, where they served as field hands, temporarily filling the empty positions left by the many *pinoys* who volunteered for the war. The Victory Crew of Salinas was an ethnically diverse group of women consisting of Filipina, Chicana, and Anglo-American women who worked to grow and gather food supplies for American troops.[365]

First-generation *pinays*, like those of the FWC, dedicated their energies to rallying morale and fundraising for the war. *Pinay* wives and their teenage daughters organized social dances, pageants (i.e. The Miss Victory Pageant), parades, dinners, military balls, Red Cross fundraisers, and social events that honored the Filipino First and Second Infantry Regiments recruited from the Central Coast.[366] The Mothers of Monterey County was an organization headed by *pinay* matriarchs (first generation wives and grandmothers) who were an active face of the growing

[363] Newspaper Wartime Ad, "Typists Wanted in Washington D.C.," *The Philippines Mail*, August 31, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[364] Newspaper Headline, "May Join WAACS," *The Philippines Mail*, May 24, 1943, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[365] Filipinas and other local women volunteered to make up for the high demand of agrarian labor in the Salinas Valley. Their work as pickers, thinners, and packing shed workers created produce that helped the many troops that made up the armed forces during World War II. See Newspaper Photo Spread, R. Nietes, "All...Food for Victory!" *The Philippines Mail*, May 1943, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[366] Newspaper Article, "Miss Baguio Wins Title in Second Tabulation," *The Philippines Mail*, August 31, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

Filipina leadership brought on by the war in the Pacific.[367] By taking on more economic and public leadership roles, *pinays* of the broader Monterey County were able to diversify their vocation or trade in their ethnic hub. While still conscious of maintaining the model gender roles of the caregiving cultural matriarch, or as the well-mannered *dalagang bukid* daughter, this *pinay* wartime generation encouraged one another to engage in other opportunities that promoted both their patriotism as Filipina Americans and ethnic sisterhood.

With many of the Filipino men training at Camp San Luis Obispo, Fort Ord, and Papua New Guinea, Filipina wives and daughters took it upon themselves to fill roles as the family head, breadwinner, and representatives of the broader Filipino American community of Central California. Filipino owned grocers, restaurants, cafes, and labor camps became managed solely by Filipina wives. Prominent leader of the Mothers of Monterey County, Mrs. F.A. Rosario, managed and owned a local Philippine grocery and dry goods store in Salinas during the war. She simultaneously put her patriotic efforts towards supporting the domestic front, her Filipina network, her family, and managing her business when 3000 *pinoys* from the Salinas Valley departed for the war.[368]

The *Pinay* Take on Filipino American News 1941-1949

Other positions in the community that Filipinas began to manage included the much loved and widely circulated Central Coast Fil-Am newspaper, *The Philippines Mail.* Prior to the war, Filipina involvement with *The Philippines Mail* often consisted of secretarial work, bookkeeping and treasury, and town and district representative positions held by the elite *pinays*

[367] *Pinay* representatives of the organization Filipino Mothers of Monterey County held a military ball they organized to bid their *pinoy* brothers farewell and fundraise for the cause, August 1942, *The Philippines Mail*, August 12th, 1942, courtesy of the Steinbeck Public Library.

[368] Newspaper Headline, "Salinas Filipino Women Present Colors to Filipino Unit, C.S.M. Colonel Offley Guest of Honor," *The Philippines Mail*, August 12, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

(those with kinship politics standing in their community) such as Consuelo Antonio, whose father was a prominent community leader during the 1930s.[369] Other women who held these positions with *The Mail* were former pageant and popularity queens like Rebecca Santiago, a former "California Sweetheart Queen."[370] The decade prior, the gossip columns "Miss Spotter" and "Ask Aunt Drearie" operated as the only consistent forums where Filipinas participated in writing for the paper. With the recruitment of Filipino men to training facilities at Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo, like society editor Victor Calderon and lead journalist Alex Fabros Sr., *pinay* writers quickly assumed leadership roles within *The Philippines Mail*, writing beyond the gossip columns and authoring their own columns of interest.[371]

Lead positions within *The Philippines Mail*, such as society editor, was taken up by popular Salinas college educated debutante Jessie Javier, after its previous head was inducted into the Armed Forces in August of 1942.[372] Other positions, such as editor-in-chief and front page journalist were taken up by first and second-generation *pinays* like San Jose's celebrated singer, Pacita Todtod, who would remain editor-in-chief for the Salinas paper till the late 1940s. Both women, like the *pinays* involved with *The Mail* before them, were popular pageant winners or debutantes. Their reputation in the Salinas Filipino community thus bolstered the community's support and praise for their new positions.

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[369] Newspaper Letter to the Public, Luis Agudo, "New Publishers in Charge of the Mail," *The Philippines Mail*, January 29, 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[370] Newspaper Headline, "Willing Helper," *The Philippines Mail*, December 1934, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[371] Newspaper Headline, "To Be Installed," *The Philippines Mail*, March 29th, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California. Newspaper Headline, Arquero, "Society Editor," *The Philippines Mail*, August 12, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California. Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, "Beauty Queens, Bomber Pilots, and Basketball Players," in *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical Theory* (New York, Routledge, 2005), ed. Melinda L. de Jesus, pg 126, 127. Newspaper Headline, Arquero, "Editor-In-Chief," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1945, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[372] Newspaper Headline, "Society Editor," *The Philippines Mail*, August 12, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

With new influential and public platforms, *pinay* journalists from 1941-1947 ventured into bold topics that stretched beyond the confines of the gossip column and the "women's issues" page. Articles pertaining to women's rights, their opinions on wartime politics, their womanly take on patriotism as Filipina Americans, and their overall potential and contribution to their community were the central themes of *pinay* journalist enquiry in Salinas.

Throughout the duration of the war (1942-1945), one monthly column titled "On the Side," written by a Salinas local with the pen name "A Filipina," served as an opinion piece that drew on patriotic themes to support, defend, and secure women's efforts in the workplace. The *pinay* author highlighted every month how valuable the Filipina American was to the war effort, praising her daily involvement while promoting camaraderie at home, reminding her audiences that true victory can only be won by having a strong unified home front held together by both *pinays* and *pinoys*.[373] She concluded in her column in the winter of 1945 that the Filipino-American soldiers deployed from the Central Coast were essential in the taking back of the Pacific from the enemy. Not only were the *pinoy* soldiers a major resource for the war, but so were Filipinas. Filipinas who fought for the Philippine Resistance and the effective fundraising and organizing of *pinays* in America all helped in the liberation of the Philippines. Because of their efforts, she argued that the new governments (American and Philippine) emerging after the war should also look to Filipinas as potential leaders of the postwar world. The anonymous pinay author with confidence and pride described Filipina Americans as "qualified public service workers who inherently, as Filipinas, always put "service above self," and would be the ideal modern candidates for any democratic institution."[374] Not hiring them to such endeavors would

[373] Newspaper Opinion Column, A Filipina, "On the Side," The *Philippines Mail*, July 1946, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[374] A notice from *The Philippines Mail* as the liberation of the Philippines was fully underway in April of 1945. Filipina American representatives of *The Philippines Mail* argued how central Filipinas can be contributors to the

be an "unpardonable waste of talent."[375] Filipina Americans on the west coast especially, she noted, would undoubtedly "use their talents and abilities for the benefit of all Filipinos."[376]

Another *pinay* writer of the paper who commented on the value of having a Filipina woman's presence on the home front was Juanita Begley. In her 1942 opinion piece titled "I Speak My Mind," she argued that the traditionally perceived faults of *pinays*, such as being incessant gossipers or overly sentimental creatures, are not a Filipina's weaknesses. Rather those qualities are strengths and necessary components found in successful Filipino marriages. If Filipinas do not constructively criticize their husbands openly to family and friends and threaten him with the shame of his peers and community knowing of his failures or transgressions, how else, Begley pointed out, will Filipino men improve themselves? Begley titles Filipina gossip circles as networks of "sincere squawkers;" coalitions of wives and female elders who simply provided strong and honest criticisms and whose purpose was to build up and strengthen men, especially in trying times like the war.[377] Filipino males who could handle such feedback and respond with chivalrous, more confident attitudes were, in Begley's opinion, real *pinoys*.[378] Thus the stereotypes and criticisms Filipina American women faced under the "culture of surveillance" during the war were challenged by *pinays* like Begley, who found a new sense of empowerment due to a shift in gendered spheres of influence brought on by the absence of *pinoys* during the war.

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new Philippine government in the postwar years to come. Newspaper Letter to the Public, "Give Chance to Women," *The Philippines Mail*, April 1945, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[375] Newspaper Opinion Column, A Filipina, "Woman-Isms," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1945, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[376] A Filipina, "Woman-Isms," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1945, microfilm.

[377] Newspaper Opinion Piece, Juanita Begley, "I Speak My Mind," *The Philippines Mail*, January 31, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[378] Begley, "I Speak My Mind," *The Philippines Mail*, January 31, 1942.

Pinays who had written for *The Mail* in the 1930s did not always directly challenge such gendered stereotypes to the extent that those writing during the war did. Filipina American contributors to the women's page of *The Philippines Mail* a decade prior to the war hinted at the "culture of surveillance" more as a standard to abide by, agreeing that Filipinas were more than capable of meeting such standards, but should still be allotted more space and opportunities to exercise their free will. Helen Rillera's poetry and short articles written from 1933-1935, "The Filipina in Filipino Society" and "The Ambition in the Filipina" respectively, described the struggles of being Filipina in a male dominated ethnic hub.[379]

Rillera wrote that the ultimate duty of a Filipina American girl was to sacrifice her youth in order to fully contribute to the morals and culture of Filipino society. As a proud Filipina American, Rillera described herself as proud to be Filipina and humbled to the tasks of representing the Fil-Am community. But Rillera also commented that to take on such feminine tasks, regardless of how well performed, also meant *pinays* were subjected to "unjust talk" and cruel judgements from her Filipino brothers.[380] Unlike Begley, Rillera advocated for her *pinoy* brothers to try and be more sympathetic, protective, and more open armed to their hardworking *pinay* sisters. Rillera tried to maintain a tone and image of a dutiful and culturally proud Filipina daughter, albeit conflicted internally, when arguing against biased male criticisms of Filipinas during the early 1930s. Begley's tone a decade later, on the other hand, was less forgiving, less willing to compromise, and far less concerned with the criticisms emanating from the culture of *pinoy* surveillance in Salinas.

[379] See Helen Rillera's opinion pieces found in *The Philippines Mail*, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.
[380] Newspaper Opinion Piece, Helen Rillera, "The Filipina in Filipino Society," *The Philippines Mail*, August 13, 1934, microfilm, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

Begley proudly listed the strengths and values of Filipinas in society and was unapologetic in her claims, thus dashing Rillera's appeal for Filipino brothers to treat Filipinas as if they were their real sisters. Begley argues in her column that Filipino men who could not handle criticisms and conversations from Filipinas were not real men. Wartime economic opportunities and a public space with fewer criticizing male eyes encouraged *pinays* like Begley to speak her mind and challenge traditional gender expectations in public forums led and supported by other *pinays*, like *The Philippines Mail*. Under less scrutiny from male peers who were absent due to their service in the Pacific, Central Coast *pinays* took on bolder stances in expressing their individuality, cultural uniqueness, and value as Filipina American women.

Building Filipina Wartime Networks of Support & Communication

Throughout the war, Asian American communities strove to prove their loyalty to their white neighbors to avoid harassment and vengeance at the hands of the white vigilante squads who regularly terrorized rural Asian immigrant communities in farming towns like Exeter, Watsonville, Monterey County, and Stockton. During the interwar period Asian American leaders asked their communities to portray themselves as American in their heart, culture, and minds. In nearly all American public schools that Asian American youths attended during the first half the twentieth century, they were told and instructed by their immigrant parents to only speak English and to assimilate to American culture, as they were severely physically or verbally reprimanded by their teachers if they did not perform "being American."[381]

[381] "Aims, Purposes of Phili-American Foundation," *The Philippines Mail*, February 17, 1942, SteinbeckPublic Library, Salinas. "The Flag of Freedom, *The Philippines Mail*, February 17, 1942. E. L. Garcia, "One Man's Opinion," *The Philippines Mail*, February 17, 1942. The three articles cited here all vouch for the ways Filipinas/os expressed their loyalties to both the Philippines as their Fatherland and the United States as their Motherland so as to

Asian immigrant women especially were tasked with enforcing these standards as cultural matriarchs and bearers of their community. Oftentimes this included teaching and practicing a complicated and toxic interpretation of showing one's Americanness so as not to be further ostracized or violently harassed by the larger Euro-American communities.[382] Japanese American women's magazines wrote to their audiences that their communities were American at heart, and that their responsibilities were to continue carrying on doing their womanly duties of keeping their house and home while raising their children to be good American citizens.

Similarly, *pinay* writers for *The Philippines Mail* constantly argued that their communities and children were dutiful American members of society, and that their loyalties and cultural assimilation into American society was proof enough of their American fealties. Around this period Asian American periodicals like *The Philippines Mail* and *Japanese American Citizens League* also argued that Japanese, Filipinos, Koreans, and Chinese had to see themselves as Americans during a period where war in Asia would most certainly increase racial tensions in the United States.[383] Many even had to wear pins that stated their Asian heritage in order to avoid being mistaken for Japanese. Millie Celestial Granados, a *pinay* who immigrated to San Diego in the late 1920s, remembers wearing a name badge with the phrase "I AM FILIPINO" at San Diego High, to avoid racial harassment after seeing her friend and classmate

explain to audiences why proving one's Americanness was an invaluable asset to survive as people of Asian descent in America.

[382] Unknown Author, ""Japanese Americans Fate Tied Up with that of Other Minorities," Editor Writes," *The Pittsburgh Courier*, January 1, 1944, last accessed January 20, 2022, https://www.newspapers.com/image/?clipping_id=47455160&fcfToken=eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiIsInR5cCI6IkpXVCJ9.eyJmcmVlLXZpZXctaWQiOjQwMDU1MTc4LCJpYXQiOjE2NDI3NDk3NzYsImV4cCI6MTY0MjgzNjE3Nn0.8QqiaA_dk8m7iLfE7br6I7qRB6ZOWkwG2JCfQJFE3DY.

[383] Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton University PRess, 2008), 110. Japanese American newspapers on the conversation of American culture and successful assimilation, *The Japanese American Courier*, December 14, 1940, https://depts.washington.edu/civilr/images/courier/Full%20page--Second%20Generation%20Activities--dec%2014,%201940--p.1_1200.jpg.

arrested by F.B.I. and sent to a Japanese internment camp.[384] Proving one's loyalty to local white Americans as Asian minorities became a major goal for *pinays*, who took on leadership roles within their communities and were already viewed as the middle-(wo)men representatives of their rural hubs.

Female encouragement and empowerment was a common sentiment addressed by the new committee of Filipina writers for *The Mail*. They provided mutual support and endorsed one another in their political endeavors. Gossip columnist, "Miss Spotter," used her monthly spread in 1941 during Salinas' public office spring elections to nominate her female choice for Salinas Valley's Filipino community president, the recent FWC president, Eugenia Sales.[385] Miss Spotter's written praise and nomination for Sales scoffed at the local *pinoys*' negative remarks of having a female president represent the Filipino American community. To bolster support for Sales, Spotter wrote of the revered qualities and traits associated with Filipinas to support her nomination. For two months, Spotter highlighted Sales' Filipina attributes as a capable caregiver who had a history of devoting her time to the welfare of the Filipinos of Salinas.[386] The gossip columnist took her argument one step further by comparing how the men in the Philippines were far more progressive and masculine than Filipino men in California because their treatment of women leaned far more left and pro-suffrage. Spotter referenced how Filipinos abroad asked women guerrillas to fight alongside them, not as footmen, but as their generals or captains and even elected *pinays* as representatives of their *barrios* and districts. Like Begley's criticism of

[384] STEVE GRANADOS, Jr. oral history, Filipino American National Historical Society, San Diego Chapter, 2017.
[385] Eugenia Sales was a popular nominee especially among *Pinay* circles as she also was the FWC president throughout the war.
[386] Newspaper Column, Miss Spotter, "The Spotter," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1941, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

Filipino masculinity in Salinas, Spotter used the same rhetoric in referencing Filipino *machismo* attitudes as backwards if they failed to recognize a Filipina's potential for political leadership.[387]

As the Philippines and its people came to be received in a friendlier light due to their support in the Pacific Theater, Filipinos and Filipino Americans were dubbed as America's "brown brothers and sisters" as the war progressed. The wartime alliance slightly eased racial tensions and prejudices held against Filipino immigrants and Filipino Americans along the Central Coast. Filipina American writers of *The Mail* also spotlighted fellow Filipinas across the United States who were improving American and Filipino relations, as demonstrated by their patriotic duties as local volunteers, government aides at the nation's capital, and as political representatives to the broader Philippine community.

Throughout the paper's monthly publications during the war, Filipina writers continued to encourage their fellow *pinays* to extend their labor and patriotism beyond their Salinas and Central Coast communities. The *pinays* of *The Philippines Mail* took advantage of their prominent positions with the paper to network with other *pinay* Americans in order to build a domestic and international sense of Filipina comradery. Within this network, the *pinay* journalists praised their female circles with ads and spreads in *The Mail* that beamed with positive affirmation for the roles *pinay* leaders and patriots took on in the broader Filipina diaspora during the war. FWC president Eugenia Sales would eventually win the local election as the Filipino community representative of East Salinas in Monterey County, serving as the first *pinay* of the Filipino Community of Salinas Valley, Inc. Sales would receive regular praise and support by other women of *The Philippines Mail* like Mrs. Ramona Losada, a past FWC

[387] *Machismo* is a Spanish and Portuguese term that references strong or aggressive masculine pride. Kevin L. Nadal, *Filipino American Psychology: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), Chapter 2.

president during the early to mid-1930s.[388] Lifetime members of the FWC, like Susan Aremas, still remember Mrs. Eugenia Sales as a force to be reckoned with, and that her tireless dedication to the Filipino American community of Salinas and Monterey County was simply an "indicator of the overwhelming vitality and creativity in leadership by Filipinas."[389]

Other accomplishments and nods to Filipinas in the workplace are found in the monthly column titled "Filipino Woman Notes." This column was dedicated to highlighting the Filipina and Filipina American war volunteers and community representatives that helped to maintain a friendly alliance between the Philippines and the United States. Such monthly segments running till the late 1940s praised the accomplishments of Filipina Americans working in Washington D.C. as typists and secretaries, of major Filipina diplomatic representatives serving in their husband's place for public appearances, and even of Filipina consulate members in San Francisco.[390] Mentions of notable Filipinas across the Pacific also made the monthly segment a celebration of the headway made by heroic Filipina guerrilla fighters and nurses throughout the war.[391]

By highlighting the accomplishments of Filipinas in the United States, and in the Philippines, the women of *The Philippines Mail* were able to push a proto-feminist agenda towards Filipina/Filipina Americans' inclusion and participation in politics and government after the conclusion of World War II. Filipinas of *The Mail* advocated for their inclusion in the

[388] Newspaper Article, Ramona Losada, "Around the Town," *The Philippines Mail*, March 1941, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.
[389] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas of the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas conducted by Stacey Salinas, March 26, 2023.
[390] Newspaper Column, La Senorita, "Washington Potpourri," *The Philippines Mail*, March 1945, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.
[391] See the column titled "Washington Potpouri," written by a Filipina by the pen name "La Senorita," describes the praise and accomplishments of the Filipinas involved with *The Philippines Mail* as well as the patriotism of *Pinays* across the United States, circa March 1945. La Senorita, "Washington Potpourri," *The Philippines Mail*, March 1945.

postwar world by citing their war efforts and how their patriotism aligned with both the United States and the new sovereign Philippines. *Pinays* showcased their attributes as responsible leaders, which they argued was a trait inherent in their "feminine qualities" and a source of Filipino cultural pride among Filipinas. Furthermore, patriotic *pinays* collectively argued that they could take on more than roles and responsibilities associated with their gender. The multitude of economic and social opportunities Salinas Filipinas found available to them with the departure of the Filipino men to the war effort afforded them both the economic means and public space to voice their concerns and advocacy towards Filipina inclusion outside of the family and home. In contrast to the restrictive matriarchal expectations under the culture of surveillance, the Pacific War time experience marked a transformative threshold whereby Filipina Americans exercised their explicit rejection of the policing cultural force of the local *pinoys*. And although Filipinas on both sides of the Pacific found themselves contributing to the diasporic maternal, they nonetheless handled with precarity a particular balancing act of nationalism and Filipina agency. They were forced in many situations and environments to uphold caregiver responsibilities in the hypermasculine environments of war, otherwise they were not allowed to participate in the war effort and liberation of their nation. In order to prove their worth and have their contributions validated by their male peers in both the Philippines and the United States, they had to be many things, wear multiple caps, while maintaining a Maria Clara facade so that they could be acknowledged and viewed as potential full-fledged citizens of the United States and Philippines. In their balancing act of cultural and political obligations, Filipinas openly challenged traditional gender norms of their Filipino hubs. Wartime *pinays* established a new conceptualization of Filipina American agency; one distinctly different from the FWC's (Filipino Women's Club) initial interpretation of Filipina femininity.

Machismo Backlash to the Emerging Filipina American Identity

Although many of the first and second-generation Filipina Americans during the war torn 1940s experienced a brief dissipation of *pinoy* surveillance in their hometowns, they still found themselves having to conform to ideal types of Filipina womanhood. Some *pinoy* critics like Greg S. San Diego opted to use his poetry column in the *Philippines Mail* to deliver a "gentle" warning to politically inclined *pinays*, and although supportive of local *pinays* and Philippine suffrage, still held onto rather conservative interpretations of *pinay* agency in his later writings. In his 1941 poem, "To a Filipino Woman in Politics," San Diego expressed his concerns that *pinays* as "innocent girls of song" might become disillusioned with gender equality as they take on new responsibilities. Most importantly, San Diego warned that if *pinays* were not careful with how much they tended to their political labor, they might naively damage their innocence and beauty as they would be forced to contend with "baneful politics" filled with "men full of pride."[392]

Another male critic by the name of Manuel I. Abella refused to be gentlemanly in his discussion of pinays in politics. Abella ran a headline article titled "An Estimate of a Woman" in *The Philippines Mail* that was published in weekly segments in the fall of 1942, in which he argued that Filipina American women were guilty of pushing their agendas of gender equality too far. Calling Filipina Americans pushy and arrogant, Abella also described them as poor representatives of their ethnic heritage. Abella believed *pinays* in America to be too westernized,

[392] Newspaper Poetry, Greg S. San Diego, "*To a Filipino Woman in Politics*," *The Philippines Mail*, February 14, 1941, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

a danger to fellow *pinoys'* wallets and hearts, and were "pesky spoiled things" who lacked the ability and stamina to undertake the responsibilities that come with gender equality.[393]

Abella wrote in a reproaching tone that was observant of the generation of Filipinas stepping into government sponsored job positions that helped them to transition into a more elevated economic status.[394] Rather than commend his female peers, he associated their new roles as having justified their behavior as snobbish flirts and unappreciative job holders in a place that Abella argues "should have been the exclusive domain of men."[395] Abella's criticisms of local Filipina Americans', mentioning many by name in his editorial pieces, represent the social constraints Filipinas regularly faced even as they exercised greater agency within a wartime environment.

Abella's writing was quick to lambast Filipina Americans' participation and inclusion beyond their ethnic circle and familial household. His segments on Filipina American women displayed blatant disapproval of Filipinas who appeared too Americanized and were "only Filipina in skin color."[396] Filipina American women, in Abella's opinion, did not meet traditional expectations and were not representatives of the ideal Filipina; one who embodies Philippine ethnic pride and mothers her community as a cultural matriarch. Articles and opinion pieces like Abella's found in *The Philippines Mail* reveal that the culture of surveillance throughout the war was still an active policing agent that weighed heavily on, if not limited, full Filipina American agency in their communities and their other endeavors.

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[393] Newspaper Article, Manuel I. Abella, "An Estimate of a Woman," *The Philippines Mail*, September 19, 1942, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[394] Abella's article discusses his observation of Filipina Americans in Northern California and the Central Coast who took on wartime industry jobs in California's port towns.

[395] Abella, "An Estimate of a Woman," *The Philippines Mail*, September 19, 1942.

[396] Abella, "An Estimate of a Woman," *The Philippines Mail*, September 19, 1942.

Although Juanita Begley was a well-respected *pinay* business owner in her community, her letter describing the Filipina's worth was not taken lightly by the *pinoys* who remained on the Central Coast. Manuel I. Abella was a frequent correspondent of *The Philippines Mail*, local *pinoy* doctor, and prominent member of the Philippine Constitutional Convention. A month after Begley published her letter celebrating a *pinay's* worth within the Fil-Am community and how *pinoy* criticisms were more a reflection of their own misgivings and their inability to empathize or know how to love properly, Abella published his response in *The Mail*. Abella wrote a lengthy response titled "An Estimate Of Women (WITH MY APOLOGIES TO JO BEGLEY)" to Juanita Begley embodying the *pinoy machismo* rhetoric felt throughout the Fil-Am communities of the Central Coast a decade prior:

"The male of the species contributes just as much as the Female. Herein lies the delusion of those -- mostly women, by the way -- who think that only women can feel real love. To put it in another form, it is their belief men are unfeeling, motionless, heartless cads. It was Shakespeare who said more or less that love is but an incident in man's life, while it is woman's whole existence. Shakespeare was a poet.

Not one psychologist worthy of his name ever maintained that women are better lovers.The intensity of the emotions is not predicated on sex. To say that women have a monopoly of the tender passion is to state a plain hokum.The unadulterated fact is men have more self control either through force of tradition or through force of habit. It is not that they feel less but that they know better to repress and to conceal.

From the dim reaches of recorded history, women have led a passive and subservient life in the home. Hence they had time and opportunity to coddle and nurse their feelings. Hence, the moniker of "the weaker sex." Hence the widespread belief they are all hearts.

Indeed, apparently the women were right, for were they not always crying at the slightest provocation? Were they not as coy as doves? Were they not perennially the victims of a broken heart? In this wholesale deception, the poets and the novelists, unwittingly perhaps, were no less responsible.

The American women overnight found themselves at large in the up-to-then the world of men exclusively. As soon as they had a chance to be tough and coldly practical they became so with a

vengeance. There is nothing as scientific as a woman scientist; nothing as frigidly surgical as a woman surgeon; nothing as business-like as she is in business.

Read any random divorce suit and the first thing that will greet your eyes is the settlement of alimony asked by the coy young matron, whose sparkling happy eyes give an unconditional lie to a tale of cruelty recited by lips tutored by an experienced shyster."[397]

In the greater Bay Area Juanita Begley was a *pinay* pioneer and leader in her own right. As one of the first Filipinas to graduate from the first American nursing program established in the Philippines at the turn of the century and being one of the first Filipina nurses to immigrate to the United States in the 1910s, Begley was a force to be reckoned with. Her white American husband had chosen to leave her and his four children to start anew in the Midwest. By herself, Juanita managed to raise enough capital to own a cafe, restaurant, and barber shop. Abella most likely knew Juanita's marriage history and the popularity of her current businesses in the greater bay area, as the Central Coast and Peninsula Fil-Am network were very tight knit and there were only so many *pinays* prior to the War Brides Act of 1946. Rather than commending her for her longstanding role in the community as a valuable *pinay* entrepreneur, Abella retorted that women in business were the shrewdest and most unfeeling of all. Such women had been exposed too long to American culture and had forgotten their cultural roots, which, according to the *dalagang bukid* and Maria Clara narratives, entailed women who consistently honored their husbands as submissive women of the home. Thus, *pinays* who had become too American had forgotten their duties and attention to love and honor and were conniving creatures responsible for loveless marriages and penniless betrayed husbands.

[397] Manuel I. Abella, "An Estimate Of Women (WITH MY APOLOGIES TO JO BEGLEY)," *The Philippines Mail*, September 19, 1942, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas.

Juanita's business and home became a rest stop for *pinoy* migrant farm workers seeking refuge during the 1930s. During the war, Juanita and her daughters continued to house and entertain *pinoy* soldiers en route to being deployed to Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. Her granddaughter, Maria Chua O'Toole, remembers her grandmother Juanita and her aunts as "smart firecrackers whom everyone respected."[398] Maria remembers her grandmother and aunts as fiercely loyal to their community, and who in turn, were adored by those that Grandma Juanita took in.[399] Despite Juanita's reputation within the Fil-Am community as a surrogate mother to local *pinoys*, thus fulfilling the *pinoy* gendered expectation of *pinays* to serve as matriarchal pillars of the community, *pinoy* criticisms of Juanita's column were nonetheless relentless in their criticisms of her marriage and public persona, and thus were boldly *machismo* in rhetoric.

Manuel Abella wrote another follow up letter to his original critique of Begley three months later, adding more to his venomous critique of all Filipina Americans attending social gatherings, stating that Filipina American women were a lost cause as they had become too Americanized, too proud and consumed with themselves in return for their American habits. They had suffered at the hands of white American husbands, thus only having themselves to blame:

"The ancestors of these girls must turn in their graves across 7,000 miles, whenever they surrender themselves to the back-breaking convulsions of a strange freak of a dance [the jitterbug and jazz steps], in the dress of Maria Clara. One day she woke up married to a naturalized German stevedore, strong as an ox, though not as filthy, nor as rude and temperamental. In no time, he was riding her as a cowpuncher. When she finally called a halt to the gory affair, she was just a wreck of her former self, with her beauty gone, never to return. At the age of 25 - hardly - she was a dipsomaniac, and looked 40. She was paying a penalty for her foolishness - and what a penalty!

[398] *Kwentuhan* with Maria Chua O'Toole conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2020. See Maria Chua O'Toole's family biography history that she personally wrote tracing back her family's immigration story to the onset of the American Occupation Era.
[399] *Kwentuhan* with Maria Chua O'Toole conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2020. See Maria Chua O'Toole's family biography history that she personally wrote tracing back her family's immigration story to the onset of the American Occupation Era.

The gravest mistake of our Filipino *mestizas* is to misunderstand the white men who choose to associate with them. Those who have been to the Philippines and married Filipinas over there, sooner or later dispose of their spouses here.

When I started writing this article, I did not know I had to discuss this side of Filipino girl in the United States. I am glad, however, that I did it."[400]

Pinays were keen to respond to the anxieties Filipino men felt during the war when gender spheres began to shift as demands for women's labor increased. Editor-in-Chief of *The Philippines Mail*, Pacita Todtod, was a 1.5 generation Filipina American who acknowledged these criticisms and used her editorial column to ease and manage men's critiques of their Filipina peers in Salinas. Towards the end of the war, Todtod wrote a personal piece about her goals and vision for the future publications of *The Philippines Mail*. But prior to listing her hopes for the paper's future success, she put forth an argument as to not only why she was qualified as the editor for *The Mail*, but why the paper would benefit from a *pinay*'s management.

Todtod explained to her audience that the paper would not become a "woman's paper, a she-paper, if you please," to dispel any misogynist concerns, like Abella's.[401] Furthermore, Todtod assured her readers that Filipina Americans of the paper were not overstepping certain masculinized domains, nor were they self-indulgent citizens who only wrote on their preferred topics. Instead, Todtod delicately phrased that she advocated for collaboration amongst Filipinos (*pinays* and *pinoys*) as the paper's first and foremost goal. Those who refused to participate in forming cordial relations in the Filipino American community, she threatened, would be thus exposed by the paper as unpatriotic, backwards, and undemocratic.[402] Todtod's use of fear in the

[400] Manuel I. Abella, "An Estimate Of Women: Part III," *The Philippines Mail*, December, 1942, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas.
[401] Newspaper Editor's Letter, Pacita Todtod, "Miss Todtod," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1945, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.
[402] Todtod, "Miss Todtod," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1945.

form of public shaming thus turned the culture of surveillance back onto her male critics. With threats of tarnishing one's reputation in a community that relies heavily on status and gossip, Todtod like other female writers of *The Mail,* confronted head-on the naysayers and critics like Abella and publicly deemed them as detriments to their community for not supporting the voices of all participants of their Filipino American circle.

In her 1945 editorial letter Todtod concluded that a successful and progressive paper is one that relies on the collaboration of both men and women, where men support the voices of their female peers as equals. If *the Mail* was to catch up with the times, in her opinion, it had to cultivate a bilateral relationship between *pinays* and *pinoys*:

"I have a special responsibility to Filipino womanhood. The point of view of women must receive more attention. The idea that man alone plans things is due for discarding. The notion that woman was created to be a mere follower is due to oblivion."[403]

Todtod's tone and delivery of her principles on gender equality remained firm in her editorial pieces through the late 1940s. In a similar fashion to the contemporary Filipina writers for *The Philippines Mail* from the 1930s-1940s, Todtod also weaved in how certain qualities of her female character matched the ideal Maria Clara archetype. It was her own inherent Filipina femininity, according to Todtod, from which she drew her strength and qualifications and that allowed and bolstered her capabilities to run and represent the paper.

In an open letter published in *The Philippines Mail* to General MacArthur in February of 1945, Todtod acted as representative for all her fellow Filipinas. She described their female collective "as the natural trustees of their race" and thus all Filipinas were the premier face of the patriotic Filipino people when offering their gratitude for MacArthur's work in liberating the

[403] Newspaper Headline, "Miss Todtod," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1945, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

Philippines.[404] She argued that Filipinas always looked to advance the welfare of all Filipinos, and that she herself personified the Filipino patriot that aimed to unite all Filipinos under the common cause of supporting their community and the war effort. From Todtod's perspective, this new wartime duty was both a strength and an extension of one of the many Filipina responsibilities that should be praised by *pinoy* observers.

As a public figure for the Fil-Am communities in Northern California, Todtod was also one of the staunchest supporters of the Allied front in the Pacific. She petitioned that Filipino men in the United States be allowed to volunteer and register for the war, as they were previously denied serving because they were defined as aliens ineligible for American citizenship under the Tydings McDuffie Act of 1934. She collected letters and signatures from Fil-Am community representatives across the country in support of allowing Filipino men to join the war effort. After the military office in San Francisco received her letter, which ardently requested that Filipinos be allowed to serve regardless of their citizenship status, President Franklin D. Roosevelt revised and signed the Selective Service Act in January of 1942. Thus, her efforts allowed Filipinos to serve in the American military while also offering naturalization as an added incentive for Filipinos to join the war.[405] The multi-faceted *pinay* actress turned journalist, despite the misogynistic criticisms of her male peers, fulfilled every role expected of a Filipina in Fil-Am society. Like the Filipina club women who served as essential go-betweens and middle(wo)men in negotiating Filipino and Anglo-American relations, Todtod managed and took on the responsibility of advocating for Filipinos, declaring that they were worthy of serving

[404] Newspaper Article, Pacita Todtod, "To Gen. MacArthur from the Filipino Woman," *The Philippines Mail*, February 1945, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

[405] Cicero A. Estrella, "Filipinos had to Fight for the Right to Serve their Adopted Home," Last Modified May 5, 2005, Last Accessed November 13, 2021, https://www.sfgate.com/entertainment/article/Filipinos-had-to-fight-for-right-to-serve-their-2632699.php.

the United States and thus arguing that Filipinos in America were true Americans and should be treated as such by allowing them to serve and become American citizens. Furthermore, Todtod also regularly took in and housed Filipina and Filipino war heroes who had completed their missions or were honorably discharged, therefore serving as the epitome of the quintessential hostess. She not only invited them to stay at her humble abode, but she also organized Fil-Am parties and events to celebrate and welcome the Filipina/o veterans.

Todtod, like many other *pinays* at the time, also went to the forts where the Filipino soldiers trained before being shipped out in order to raise their morale and performed dances, sang, and cooked Filipino dishes for the new officers. Todtod would also take on acting and singing roles in war films like *They Were Expendable* (1945) starring John Wayne, thus representing the Fil-Am community proudly in American cinema by helping to portray Filipinas/os as stalwart allies. Todtod's patriotic efforts combined with her filial and affective labor for the larger Fil-Am community thus was more than enough in proving her dedication and devotion to her Filipino community members. Yet, despite her tireless endeavors, Todtod's management of the *Philippines Mail* received regular criticisms in nearly every issue throughout the war from her fellow *pinoys*, therefore revealing that even in wartime and economic duress, labor roles and community dynamics continued to be dictated by *machismo* rhetoric and surveillance.

By painting both herself and her fellow *pinays* as sharing characteristics associated with the caregiver persona that the FWC leaders embodied, Todtod validated her position and capabilities as more than simply an editor for the paper, but most importantly as a Filipina American leader. Todtod proved that she was up to par with what was expected of *pinays* while also emasculating the "culture of surveillance." By using shame as a tactic to confront the more

conservative culture police of Salinas and the broader Monterey County, Todtod paved and safeguarded a route for Filipinas to explore outside of their traditional gender roles. Todtod's rhetoric of a Filipino community built by both genders was one expression of the many transformations felt by the Central Coast Filipino American enclave during the war. This transformation ultimately allowed Filipina immigrants and Filipina Americans to exercise their opinions and promote their missions and labor as a positive facet of their female identity, and not a hindrance to their ethnic heritage.

Conclusion

Bearing the responsibilities of caregiver and cultural matriarch, serving as the social officer and representative of their communities, keeping their own homes economically afloat as the men went off to volunteer for the war, keeping their community stable during a depression, while negotiating racially hostile environments, all the while under the critical *pinoy* gaze; *pinay* responsibilities within three years had intensified and they found themselves expending their energies into multiple labor platforms and motherwork.

Progressive *pinays* continued to navigate their opportunities and assert their political opinions with care and caution. Many were continuously observant and sharp in weaving Filipino gender expectations into their p/feminist rhetoric. Filipina American writers for *The Philippines Mail* described their leadership potential as a direct result of their "Filipino feminine qualities," referencing their family's reputation and their own achievements to prove their capabilities in their new work positions, and heavily emphasized their cultural pride and patriotism distinctly as *pinays*.

By carefully maneuvering through the somewhat dissipated fog of cultural surveillance in Salinas' Filipino circles, *pinays* during the war were still able to exercise an expanding form of

agency. They tackled culturally informed gender norms, took on civic and administrative positions (at the workplace and as volunteers in county governments and local organizations), and asserted their own literary reassessment of Filipina American femininity. Most importantly, one of their largest contributions to the pre-1965 pioneer Asian American experience was that they simultaneously grounded and expanded Filipino American communities throughout the war as a result of their consistent development of intra-Filipina mutual support networks across the country and the Pacific.

Chapter 6: Post War Pinays: Questioning Filipina Domesticity in the Post War Era

The conclusion of World War II meant the return of the *pinoy* veterans to the greater Central Coast as full-fledged American citizens who had earned their naturalization through their service in the war. Many remained in the Philippines after the war, married, and brought their new families back with them to the United States before the conclusion of the War Brides Act (1945-1948). Others continued to work for the American military, some serving in the Korean War as strategists or part of supply units. Those who chose to return to the United States, once they were discharged from their service, fell back into their previous rhythm; as migrant laborers working in the fields and valleys of California. The *pinoys* who wanted to take what little advantage they could from their new citizenship status and veteran benefits from their participation in the war looked to fulfill a major facet of traditional Filipino masculinity previously denied to them as noncitizens: Marriage and having a family of their own.

This chapter discusses this new wave of war bride Filipinas who worked alongside the slightly older *pinays* of the Central Coast after the war. Together, they would come to affectionately represent the *manang* generation to their children, the second generation known as the Bridge Generation. When the *pinoys* returned, the FWC *pinays* and war bride *pinays* would work together in the fields and in their community centers, adding to the civic motherwork mission of preserving and growing their rural Little Manilas. Moving forward, the precedent the FWC set in terms of community care work as an extension of their mother work as their entry way into local politics would continue to resemble club work. But the two generations of *pinays*, the older pinays and war brides, would continue to run on the momentum of the civic and political transformations they felt as full participants of the war and preservers of the homefront.

Such political sentiments that moved beyond the *dalagang bukid's* kinship political influence became their raison d'etre in their community work, drawing from their experiences they had gained as leaders during wartime.

Upon returning from the war, Filipino American veterans found that their request for benefits fell on deaf ears. Old racial prejudices against Filipinos would seep back into their daily lives as they labored again along the Central Coast and greater Salinas Valley. Although some gained access to the GI Bill, like Alex Fabros Jr.'s family, which allowed them to take out loans to move out of the labor camps and into the emerging middle class suburbs, even then, they were confronted with white neighbors who saw their presence as a blight on their neighborhood's respectability and reputation.[406] Fil-Am veterans living in "liberal" spaces like San Francisco also faced similar experiences with rejection due to their race. Maria Chua O'Toole recalled how her family applied for three years to be approved for a loan on a house in San Francisco's suburbs:

> "My mother and father decided that they wanted to buy a house in San Francisco. We looked for three years. As young as I was, I still remember realtors telling my father (a Filipino veteran), "You qualify for the loan, but the residents don't want your kind in this neighborhood and the owners won't sell to you." One time, the realtor called to tell my dad, "Guess what!? You can buy that house because the residents did not know that you are a physician!" My father responded that we really didn't want to live there anyway. Finally, in 1957, my parents purchased a small home on 6th Avenue in the Richmond District of San Francisco. We were the first Asians on that street."[407]

The opportunity to purchase a home meant a great deal to the *pinoy* veterans. The *pinoys* who wanted to take what little advantage they could from their new citizenship status and gains from their participation in the war looked to fulfill a major facet of traditional Filipino masculinity previously denied to them as noncitizens; marriage and raising of a family.

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[406] *Kwentuhan* with Alex Fabros Jr. conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2018.
[407] *Kwentuhan* with Maria Chua O'Toole on her Family history in San Francisco, 2020.

Under the War Brides and G.I. Fiancé Acts, foreign brides of American soldiers could accompany their husbands back to the United States and eventually become naturalized American citizens. Filipino soldiers who had lived in the United States during the implementation of the anti-miscegenation laws viewed the War Brides Act as an opportunity to marry women of their own ethnic heritage and begin their own families in the United States. In many instances, Filipino American soldiers, and recently naturalized *pinoy* farm workers (due to the naturalization act of 1945), traveled back to the Philippines with the specific intention to be matchmade by networks of family and friends, and would bring their new bride to the United States.[408] In other cases, similar to Susan Aremas' parents, Filipino American soldiers would marry their brides and officiate their marriage in the American military bases in Leyte or Luzon where they were stationed and return alone to the United States. Once there, husbands would try to arrange their new home for their wife, secure a job to provide for their family, and then send word and travel fare to their overseas spouse, who would have to brave traveling to America alone by ocean liner or cargo ship.

Susan's mother, Serapia Estojero, a Samar *guerrillera* (Philippine guerrilla resistance fighter), met her husband, Ricardo Aremas, at an American supply base where she was volunteering on the island of Leyte. Tasked with providing food supplies to the neighboring civilians in the Tacloban area, Ricardo and Serapia regularly crossed paths and took notice of one another. As a clerk, Serapia would register families for their food rations and Ricardo would deliver the supplies to her to hand to the civilians. Neither shared the same Filipino dialect (Serapia was fluent in Visayan, Ricardo was fluent in Ilocano), and so they spoke to one another in limited Tagalog or with what simple English they knew.

[408] Mina Roces, "Filipina/o Migration to the United States and the Remaking of Gender Narratives: 1906-2010," *Gender & History*, vol. 27, no. 1 (April 2015,190-206): 192.

Serapia remembered how her husband first tried to court her, remarking, "I would be writing at the desk in this big warehouse. And he [Ricardo] would sign something and 'make eyes at me' [*laughs*]... When I would go home, he would give me just a little package of food… [*laughs*]… he was not allowed to give those [supplies] away…it was a little something to make us get to know each other."[409] Serapia's daughter, Susan, explained how upon hearing that story, that she realized just how much her father must have fallen for her mother in 1945: "He [Dad] was so honest, he would never do anything to break a law, and giving her something [military supplies] that was against his job, was out of character."[410]

Serapia and Ricardo pose for their marriage license, 1945, courtesy of the Aremas Family, Personal Collection.[411]

Within months of knowing one another, the *pinoy* turned Supply Sergeant and the *guerrillera* turned military clerk were married on December 3, 1945, four months after the Imperial Japanese Army was defeated in the Philippines Campaign. As her husband settled their living arrangements back on the Central Coast in Salinas, he would also help to fund Serapia's

[409] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas & Serapia Aremas, (World War II Philippine Guerrilla, Salinas *manang* pre-1965 generation & daughter), conducted by Stacey Salinas, March 31, 2018.
[410] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas & Serapia Aremas, (World War II Philippine Guerrilla, Salinas *manang* pre-1965 generation & daughter), conducted by Stacey Salinas, March 31, 2018.
[411] Photograph, "Serapia "Sherry" and Ricardo's Marriage License," 1945, courtesy of the Aremas Family, Personal Collection.

endeavors as a credentialed fashion designer and seamstress at Samson's Fashion College of Manila.[412] After she graduated, her husband sailed back to Manila, and the two boarded the *USS Meigs,* a vessel once used as a troop transfer ship during the war. The couple arrived in California and settled in one of Salinas' labor camps in 1947, where her father would again continue to labor in the lettuce fields as an irrigation expert for three years before choosing to work at Fort Ord as a groundskeeper.

Serapia would experience many new changes to her life as a new bride to an American soldier. One of the first changes included changing her Philippine name, Serapia, to "Sherry" upon marrying her husband in a Tacloban commonwealth office:

"The officer typing our papers told me I was a very beautiful girl…[laughs]…. but apologized and said he didn't know how to spell my name. That is when my husband told me "Sherry" might be easier to use in America. I agreed, and my name was "Sherry" ever since."[413]

In the Salinas Valley, Sherry continued to keep busy in her new community as a seamstress, new mother, and wife. She joined the Filipino Women's Club, the Women's Auxiliary Club of Salinas, and took on private enterprises as a dressmaker, seamstress, beautician, baker, and cake maker amongst her *pinay/oy* clientele. Although she worked as a beautician in her first few years living in Salinas, Sherry chose to become a homemaker to raise her daughter Susan. Although Sherry would come to define her status as a housewife, she continued to utilize and hire out many of her other skills and licensed credentials that she earned in American trade schools.

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[412] Serapia would be the first to graduate from the Samson Fashion College 1946 cohort because her last name had become Aremas, and graduates walked to receive their degrees alphabetically depending on their last names. The requirement to graduate was to sew one's own Filipiniana dress design. Grandma Sherry was very proud to share these facts during her talk. *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas & Serapia Aremas, (World War II Philippine Guerrilla, Salinas *manang* pre-1965 generation & daughter), conducted by Stacey Salinas, March 31, 2018.

[413] Sherry Aremas (World War II Philippine Guerrilla, Salinas *manang* pre-1965 generation), interviewed by Stacey Salinas, April 2018.

As Sherry settled down and became acquainted with the Filipino hub of Salinas, she too witnessed *machismo* scrutiny and patriarchal criticisms during the postwar period as the "culture of surveillance" began to re-emerge once *pinoys* re-settled the Salinas Valley. Acquaintances of Sherry's husband openly remarked on Sherry's name, insinuating that she had changed her Filipino-Spanish name because she was "ashamed of her heritage and most likely wanted to appear more westernized."[414] Upon hearing this in the local Filipino owned barbershop, Ricardo, in support of his wife's reputation, suggested to his wife that she confront the gentlemen and their accusations:

> "The next time I saw him [the male critic] I told him the story about why I changed my name, and my husband's part [in it]. He apologized to me, and I never heard anyone speak bad, or question my name, after that."[415]

Sherry's confrontation with her fellow *pinoy* community members reveals the lingering culturally-gendered expectations placed on *pinays* (war bride and FWC cohorts) in Salinas that continued well into the postwar period. Charged with the accusation that she failed to fulfill her assigned gender role as a cultural matriarch, Sherry in response had to defend her reputation to prevent further gossip from sullying her and her husband's roles in their ethnic enclave of East Salinas (the Fil-Am quarter). Despite her active membership to the FWC, Women's Auxiliary, commitment to her daughter and family, and her own contributions to her *pinay/oy* peers as local seamstress and beautician, her social standing was nonetheless easily questioned due to misinformed gossip headed by male circles.[416]

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[414] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas & Serapia Aremas, (World War II Philippine Guerrilla, Salinas *manang* pre-1965 generation & daughter), conducted by Stacey Salinas, March 31, 2018.

[415] *Kwentuhan* with Sherry Aremas conducted by Stacey Salinas, Salinas, California, April 2018.

[416] The Aremas family shared Sherry Aremas' marriage certificate, typed in December 1945. The signatures and names on the certificate reveal her name change from the traditional Castilian Spanish name, Serapia, to the American name, Sherry, that she chose with her husband Ricardo. Courtesy of the Aremas Family's Personal Collection. Legal Marriage Document, "Aremas Marriage Certificate," December 1945, courtesy of the Aremas Family Personal Collection.

Mrs. Aremas' experience reveals the intensely observant patriarchal culture that hovered over the Filipino American hub of Salinas well into the postwar era. In a similar vein to the older FWC leaders, newer community members like war bride Sherry felt the same pressure of fitting the mold of housewife and ideal cultural matriarch. And, like the wartime *pinay* leaders of the Salinas Fil-Am community, Sherry also challenged the paragon of Filipina femininity, the *dalagang bukid* archetype, by tackling *pinoy* culture police head on. By taking on her own independent economic endeavors as an immigrant woman of color she, like many of the other FWC members who were business owners or labor camp operators, also secured her economic freedom, making pinays of her generation crucial contributors to both the Fil-Am household and the Fil-Am community's socio-economic growth. Like the FWC *pinays* and their daughters, war brides like Sherry were not afraid to confront their overly gossiping, or *chismoso*, *pinoy* critics.

Nearly 2,300 war brides from the Philippines would immigrate to the U.S. from 1946-1950.[417] Filipina war brides represented a second trickle of a wave of Filipina immigrants who would come to represent the pre-1965 Filipina American experience. Although they represented a small fraction of the total Filipino population of 61,645 in the United States by 1950, they helped considerably in further grounding their husband's ethnic hub by establishing families and diversifying their ethnic sphere's economy with their multifaceted skill sets and trades. Most importantly, as many Filipina war brides hailed from the Visayas region of the Philippines, these Filipina immigrants represented a new ethnic and language group that further diversified the

[417] Ed. Roger Daniels, *Immigration and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman* (Kirksville:Truman State University Press, 2010), 103.United States by naturalizing, but also ensured a substantial increase in the nation's Philippine-born population by utilizing the War Brides and G.I. Fiancées Acts and general provisions of immigration law now applicable to them. During the 1946 through 1950 fiscal years, 2,215 Filipina war brides (and a lone Filipino war groom), 269 minor children born overseas to these Filipina wives, and 46 Filipina fiancées acquired non-quota immigrant status—a total of 2,531 Philippine immigrants.

longstanding Ilocano and Tagalog heritage of the Central Coast.[418] As foreigners an ocean away from family and friends, trying to acculturate to their new American homes and Fil-Am community proved difficult. Like their husbands before them who built comradery in the bachelor *pinoy* camps and infantry regiments, Filipinas looked to one another for support. Filipina war brides thus found solace and inclusion in their new American landscape as new additions to the actively growing and prominent women's organizations in Salinas and greater Central Coast towns.

Pinay Leadership: The Face of the Fil-Am Community

As the atmosphere of postwar Salinas gradually returned to the migrant farm seasonal rhythms of a decade prior, the Fil-Am community also underwent a revival of Filipino cultural pride. Filipinas who had held their ethnic neighborhoods together while their husbands and sons were off to war also collectively anchored the Filipino American identity and hub of Salinas after the war. Filipinas in Salinas by the late 1940s continued to hold proprietor and management positions in East Salinas labor camps. More Filipinas, like Salinas local Flora Cabacungan, owner and manager of Flo's Men's Wear and Flo's Clothing, began to openly advertise and operate essential businesses that the neighborhood relied on, including laundry, tailoring services, and consignment goods.[419] Although both she and her husband owned their own separate establishments, Cabacungan's photo and personal catchphrases became the sole face of both her and her husband's stores. A decade prior, the ads for the Cabacungans' stores only had

[418] Mae Respicio Koerner, *Images of America: Filipinos in Los Angeles* (San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 21. In 1940, the U.S. Census listed the Filipino American population at 45,208. By 1950, the number had risen to 61,645. Those who came during these years are often referred to as the second wave.

[419] See Mrs. Flores Cabacungan's store ads for her store, "Flo's Clothing," which was in operation for over 10 years (1938-1950s). She also helped her husband Fred Cabacungan manage his store. "Announcements," *The Philippines Mail*, March 1948, courtesy of the Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas.Newspaper Ad, "Flo's Men's Wear," *The Philippines Mail*, June 1948, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.

the name of Fred Cabacungan, and not his wife. Now in the postwar era, after *pinays* held their own as the men were away, the Fil-Am hubs of Monterey County preferred and were more comfortable seeing local *pinays* be active front-facing representatives of community establishments.

Other *pinays* whose businesses held monthly ads and received written accolades for their success in *The Philippines Mail* included Filipina owned grocers, restaurants, and cafes. Cafes like Mrs. E. Braga's "Mama Edad Steak Shop" in East Salinas became a major hangout for Filipino *pinoys* and their new families, and received more ad space than local as well as Bay Area and Los Angeles *pinoy* owned restaurants.[420] The increased recognition of multiple Filipina owned and/or managed dry goods stores, restaurants, cafes, and pool halls thus signaled to local Fil-Am communities that they had successfully planted stable roots in the area.

Traditional Asian American scholarship paints the earlier Fil-Am pioneer generations as constantly mobile due to their dependence on migrant labor, making *pinoy* culture and populations rarely able to plant long standing community roots similar to the Chinatowns and Little Tokyos that emerged and are well documented from the 1870s-1930s.[421] The presence of Filipina proprietors challenges this depiction of the pre-1965 Fil-Am generations as lacking in economic success and community formation like their Japanese and Chinese American counterparts. Even a decade prior to the war, Filipina store owners like Juana Begley and her daughters in San Francisco owned their own home and managed a successful restaurant and barber business to cater to the local and migrant laborer Filipinos. During the war, the Filipinos

[420] Newspaper Ad, "Mama Edad Steak Shop," *The Philippines Mail*, 1945, microfilm, John Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas, California.
[421] Rick Bonus, *Locating Filipino Americans Ethnicity and the Cultural Politics of Space* (Temple University Press, 2000), 106. *Rudy P. Guevara Jr., Becoming Mexipino: Multiethnic Identities and Communities in San Diego* (Rutgers University Press, 2012), 99-100.

who volunteered for the war would make regular stops at Lola Juana's store. Eventually, due to her consistent presence in the old Fil-Am district on Sonoma Street and the International Hotel, the restaurant continued to serve as a club space and hangout for older and younger Filipina/o Americans through the 1950s.

Juana's granddaughter, Maria Chua O'Toole recalled:

"As it turned out, Grandma Juana was a mover and a shaker. She opened the first Filipino restaurant in San Francisco, replete with a barber chair, a pool table and a restaurant. It was a place where the "old timers" could gather, socialize and eat their native food. During World War II, her home on 1412 Geary Street became a haven for Filipino soldiers, merchant marines and many others. Her albums were filled with the pictures of Filipino men, young and old alike, which filled her home with music, laughter and camaraderie. It was my understanding that there were not many places where Filipinos were welcome even in San Francisco. So, Grandma gave aid and comfort to those so far from their homeland."[422]

The wartime mobilization of *pinoys'* Filipina and non-Filipina wives in the fields to grow and pick America's produce to feed American troops made visible the presence of more *pinays* in the fields, beyond the packing sheds where women were normally relegated to. Both generations of Salinas pre-war *pinay* wives and the war brides whose husbands continued to work as migrant farmers in the Salinas Valley also had the opportunity to take on the paid seasonal task of "buncher." Women bunchers were responsible for the labor-intensive tasks after the crops (mainly green onions, garlic, and carrots) were collected. Bunching included the washing, cutting, packing, and visual prepping of the produce. Japanese American growers in the greater Central Coast hired majority *pinay* wives as their seasonal shed "bunchers," allowing them to add another source of independent income to their household economy.[423]

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[422] *Kwentuhan* with Maria Chua O'Toole on her family history in San Francisco conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2020. Maria Chua O'Toole also shared her personally written histories that she completed describing her family's immigration narratives and their lives in San Francisco.

[423] The term "bunching," particularly in regard to onion picking, meant washing and cutting parts of the onion to prepare it for sale in local and national grocers. The buncher laborer would remove the outer layer of the washed onion, count and bunch other cleaned onions together using rubber bands, and then pack them into crates. The shed bunchers would then be paid by the weight of the filled onion crate. Sometimes, farm owners and planters would

Traditional bunching, prior to the mechanization many growers use today, required an assembly line type process. Whereas the husbands would provide their labor to prep, plant, grow, pick, and irrigate the fields of the Salinas Valley, Filipina wives covered the final steps of cleaning and packing the produce into crates, readying Salinas produce for both local sale and nationwide delivery. *Pinays* thus made the growing and picking processes of farm labor more streamlined and less arduous for their husbands by taking on the final processing stages of a picker's regular workload. As hired independent "bunchers," Filipinas independently supplemented their family's income on a seasonal basis.

War bride wives new to *campo* life also had to reckon with the up ticking of pinoy machismo and dominance in the camps, or *campo*. Unpaid labor that the wives tasked amongst themselves within these camps helped build a sense of female comradery, of extended family networks, and made both camp life and farm work more orderly, structured, and most importantly, familial. Labor camp wives performed as mothers, surrogate sisters to the bachelor *pinoys*, and caregivers as they cooked not only for their families but for the other men who were without kin. Amongst the wives, the *Manang* Generation divided up camp tasks, scheduling cleaning lists amongst one another, as well as taking turns cooking for the camp members in the mess hall. The postwar wife made farm labor in the Salinas Valley and greater Central Coast more efficient and welcoming, while they themselves earned an income to supplement their household's total income.

Other ways war bride *pinays* operated their own economic sphere within the farm labor work force included selling their own home-made goods for the unmarried *pinoys* in the fields. Susan Aremas remembers growing up in and around Filipino labor camps in East Salinas and

hire whole families out to do a week's worth of bunching, paying each individual depending on how much they bunched.

along the Salinas River, and how central both the Filipina and non-Filipina wives of the *pinoys* were to the efficiency and emotional well-being of the labor camps. Filipinas simultaneously served as dutiful wives and caregivers to the *pinoy* bachelors, while also occupying themselves with their own independent workloads and trades that contributed to their communities.

Cornelia Delute, like many of the new generation of *pinay* postwar brides, is still remembered by her children Heriberto and Nickie Delute for her roles in the Delano Fil-Am community, in which she cooked and prepared food and snacks for the field workers. The time intensive Filipino desserts she prepared for the *manongs* included *bibingka*, *biko*, cassava cake, and *suman*. Without any childcare benefits, Cornelia, like other *pinay* farm workers at the time, took her children with her in the fields as she sold her homemade goods to the *manongs* who saw such snacks as nostalgic reminders of their homeland.[424] As a working mother who worked side by side with the *pinoy* farm workers, Cornelia, like her compatriots, saw the value in a strong union. She, alongside her husband Heriberto Delute, both became strong supporters of the United Farm Workers. Cornelia would continue to work in the grape fields and carrot packing sheds until her late seventies.

Alex Edillor of Delano's Fil-Am community remembers how his mother, a postwar *pinay* of the Delano community, would prepare Filipino sweets and snacks for the aging *pinoy* farm workers at the labor camps over the weekends. His parents and his mother especially, insisted that they travel as a family to see extended family and the *manongs* in the older Fil-Am communities along the migrant labor route. Alex remembered how his mother ensured that family trips were opportunities to check in with the *manang* and *manong* farm workers. For

[424] *Kwentuhan* with Heriberto and Nickie Delute conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2022. The Delute family also shared their own personally written histories that they had collected and documented over the years.

Alex, he recalled how much sisterly affection *pinays* like his mother gave to the older bachelor *manongs* who continued to labor in Delano well into their seventies.

"The *manangs* would make snacks, rice cakes especially, and other dishes that they would sell to the men as they worked and took breaks. For me, the *manongs* were my uncles even if we weren't related. The women really took care of them and we were all family."[425]

Alex's mother, Natividad Ballesteros Edillor, was a postwar *pinay* bride who dedicated much of her life to serving her community and carried with her elements of the maternal *dalagang bukid*. She taught first grade in the Philippines, Muntinlupa Elementary, for 13 years. She married Carmelo Jarligo Edillor, a Philippine officer and veteran of World War II, in 1947 and established their family home in Muntinlupa. Her husband Carmelo immigrated to the U.S in 1952 in hopes to secure a better income for his family. Seven years later, Natividad and their two young children joined Carmelo in the U.S. in Delano. Natividad was unable to find work as a teacher because her Philippine degree was deemed inadequate, and she decided to pursue her teaching credential. She would be forced to give up her goal to become a teacher in California due to the daily hardships of attending college at night (commuting by bus 30 miles each way) while working during the day and upkeeping a household of four. She worked alongside her husband and the older *pinoys* harvesting produce (grapes/carrots) in and around Delano until her retirement. Natividad used her education, and eventually her home, to act as a go-between and cultural broker for the *pinoys* (many of the older generation were not well versed in English as many had only attended elementary for a few years) who wished to send letters, money, and gifts to their families in the Philippines well into the 1970s. She participated in the grape strike (1965-

[425] *Kwentuhan* with Alex Edillor Jr. conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2021.

1970), supported her Fil-Am community and family as one of its matriarchal anchors, and lived to be 92 years old.[426]

In the process of making the *campos* more functional and family oriented, the war bride wives, new members of the *pinay* generation, were crucial to the success of the local growers and growing Fil-Am communities along the migrant labor routes. The functionality, efficiency, and productivity of Filipina wives within the camps alone bolstered family bonds and extended networks of Salinas and the rural agrarian towns that made up the growing Fil-Am California community. Through their paid and unpaid services as ideal female managers who oversaw the wellbeing of their traditional ethnic households, *pinay* wives were vital to the economic success of not only their regional or county's agrarian markets, but wider network of Fil-Am communities of California. Through their kinship politics and care work, pinay wives and mothers, like those of the Edillor and Delute families, supported the cultural and emotional stability of the *manongs* both before and during what would become the Farmworker Movement.

The early generations of Filipinas in Salinas and greater Central California rural Fil-Am communities prior to 1965 were essential to the direct involvement in managing their ethnic hubs, shaping local Fil-Am status and reputations, and ultimately provided the roots and foundation of their ethnic heritage for the following generation of Fil-Ams, the Bridge Generation, to inherit, reference, and build on.[427] *Pinay* political agency expanded during the war and continued to be influential into the postwar years. The presence of more pinay wives was a direct result of the War Bride Act and changes in immigration policies and opportunities for

[426] *Kwentuhan* with Alex Edillor Jr. conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2021.

[427] The Bridge Generation represents the second generation of Filipina/o Americans born from the *manang* and *manong* generation. The achievements of the Bridge Generation (the Fil-Am second generation born from the *manong* generation) in higher education and professions were often cited as direct credit to the honorable reputation and status of the Salinas Filipino families and community that nurtured them. Peter M. Jamero, *Vanishing Filipino Americans: The Bridge Generation* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2011). Peter M. Jamero, *Growing Up Brown: Memoirs of a Filipino American* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), x.

naturalization in the United States. The larger *pinay* generation continued to tread lightly within Filipino hyper-masculine spaces by framing their contributions as an outlet of their motherwork responsibilities as pillars of the community; methods of peminist politicking that both the New Filipina and older *pinay* generations had practiced to secure their leadership positions as a means to preserve and help their communities. Filipina American grown organizations achieved this balance of catering to the preferred notions of Filipina femininity while, at the same time, adding and shaping their Fil-Am cultural standards of gender through the production of more platforms that spoke to *pinay* sisterhood and *pinay* empowerment.

Pinay Sisterhoods: Building on Unilateral Filipina Social Circles

The postwar period in Salinas represented an opportunity for the Filipino community to rebuild and begin their new families. As the main caregivers and ideal mothers of the community prior to the war, the women of the FWC naturally took on the large responsibility of rebuilding and strengthening their ethnic hub. By 1948, the FWC members would take on larger endeavors that spoke directly to their prized roles as cultural matriarchs for the Filipino circles of the Central Coast.

The FWC's continuing tradition of providing annual scholarships to outstanding Filipina/o American students in Salinas was first implemented during the post war period, in 1949, to help local Filipino Americans to achieve a higher education. The success of the Fil-Am second generation, especially in education and professional occupations, equated to the achievements, cultural assimilation over two to three generations, and reputation of Filipinos in America. Monthly two to three page spreads about the local Filipina/o American students who had graduated high school, qualified for internship programs, or entered or graduated from major

universities like Berkeley were common blurbs found in the post war *Philippines Mail.*[428] The achievements of the Bridge Generation (the Fil-Am second generation born from the *manang*/*manong* generation) in higher education and professions were often cited as major examples of the honorable reputation and status of the Salinas Filipino families and community that nurtured them.

Susan Aremas recalls that her parents always, like many Filipino families of the *manong* generation, emphasized the importance of a college education. "My parents were different, not as strict. They didn't push me to study any specific subject like nursing. I ended up wanting to be a teacher. They just wanted me to get an education because that meant a better life."[429]

More Filipina headed organizations would also sprout up in the late 1940s with similar aims to the FWC in regard to improving the reputation of the Fil-Am community as well as reinvigorating local Filipino cultural pride. One such organization of the postwar era was the Saturnina Rizal Lodge, Caballeros de Dimas Alang Inc. founded in 1947. Leaders of the new women's organization such as Mrs. A. Barnachia set up the Cultural School as its main project to "teach the development and propagation of Philippine culture" to support Filipino heritage in Salinas and the larger Monterey County. The women of the Cultural School promoted Filipino culture by teaching local youth traditional dances, music, folklore, and courses on language, and Filipino culinary techniques and dishes.[430] Other organizations of the 1940s-1950s include the Women's Christian Circle of the Filipino United Church, whose other goals outside of prayer circles and worship services also included an emphasis on rearing the Fil-Am second generation

[428] Unknown Author, "Future Backbone of the Philippine Republic," *The Philippines Mail*, June 1946, 3.
[429] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas conducted by Stacey Salinas, Salinas, 2021.
[430] "A. Barnachia," *The Philippines Mail*, December 1947, Steinbeck Public Library, Salinas.

youth via family programs and fundraisers like the annual Children's Christmas Fund.[431] The *pinay* bride postwar cohort continued and mirrored the community organizing roles of the older FWC members, therefore revealing the kinship political power that *pinay* labor continued to have. The new recently immigrated cultural matriarchs who had experienced the war firsthand had also wanted to experience a sense of normalcy and saw their Fil-Am towns as an opportunity to achieve that and continued the cultural and *pinayist* practice of mother work as a method of community survival and cultural pride so as to feel more grounded in their new homes and communities.

Such a growth of *pinay* community outreach continued to spread and influence the greater Central Coast. After the conclusion of the War Brides Act in 1948, the formation of multiple Filipino Women's Club chapters, beginning in 1950 and onwards, sprouted across California's rural Fil-Am communities like Watsonville, San Luis Obispo, Sacramento, Delano, and Stockton. The *pinays* of the original FWC cohort, along with the new group of Filipina war brides would continue to heal their communities by practicing what Harrod Suarez describes as the Filipina domestic maternal even as they all recovered from their experiences with war.

Suarez argues that the cultural practice of Filipina mother work signifies the formation of a unique Filipina diasporic phenomenon that he calls the Filipina domestic maternal. This uniquely Filipina method of community solidarity and formation abroad is an opportunity and practice for the Filipina to maintain her cultural interpretation and loyalties to her motherland, or at least how she imagines her country's ethics and cultural standards of etiquette. Within that imagined Philippine set of cultural practices and ethics, the political and postcolonial dynamics of gender are also present.

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[431] Mrs. Maxima Sampayan, "Members of Women Christian Circle Observed Xmas Day," *The Philippines Mail*, January 1943, 1.

To add to Suarez's interpretation of the diasporic Filipina as caregiver and mother, I have also historicized the antecedents to the formation of the Filipina domestic maternal. In the previous chapters, I have shown how, across two generations (the New Filipina and the FWC generation) and within a transpacific context, a good Filipina citizen is praised for being docile, compliant, and hospitable; what I have called the ideal cultural matriarch. By historicizing the formation and growth of the colonial and Filipino *machismo* culture that affected and promoted such gendered histories and gendered caricatures of preferred Filipina femininities (many of which became the Maria Clara and *dalagang bukid* ideals), we can trace the earlier nodes of what would become the Filipina/o/x diaspora. Locating the domestic maternal through the *manang* generation's *pinay* mother work as community organizing demonstrates that Filipinas, long before the 1965 Immigration Act and the waves of overseas Filipino worker (OFW) and skilled healthcare professionals, had already taken the role of nurturer and care worker in the newly forming diaspora. It also reveals just how intensive and culturally internalized the colonial endeavor of extracting Filipina carework affected the performance of the Filipina as mother and nurturer abroad, such that even within her own community this role was demanded and expected. The war bride generation of *pinays* also continued the cultural traditions of nurture, care, and service work on a global scale. The diasporic maternal embodies these settler colonial gendered expectations, the care labor that Filipinas were coerced in providing for the global economy, which was also discussed in the previous chapters as the reasoning behind the New Filipinas' interpretations of their political images that they too upheld as representatives of their motherland when studying abroad as *pensionadas* and that the *pinay* generation of the FWC would also uphold.

Such Filipina diasporic care is confirmed in the Filipino phrase that emphasizes the motherland or mother country, *Inang Bayan*.[432] *Inang Bayan*, if taking the diasporic maternal as part of the language of how the Filipina is seen abroad and as part of her homeland, reflects her loyalty and patronage and service to the nation. This transaction of gendered labor for Philippine status is her consolidation of cultural citizenship and national identity, what Suarez describes as a diasporic sense of belonging. Therefore, sacrifice and loyalty and love for the nation are understood through the performance of the diasporic maternal family, which are informed by the histories of colonialism, empire, and globalization.

This method of affective community care as the "cultural practices of nurturing," the continuation of the diasporic maternal led by the *manangs* of Salinas, continued to ground the Fil-Am communities of greater rural Central California and was a link and connection of affectation that the FWC generation and the newly immigrated *pinay* war brides had in common and shared.[433] Pinay mother work as community care and community organizing was their bridge to maintaining their cultural roles as mothers of their kinfolk while preserving their gendered connections to their Philippine roots and heritage, which only strengthened the community's cultural ties to one another and officially transformed them from vulnerable mobile units to fixed and stable networks of California's Little Manilas.

[432] "Without disregarding the critical differences among Filipina/os working overseas those who have emigrated permanently, and those who live within national borders, the diasporic maternal offers a way to think about the contexts of empire, nationalism, and globalization as it affects those who bear a relation to the sign in all its fullness and plenitude." The Work of Mothering: Globalization and the Filipina Diaspora, Harrod J. Suarez (2017), 12.
[433] "A diasporic and archipelagic positioning helps us to realize how empire thrives and is challenged by Filipina cultural practices of nurturing." The Work of Mothering: Globalization and the Filipina Diaspora, Harrod J. Suarez (2017), 165.

Conclusion

According to Susan Aremas, the *pinays* who would come to be affectionately known as the *manang* generation of the postwar period "didn't rely on the permission" of the local *pinoys* to pursue their own interests. Sherry's experience reflects how *pinays*, well into the post war period, carried on the liberatory rhetoric and political agency they practiced and gained as active participants and combatants during the war. Feelings of isolation, exclusion, and cultural differences were common experiences felt by non-Ilocano and non-Tagalog speaking war brides of the 1940s-1950s. But despite the *pinoy* critics' ever watchful eyes during the postwar period, the younger *pinay* additions to the Fil-Am community in Salinas continued to operate as the backbone and glue of their community. In true cultural maternalist habit and expectation, *pinays* after the war still emphasized their role as pillars of their households. The postwar Fil-Am community again became an extension of *pinay* motherwork labor. The continued growth of what Franklin Ng describes as "women-centered kin networks" from the perspective of Chinese immigrant women, was also a major phenomenon within the pre-1965 Fil-Am communities on the greater Central Coast and rural Central California.[434] The kinship politics *pinays* had and used as their preferred method of interjecting and contributing to community care speaks to the socio-economic and cultural value of "female centrality" within ethnic immigrant hubs that allowed for their survival during the trying times of the Great Depression, World War II, and the highly racially charged era of xenophobia and anti-Asian hate.

Jean Vengua, who would participate in the many social boxes and queen contests as a youth, fondly recalled how her mother Trinidad Vengua, who immigrated in 1949, became good friends with Rosita Tabasa, one of the most influential *pinay* leaders in the Watsonville and

[434] Franklin Ng, *Asian American Women and Gender* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998), 96.

Santa Cruz region. It was through their friendship and mentorship that Trinidad gained advice on how to acculturate and fit in her new surroundings. Rosita Tabasa would also help Trinidad network to join and find community with other Filipina organizations of the greater Central Coast.[435] Other Filipina war brides like Mrs. Sherry Aremas would also look to *pinay* circles to feel connected and seek advice on how to acculturate to Fil-Am networks within the larger Fil-Am sphere of Monterey County, becoming a lifetime member of the Filipino Women's Club of Salinas until her passing in 2021.

The early generation of *pinays* in Salinas prior to 1965 were directly involved in managing their ethnic hubs, and ultimately provided the roots and foundation of their ethnic heritage for the following generation of Fil-Ams, the Bridge Generation, to inherit, reference, and build upon. *Pinay* agency expanded during the early years of the postwar period while still trying to tread lightly within the Filipino masculine spaces of the Central Coast. Filipina American grown organizations achieved this balance of catering to the *pinoy*-preferred notions of Filipina femininity, while at the same time, adding and reshaping their Filipino cultural standards on gender. *Pinays* through their war efforts and post war rehabilitation of the Filipino hub of Salinas, for example, morphed Filipina womanhood into a cultural identity that took on both Filipino and American values; that of a cultural matriarch and capable wartime working woman. After the war, Filipina Americans would manage all the socio-economic infrastructures supporting the Filipino American community. They represented the devout role model, cultural placeholders, savvy entrepreneurs, socialite networkers, down to earth field hands, and mothering caregivers of the revamped Filipino American hubs emerging out of the aftermath of World War II. The energies of these early pre-1965 networks of *pinays*, the *manang* generation,

[435] *Kwentuhan* with Jean Vengua conducted by Stacey Salinas, June 2022.

helped to shape not only their ethnic hub's survival and success but also the success of the broader Central Coast and rural Central California economies that relied on the *pinoy* farm workers, the *manong* generation, who in turn relied on the *manang* generation's care work and mothering hands to keep their ethnic hubs, their homes, a stable and reliable site to return to after the migrant labor seasons.

Conclusion

An Exhibition on Pinay Labor with the California Museum: The Legacy of the Central Coast *Manang Generation*

The pre-1965 Filipina American experience, the *Manang* Generation, does not overshadow or diminish the roles and influence of the *Manongs* as the first to plant the seeds of a Filipino American identity. But the *pinays* within these communities, like Salinas, were key economic and public actors who sustained Filipino American neighborhoods despite the gender imbalanced ratios of Filipinas to Filipinos from the 1920s-1950s. The *Manang* Generation served both as cultural matriarchs for their children and communities but also played a direct role alongside their male peers as architects of the Central Coast Filipino American communities and the emerging California Fil-Am identity. The Salinas *Manang* Generation were not passive supporters of the *Manong* Generation throughout the lows of the Depression, the male absent World War II home front, or during the reconstruction of the Filipino hub of Salinas. Rather, the *Manang* Generation's efforts in establishing a stable workforce and community for *pinoy* migrant laborers allowed for a reliable environment and center for the many phases of Filipino unionizing to grow. The Central Coast Fil-Am communities overseen and nurtured by the FWC fostered the growth of Fil-Am labor organizing.

The Farm Labor Movement of the 1960s-1970s had its roots in the early Fil-Am communities of Central California and the Central Coast including the FLU in the Salinas Valley, which would turn into the Federated Agricultural Laborers Association (FALA) in 1938, and eventually would inspire the famous Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) and the United Farm Workers (UFW) to take off representing not just Filipino laborers but also Mexican field hands as well. By helping to settle Salinas as a stable home and community for

migrant laborers to return to, the *Manang* Generation therefore laid the foundational groundwork that aided the future UFW's ability to strike and remain active in the 1970s for nearly a decade in Salinas.

Second generation Delano Fil-Am, John Armington, remembers very fondly during the years building up to the Farm Labor Movement and Grape Strike the visible impact of the local *Manang* Generation:

"The Filipina women organize everything! The men think they are, but they only have ideas! The women talk around the community as to how to follow through on it and then tell their husbands how to do it. Harvest Holiday, community floats, wedding dance, Filipino Women's Club, the Community Center, all their work and ideas. The heart and soul of everything that occurred was by the *Pinays*. If a *Pinay* came up to me to not do something, it was as if they were your own mother. The men thought they ran the Filipino community, but it was the *ninangs* (godmothers) and Filipinas of the community. The men stand up and the men make speeches but the women actually do everything! The guys all are hot air balloon talk with the billfolds, but the organizing is the women doing it. All the food that gets cooked… To deliver it on time and the finesse stuff and they don't ask people for their permission, they don't ask for glory, they just do it. So what effect did they have on us? Everything."[436]

The greater Central Coast and California *Pinay* Generation would eventually be affectionately referred to as the *Manang* Generation by their children and grandchildren. The *pinays* of the rural greater Central California Fil-Am networks like *Lola* Sherry of Salinas and *Lola* Bienvenida of Sacramento called themselves "simple homemakers" during our *kwentuhans* from 2017-2021.[437] But for me and their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, they are remembered with affection, pride, and love. As club organizers, the *pinay* turned *Manang* Generation contributed multiple paid and unpaid labor roles, all of which spoke to some form or another of care work for their families and extended household; the rural Little Manilas many of

[436] *Kwentuhan* with John Armington conducted by Stacey Salinas, 2020. John Armington is the son of Mariano Laya Armington and Velva Hopson Armington who were part of the Delano Grape Strike.
[437] *Kwentuhan* with Sherry Aremas in 2019, Salinas, and Bienvenida Dawang in 2020, Sacramento, conducted by Stacey Salinas.

which have been lost or erased due to urban renewal projects and gentrification over the last fifty years. The memories of the *Manang* Generation their families shared with me, their personal family collections and heirlooms, and the *manangs* who lived to be over one hundred years old when I met them, helped me to pursue a community endeavor to recover and map out the larger narratives of the older Fil-Am towns of California. Because these women's clubs operated on kinship politics, over time, it became easier to trace the strength and influence of these forgotten Little Manilas by way of *pinay* visibility.

As I continued to speak with community elders of the Central Coast, they would connect me to other elders in the Central Valley, and they would network me to Southern California families. My work with the Bulosan Center for Filipinx Studies in Yolo County would also connect me to the families of Sacramento and the Bay Area. From the Central Valley families I was connected to the oldest Fil-Am families of Seattle which would eventually lead me to the nearly three hundred year old Fil-Am community of Louisiana's bayou Manila men. Even if many of these families and Fil-Am organizations have lost connections with one another through the generations, the affective labor of the *Manang* Generation remains imprinted on the organizations and ethnic hubs that have survived. From one Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS) chapter to the next, from one family to the next, from one *kwentuhan* filled with fun *tsismis* to the next, each one could list out five *manangs* who were essential to not only their community, but also to their personal connection to Filipino-American culture and values as second and third generation Filipina/o/x Americans.[438]

[438] Dr. Dawn Bohulano Mabalon often said, "history is tsismis [gossip, stories] with footnotes," which exemplifies the spirit of FANHS. Dr. Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales quoted Dawn's saying at one of the many memorial services honoring Dawn in 2018.

Conducting *kwentuhans* with FANHS elders always made me worried that sooner or later, I would intrude and pry too far in these communities' personal histories and memories. But taking to heart Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales' and Jocyl Sacramento's *pinayist* pedagogy and research intentions that they describe as means to speak to community preservation and sharing our knowledge of being *pinay/oy* as opportunities to learn from one another so as to heal, helped me to center how I wanted this collection of community narratives of the *Manang* Generation to be utilized: as a resource to help outline and vent the multiple forms of care work that Filipinas across the generations, across the diaspora, have contributed to out of community love, *utang na loob*, as a response to colonial traumas, as a means to survive as colonial and postcolonial subjects, and so much more.[439]

The Filipina elders, the *manangs*, are recorded to have a relatively small presence during the early waves of the *manong* generation's labor years of the 1910s-1950s. Contrary to that narrative, the *manang* generation well into the 1920s-1950s made major cultural and economic contributions to their ethnic pocket communities throughout California's agrarian landscape during the earlier period of Filipino labor history. But within that traditional narrative as their community's matriarchal pillars as found in Fujita-Ron's and Mabalon's scholarship on early Fil-Am immigrant hubs of the 1930s, there also lies other strands of female immigrant labor history yet to be fully uncovered. Within that category of work, as demonstrated by the success and contributions of the Salinas *manangs* in firmly establishing their ethnic neighborhood, lies other strands of female immigrant labor history intertwined with so many other pivotal moments in American history including the early to mid-century labor movement, empire and colonialism, suffrage, and independence movements in Asia. A p/feminist lens applied to *manang* history

[439] Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales and Jocyl Sacramento, "Practicing Pinayist Pedagogy," *Amerasia Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (179-187): 181.

thus reveals how all these historic trends converged and affected gendered bodies under colonialism, their responses to white settler patriarchies, and the movements they were essential in building for the sake of community therefore challenging the erasure of Asian women in American history. P/feminist histories as a form of radical BIPOC feminism thus offers alternative retellings of American history that speaks to multiple themes and critical ideas on race, gender, and sex that continue to affect us in the present.

The *Manang* Generation *pinayist* narrative as a method of community archiving shows how and why Filipinas transformed cultural knowledge and gendered practices and retooled them in order to survive in their new homes. Filipinas of the FWC and the wives and daughters of the *pinoys* provided vital moral, social, economic, and political support for the rights and wellbeing of their fellow *pinoys*. By meeting the Filipino gender expectations as the ideal cultural matriarch and caregiver, Salinas Filipinas used those traits to become well versed and engaged in labor union rhetoric. Working directly with the Filipino Labor Union (FLU), holding dinners to build open conversations between growers, labor bosses, and pickers, and creating welfare programs to look after the aged and sickly *pinoys*, *pinays* operated as equally significant organizers to their *pinoy* peers of the 1930s labor strikes. As patriotic mothers and daughters during World War II, Filipinas of the *Manang* Generation took on an even wider social and economic platform to maintain and support their community while its male population volunteered for the war in the Pacific.

As women protecting the home front, Filipinas extended their hands into other social programs and paid occupations that further grounded and strengthened their local Filipino neighborhoods in a multitude of ways. Through their paid and unpaid labor roles, *manangs* of the pre-1965 generation stretched traditional cultural expectations of Filipina femininity and

womanhood to encapsulate roles beyond the simple definitions of wife and mother. The World War II experience ushered in a transformative shift in the Fil-Am gender dynamic of Salinas. Traditionally overseen by overly critical *pinoy* perspectives, wartime Filipinas redefined their own category of what they believed to be an upstanding *pinay* whose agency was not limited to the celebrated FWC model woman. The legacy of Filipina empowerment carried on well into the post war years of the late 1940s, forcing their male peers to share a more balanced partnership in rebuilding the postwar Filipino American hub of Salinas.

As I began mapping the ethnic hubs of pre-1965 Filipino America, I also in a way, was mapping the *Manang* generations' networks of care through their praxis of cultural maternalism which served as their contributions to the ethnic hubs they grounded. Noticing their culturally maternal habits of community organizing as family care led me to consider where they drew such cultural practices of care as it resonated with the care work that I saw my family's matriarchs also practice at the workplace as nurses, at home with their own children, and in public facing venues like within their own healthcare workers' unions, and Fil-Am clubs and organizations in the Peninsula. Being more than five generations removed from the *Manang* Generation made me consider the deeper culturally maternal ties to diasporic practices of survival against the effects of colonialism. And like Harrod Suarez's domestic maternal asks us to see how Filipina care work was conditioned to be extracted labor that cares for colonial institutions abroad, I wondered if I could trace the origins of such gendered colonial conditioning in the Philippines and most importantly, tease out if and how Filipinas perhaps resisted, co-opted, and considered such schooling. What I found from the literature written by elite Filipinas during the American Occupation Era, and the photographs of Filipinas laboring as domestic science students or in Philippine-American factories, when juxtaposed to the tedious notes and

files of the American anthropologists hired by the American Department of War to take note of Philippine cultural values, practices, and lucrative resources was ultimately a timeline of Filipina resistance to empire.

The New Filipina advocated for suffrage and independence taking note that lower- and working-class Filipinas needed help salvaging their homes torn apart by two consecutive wars and needed factory labor laws to protect themselves from further colonial exploitations. Achieving suffrage meant that they could gain access to political representation that went beyond kinship politics to help Filipinas as mothers of the country to protect their citizen-children from further colonial harassment thus giving birth to a new type of Filipina intellectualism that was inherently anti-colonial in its peminist politicking. The *Pinay* Generation continued this rhetoric of motherwork to resist multiple patriarchies abroad for the sake of their household, or Fil-Am community's survival. Working class *pinays* on the Central Coast mimicked the women's club work of the New Filipina's generation during the Depression Era. The next addition of pinays in the form of the war brides carried the same domestic maternal values and worked alongside the original *pinays*. The pinays of the Depression Era and the war bride generation worked together postwar to create a new system based on their leadership experiences during the war. These two generations emerged together after the war as a cohort that I and the elders of our Fil-Am communities now call the *Manang* Generation.

Pinayist Efforts in Building Community Archives

What at first became a public historian endeavor to recover the Fil-Am towns of California transformed into a *pinayist* community driven effort to produce community archives, craft K-12 Ethnic Studies curriculum, and write a peminist diasporic history, that taken all together, offers to help preserve and teach how significant and intrinsic Filipinas and their

multiple forms of labor were to their communities, that both directly and indirectly, resisted patriarchal tenets of empire.

With the help of community and labor organizations that are all supported, if not led, by *pinays,* I was able to help co-curate a public facing exhibit of California Fil-Am history that spoke to nearly every aspect of my community research but represented every family who helped me in my *pinayist* aspirations of capturing and retelling our peoples' histories as an ongoing movement of labor, liberation, and love. The team of curators and myself titled the exhibit "California Is In the Heart " as an homage to Bulosan's well loved novel *America Is In the Heart.* Supported by the California Museum, the FANHS Museum, California Nurses Association, and the Bulosan Center for Filipinx Studies, the exhibit at its core was a community endeavor to preserve and celebrate Fil-Am history.

At the entrance of the exhibit, photographs and discussions of contemporary Filipina/o/x scholars, writers, educators, researchers, and politicians fill the walls expressing that Fil-Am leadership of the 21st century is indeed multifaceted, diverse, but nonetheless community oriented. The next set of standalone walls directs visitors to consider one of the most visible and discussed labor economies of the California Fil-Am community; Filpina/o/x healthcare professionals. The walls dedicated to the California Nurses Association, led by *pinay* union president Zenei Cortez, describes and uplifts their transpacific fundraising efforts where they offered medical aid to Philippine communities in the aftermath of consecutive typhoons within the past five years. Such collective medical care efforts emphasize that their care work as nurses and union members extends beyond the borders and boundaries of the United States thus defining Filipinx healthcare workers as a universal symbol of community care.

The exhibit panels that followed was a timeline of Fil-Am history beginning from the landing of the Filipino sailors aboard the Spanish Manila Galleon trade ship *Nuestra Senora de Buena Esperanza* in Morro Bay in 1587 to every act of labor, migration, and resistance as colonial and postcolonial subjects in America up to present day with the founding of the Bulosan Center for Filipinx Studies in 2018. The walls of the exhibit that followed was my community mapping of the forgotten Fil-Am towns of California, showcasing from Northern California to the Bay Area, to the Central Coast and Central Valley, to Southern California, every Little Manila and Fil-Am ethnic hub that I could find in my research throughout my PhD program.

With a map of the migrant labor route that the *Manong* Generation traversed, audience members could visualize from the tips of Northern California to the border and boundaries of Southern California, how far *pinays/pinoys* labored, the produce they harvested, and how the migrant labor route became the political geography of Fil-Am community and labor organizing. Every town listed showed family photographs of the Fil-Am communities that lived there. From one town to the next, audiences could read quotes and memories of the Fil-Am families who lived in and helped to build these century old Fil-Am hubs. And within that formation of the migrant farm labor movement, I also organized two walls that followed explaining the military history of Fil-Ams in the armed service to demonstrate, that even during the long Farm Labor Movement from 1906 with the first migration of Filipino farm workers in Hawai'i to the conclusion of the Delano Grape Strike in 1970, Filipinas/os/x were contributing other forms of physical labor to America's wars simply to earn access to multiple freedoms and privileges including American citizenship, Philippine Independence, and global recognition as modern citizens of the world.

At the last section of the exhibit, I ended our storytelling of California Fil-Am history with the contributions of the *Manang* Generation and the women's clubs that started it all. Every photograph donated, every quote shared, and every Filipina article of clothing that decorated the stand-alone walls of the *Manang* Generation, were all gifts and memories shared by the children of the *manangs* and *manongs*, the Bridge Generation who now serve as my elders and mentors within the greater Fil-Am community of California. The stories and memories from the *kwentuhans* that I had with Fil-Am elders decorated the walls of the exhibit and were the final takeaways I wanted to leave our guests with who visited the exhibit at the California Museum in Sacramento.

Remembering the *Manang* Generation of the Salinas Valley

The Filipino Women's Club of Salinas currently maintains a total of 125 members throughout Monterey County. In March of 2023, the FWC celebrated the 93rd Anniversary of its founding in 1930 in full FWC tradition and regalia; members performed traditional Filipino dances, recollected the rich Fil-Am history of the Salinas Valley, and inaugurated its new members and president with the recognition of non-Filipino Salinas community leaders including the Salinas mayor, Joe Gunter. The women's meetings continue to be held in the Filipino Community Center on a monthly basis, or in the comfort of their own homes depending on whose turn it is to host. As the meetings were for the *Manang* Generation of the FWC, the meetings continue to represent a major social event for contemporary Central Coast *pinays*; a potluck of sorts where everyone cooks their best Fil-Am dishes in quantities enough to feed an entire family party. For Susan Aremas, the current president of the FWC and continuing member, she explained, "the meetings are always a celebration, the food represents a socializing

type of environment. We still plan themes for each meeting which makes the gatherings that much more enjoyable and lively. The theme for our last meeting was on St. Patrick's Day, and so we had to all wear green, it was so much fun!"[440]

The FWC continues to be the face, and a representation of, Monterey County's Filipino network. They continue to perform traditional Filipino dances at Salinas' annual festivals and fetes, sponsor Fil-Am scholarships for local Filipino American students and represent as close knit a sisterhood of Filipina Americans as the previous FWC councils before them. And in true peminist diasporic fashion, fundraise to help Philippine communities with medical, educational, and natural disaster relief resources as mothers and pillars of a global Filipina/o/x community. As the oldest active Asian American organization in the greater Monterey County, the FWC continues to remind locals of the rich history of the Salinas Fil-Am community. Currently, the club comprises of four active generations of Filipina Americans.

Auntie Susan, as I would come to call her, would continue to bring her mother, *Lola* Sherry Aremas, to all the FWC meetings. When the pandemic hit, the Aremas matriarchs found it difficult to continue going to every meeting in order to stay vigilant of COVID safety precautions. But despite the major setbacks and obstacles presented to the Fil-Am community of Salinas, the Aremas family continued to participate and advocate for community needs through FWC platforms. Mrs. Sherry Aremas at the age of 102 passed in the Fall of 2021, but even towards the end of her life, she continued to exemplify the ideal Filipina of the *Manang* Generation: cultural matriarch and attentive caregiver and teacher to her family and community. Although Sherry defined herself first as a Filipina housewife, her volunteer work with the FWC

[440] *Kwentuhan* with Susan Aremas conducted by Stacey Salinas, March 2018.

and private enterprises (seamstress, beautician, cakemaker) were essential contributions to the success and longevity of the Salinas Filipino hub.

The multiple roles that the *Manang* Generation of Salinas and greater rural Central California performed paints the early generation of *pinays* as more than wives and daughters of the *Manong* Generation or absent faces in Bulosan's *America Is In the Heart*. Rather this history of the *Manang* Generation showcases a long history of Filipina political agency. The influence of the New Filipina Generation that the *Manang* Generation inherited and evolved and retooled in California represents the longue durée of peminist-politicking-intellectualism. Most importantly, the history and the cultural markers of the Fil-Am communities that still stand today are a testament to the *Manang* Generation's many labors of love as creative, headstrong, architects and engineers of Filipina/o/x America.

Terminology and Timeline

A note on the use of *pinay/pinoy* and *manang/manong* versus solely Filipina/o American:

Oscar Campomanes argues that by privileging the identity or word "Filipino" rather than "Filipino American" is more apt in understanding American imperialism and its effects. Using the word "Filipino" implies much more breadth in understanding the historical implications and migrations, and waves of colonialism that have affected the Filipino culture and identity. Mentioning and attaching "American" will only perpetuate a Filipinx narrative that speaks to American essentialism while maintaining Filipina/o/x history as only relegated to the boundaries and borders of the United States.

The history of the pioneer Filipina generation in America is a transpacific, transnational, and diasporic reflection on the multiple effects and interactions with settler colonialism, imperialism, migration, war, colorism, and more. *Pinayism* as a radical BIPOC feminist method also describes in its goal of liberating the Filipina that there is no one telling, and no one way of being Filipina. To name her in Asian American history with simply one term, or to categorize her experiences as uniform to other Filipinas or other Asian immigrant women at the turn of the 19th century, would continue the amnesiatic and collective erasure of Filipinas/os/x in America's history, especially during its period of manifest destiny into the Pacific and beyond. Thus, the use of several key terms is imperative in breaking away from centering the history of the Filipina experience during the prewar era as only within the borders of the United States and as only a discussion of migration and settlement. Rather her ties to the Philippines were never cut despite leaving Philippine shores. The communities she built in the United States, and her devotion to her families and cultural roots in the Philippines influenced her labor and desires to thrive and survive in the United States during an unprecedented period in global history, as a colonial

brown female subject during the Great Depression. Furthermore, the roles that the United States played as colonizer and white overseer in the Philippines and the United States respectively would also haunt the mobility of the Filipina as she traveled throughout America's empire.[441] The effects of American empire in the Philippines would nonetheless affect the ways Filipinas were viewed and treated in the United States and vice versa. Thus, the Filipina pioneer generation, the *Manang* Generation, from 1903-1950s in this work will go by many names out of respect to their many ways that they felt and embodied what it meant for them to be Filipina.

Terms:

Asociacion Filipina Feminista: Filipina Feminist Association founded in Manila in June of 1905.

Dalagang Bukid/Filipina: Direct translation for a simple Filipina country girl. The earlier origins of the word Bukid come from the Indigenous communities of the Panay Bukidnon and is in reference to two things; the fiery red color of their traditional clothing but also speaks to older storytelling traditions reserved for the Filipinas of these highland communities also known as the *binukot.* The *binukot* were taught in their youth to memorize and sing the epic ballads and histories of their region, particularly their ballads centered on tales of beautiful mountain maidens and heroines from their folklore.

Filipina: A woman of Philippine descent. Traditionally according to the Spanish colonial caste system, Filipina/o was a person who was of Spanish descent but born in the Philippines.

Filipina American: A woman who identifies and is of Philippine heritage living in the United States.

Filipino Women's Club (FWC): The first Filipina led community organization in the United States.

Inay/Nanay: The Tagalog word for mother.

[441] Oscar Campomanes on the topic of how the newer generation of Asian American and Filipinx scholars who are addressing how "US imperialism has imprinted on his or her (Filipinx) body." 29

Pinay (United States)[442]: A woman of Filipina descent who is living in the United States; has a connotation of working-class background and implies hardworking and steadfast. The early Fil-Am communities of the 1910s-1940s were especially protective of their Filipina community members. Because the ratio of Filipinas to Filipinos were so drastic within these ethnic communities, sometimes with gender ratios being as high as 30 Filipinos: 1 Filipina, Filipinas were seen as a special treasure within the farm laboring Asian American communities. Thus, the Fil-Am attitude around the use of the word *pinay* to describe Fil-Am women grew to have a culturally sentimental but also hearty working-class association to reflect the working class Fil-Am communities that grew along California's migrant labor routes. One early description of the use of the word *pinay* can be found in a short reflection piece written by a Bay Area Filipina during the 1930s. Her name was Helen Rillera and, in her article, titled "The Filipina in Filipino Society" (1934) for the Fil-Am newspaper, *The Philippines Mail*, she discussed how difficult it was as a *pinay* to meet the cultural expectations of the Fil-Am community as she was expected to be humble, caring, intelligent, kind, family oriented, and hardworking.

Pinay (Philippines): A Filipina who is considered as part of the lower- or working-class background. Traditionally implies working in less favorable or honorable trades.

Manang: The term is from the Ilokano dialect and translates to older sister. Implies a level of kinship and respect for women who are, or act as, older sisters in extended family and community.

Mestiza: A racial term originally established and coined by the Spanish colonial caste system in the Philippines. Traditionally, they reference those who are of mixed Chinese and Philippine Native descent. Over time, the term became a reference to "lighter skinned" Filipinas.

Morena: A Spanish colonial caste system term for dark brown skinned Philippine women.

The New Filipina (*Pinay bago*): The early twentieth century "modern Filipina" who assimilated to American cultural customs and education.

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[442] The origins of the word pinay has a complicated past and evolution. The word itself is gendered in referencing Filipina women while also signifying her class status. Pinay at the turn of the 20th century (1890s-1930s), was a woman of Filipino descent who came from a working class background. The pinay then was a lower class status of the Filipina. Stereotyped for her hardiness and proneness to labor, Filipinas/os/x who immigrated to Hawai'i and the mainland would reframe the Spanish caste term in a more honorable, but still in a highly gendered, way. Instead the Pinay in America because of her rarity, meant a hardworking, loyal, and steadfast woman of humble beginnings. A woman who embodied modesty and Spanish femininity that the famed and ill fated Rizal character of *Noli Mi Tangere*, Maria Clara, had. Thus the Pinay who struggled in the Philippines, who could continue to hold her head high in the United States, providing for her family, while maintaining her feminine demure and modesty, became the hallmark of Pinoy pride for Fil-Am communities. The pinay was many things, she was the symbol of cultural pride and survival in America.

Transpacific P/Feminism: Filipina activism that works across class, ethnolinguistic, and color in order to build global Filipina/o/x coalitions that support Filipina women's involvement in Philippine politics and liberation movements. Filipina transpacific p/feminism praxis involves Philippine cultural interpretations of kinship to build global Filipina/o/x networks of solidarity.

Timeline of Filipina Organizing:

First group of *Pensionadas* attend university in the United States, 1903

Asociacion Feminista Filipina (Feminist Association of the Philippines), 1906

La Proteccion de la Infancia, Gota de Leche established by members of the *Asociacion Feminista Filipina*, 1906

Ilonga Feminist Association, 1906

Pura Villanueva advocates for a suffrage bill in 1907

Manila Carnival Queen Contests, 1908-1939

Society for the Advancement of Women in the Philippines, 1912

Encarnacion Alzona Finishes her research on Filipina History, 1920

National Federation of Women's Clubs, Philippines, 1921

Women's Outlook Magazine established, Philippines, 1923-1930

Filipino Women's Club of Salinas established, 1930

Philippine Suffrage Bill passed, 1937

World War II, 1941-1945

War Brides Act, 1945-1948

Filipino Women's Club chapters (Sacramento, Stockton, San Luis Obispo, Watsonville, Los Angeles, Delano, Santa Maria) established, 1950s

Filipino Women's Club Chapters still in operation: Salinas, Stockton, San Luis Obispo, and Sacramento, 2023

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