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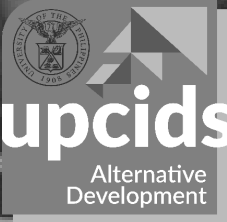
PUBLIC POLICY MONOGRAPH SERIES 2022-08

# Contentious Migrants

Transnational Protests  
and the Making of the  
Filipino Diaspora

Sharon M. Quinsaat





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# Contentious Migrants

## Transnational Protests and the Making of the Filipino Diaspora<sup>1</sup>

Sharon M. Quinsaat

### Introduction

When Filipinos migrate and settle in other countries, do they automatically form a diaspora? Based on usage of the term “Filipino diaspora” in current popular and scholarly literature, yes: migration seems sufficient to explain its constitution. This assumes that Maria, an undocumented domestic worker in the Netherlands, and Elena, a second-generation, upper-middle-class student in the U.S., are naturally both part of the transnational Filipino community as a result of their or their parents’ relocation from the Philippines to other countries. But Maria and Elena did not feel they belonged to the community until their involvement in a cross-border coalition against the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. In fact, prior to activism, their attachment to the Philippines was limited to their own families. But as they participated in discussions and engaged in actions to undermine the Marcos regime, they developed identities rooted in loyalty to the homeland, solidarity with co-nationals/-ethnics wherever they are, and shared history and memory—key elements that work together to form a diaspora.

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1 The author wrote this paper specifically for the public lecture at the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) on January 14, 2020. The paper is a condensed version of three chapters in the author’s book manuscript, which is currently being written. Correspondence should be addressed to: Sharon M. Quinsaat, 1226 Park Street, Humanities and Social Studies Complex, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA 50112 USA, quinsaat@grinnell.edu.

## 2 Quinsaas

In my book manuscript, where this paper is based on, I argue that migration alone does not create diasporas. They must be constructed through the formation of collective identities, and one way of doing this is through activism. This is because during political and social conflicts in the homeland and in their countries of settlement, cleavages in the social order become visible. Migrants then make claims and demands in public, and when they do this, they deliberately form and articulate collective identities derived from (1) loyalty and continued belonging to the homeland, (2) solidarity with co-nationals/-ethnics, and (3) shared memory and history. In these processes, the individual merges with the collective. The book thus reveals the elements that work together to form a diaspora—elements that get challenged and reconstituted in times of political unrest.

Early conceptualizations of diaspora, often based on the case of Jews, Armenians, and to some extent Africans, emphasize the following core features: (1) movement from the country of origin to at least two destinations; (2) relationship to an actual or imagined homeland, to which migrants could possibly return; (3) connections among communities abroad; and (4) preservation of identity through shared remembrances—often based on the trauma of uprooting and dispersal—across generations. While scholars agree on all these key elements, they have interrogated the idea of a diaspora's eventual homecoming, thereby referring to it as the “myth of return.” In response to the widespread (mis)application of “diaspora” to every group that crosses borders—from Singaporeans to Oaxacans—contemporary scholars such as Fiona Adamson and Rogers Brubaker have foregrounded the process of becoming a diaspora. They argue that diasporas do not simply emerge from boundary crossing and dispersal; they need to be created within social and political contexts (Adamson 2012; Brubaker 2005).

I agree with contemporary scholars that diasporas are constructions, but we should nuance our view by looking at *when*, *why*, and *how* collective identities arise among a diverse group of migrants and *what* discourses inform these identities. After all, people do not always consciously think of being a member of a group in their day-to-day routines and decisions. Also, for migrants who maintain links to the homeland and express solidarity with co-nationals/-ethnics, often, their actions are confined to the private sphere (i.e., calling or sending money to family members left there) based on their individual identities—as mothers or sons—much more than to public activities (i.e., participating in elections). However, in times of political unrest when ruptures in existing power relationships appear, migrants confront challenges to their identities beyond the private domain.

I argue that diasporas are discursive and strategic constructions; that is, they emerge from the *meaning* migrants make in their discussions about an unjust condition or event they are confronted with—whether in their homelands or their countries of



settlement—and the shared political *actions* they take to address it. Since migrants are not homogeneous, the community becomes an arena where people make meaning through debate and dialogue; in the process, they form and/or negotiate collective identities. Discourses pivot on their interpretations of history, especially the social and political forces that have shaped their homeland, and on migrants' lived experiences in their countries of settlement. Thus, the scholarly question shifts from who is considered a diaspora to why and how a diaspora is formed—whether they are a group of mostly refugees, such as the Vietnamese in the U.S., or of economic migrants, such as the Turks in Germany and the Netherlands. Theories on collective identity in the field of social movement studies are especially useful in explaining these dynamics. I will apply these theories to show how collective identities are constructed *in and through protest*—rather than preceding it—and how identity claims are part of a protest strategy.

Rather than an in-depth study of Filipino migration and its overseas communities, this paper focuses on the dynamic political and social *processes* of diaspora formation. Filipino migrants offer an interesting case in looking at these processes for three reasons. First, the population of Filipinos abroad is one of the largest in the world. Second, labor migration is a key component of the official Philippine development agenda, with a number of state agencies established for the sole purpose of exporting migrants and promoting overseas work as a nationalist deed. To normalize and nurture out-migration in the Filipino psyche, these institutions constructed overseas Filipino workers as “modern-day heroes,” willing to sacrifice proximity to their families and their country to serve the nation. Third and lastly, comprised mostly of state-brokered temporary economic workers and permanent immigrants, the movement of Filipinos is not due to shared experience of ethnic or religious persecution, banishment, and trauma, as in the early cases used to theorize diaspora. The case of Filipinos therefore allows us to foreground and explain the development of collective identities through activism based on the above core features of a diaspora—loyalty and continued belonging to homeland, solidarity with co-nationals/-ethnics, and shared memory and history. Thus, we are able to show that diasporas are indeed constructions rather than naturally given.

To provide nuance, my book is comparative in its scope, as it examines Filipino activism in the U.S. and the Netherlands. Both countries are liberal democracies that permit the free expression of dissent, regardless of citizenship. Since my main interest is activism, it is important to study countries of destination of Filipinos where right to assembly and protest is at least promoted and guaranteed. Closely similar system of government between the U.S. and the Netherlands also serves as a control, so that differences in outcomes can be attributed to key variables of interest

such as the hostland's relationship with the Philippines (strong vs. weak ties), size and demographic characteristics of the Filipino population (old/large vs. new/small), and migrant community infrastructure, among others. Filipinos in the Netherlands provide a useful comparative case to those in the U.S. because the former migrated in large numbers after the Marcos government implemented a labor export policy. The Netherlands also served as a strategic seat of the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front's (CPP-NDF) international work, which was anchored on forging close relations with socialist and revolutionary forces in Europe and on organizing members of the Filipino community.

In my book, I analyze diaspora formation in three transnational social movements: the antidictatorship movement (1965-1986), the movement for migrants' rights (1972-1992), and the (non)movement around collective memory on the authoritarian regime of Ferdinand Marcos (1986-2016). I chose these because the issues that these movements addressed created conflicts within Filipino communities and thus allowed for the formation and negotiation of collective identities through debate and dialogue. In the movement against the Marcos dictatorship, I show how migrants challenge loyalty to the state is fundamental to homeland belonging; that is, to protest a despotic regime that no longer has legitimacy from its citizens was framed as an expression of love for the nation (i.e., the people). In regards to the movement for migrants' rights, I show how overseas Filipinos subverted the "modern-day heroes" discourse of the Philippine state and developed their own stories rooted in their lived experiences of displacement, suffering, and empowerment. These narratives fostered solidarity among Filipinos across migrant destinations. Lastly, through the movement around collective memory of the Marcos regime in the context of populist support for Rodrigo Duterte, I illustrate the role of history and memory in movement continuity and multigenerational maintenance of attachment to the nation, which encompasses both the territorial homeland and Filipino communities all over the world. Thus, I describe moments and spaces of diaspora construction, such as at the U.S. Congress, where Filipino activists used the history of U.S. colonization to hold Americans accountable to the rise of the Marcos regime; at the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal on the Philippines (a nongovernment public opinion tribunal) held in Antwerp, Belgium, organized by Filipino activists and attended by migrant workers all over Europe; at Filipino community centers in Los Angeles and San Francisco, where Filipinos debated each other and came up with statements in support of migrants' rights; and at public spaces in Amsterdam, Manila, Seattle, and Queens, where Filipino community organizers memorialized those who disappeared and died during the dictatorship through performative storytelling. In this paper, I focus on the transnational movements against the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos and for migrants' rights, and reveal two

elements that work together to form a diaspora: loyalty and continued belonging to homeland and solidarity with co-nationals/-ethnics.

## **Diaspora as Social Construction<sup>2</sup>**

Diaspora often refers to religious or national groups living outside an imagined homeland (Faist 2010). From a political science perspective, Shain (2005, 51-52) describes diaspora as “a people with a common national origin who regard themselves, or are regarded by others, as members or potential members of the national community of their home nation, a status held regardless of their geographical location and their citizenship outside their national soil.” Cohen (1997) claims that the idea of a diaspora varies greatly. However,

all diasporic communities settled outside their natal (or imagined natal) territories, acknowledge that “the old country”—a notion often buried in language, religion, custom or folklore—always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions. That claim may be strong or weak, or boldly or meekly articulated in a given circumstance or historical period, but a member’s adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by an acceptance of an inescapable link with their past migration history and a sense of co-ethnicity with others of a similar background. (Cohen 1997, ix)

Early discussions of diaspora emphasize forced and traumatic dispersion, homeland orientation, and strict boundary maintenance as constitutive elements (Brubaker 2005; Bruneau 2010; Cohen 1997; Safran 1991; Tölölyan 1996). Dislocation occurs not only by being “out of place,” when one leaves a particular place and lives elsewhere; rather, the uprooting takes place due to coercion and thus emphasizes unintended action (Sökefeld 2006). Thus, involvement in homeland politics does not appear unusual; rather, it is expected since they regard their ancestral homeland as their true and ideal

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2 In surveying the literature on diaspora, it is important to be cognizant of the “diaspora” diaspora (Brubaker 2005), a dispersion of the meanings of the term in semantic, conceptual, and disciplinary space. In recent years, the term has appeared in both academic works and journalistic accounts to refer to nearly every migrant group. This is mainly due to its metaphorical usage (Bruneau 2010) and the conflation of diaspora as a social form and diaspora as a type of consciousness (Sökefeld 2006). Brubaker (2005, 3) warns, “the universalization of diaspora, paradoxically, means the disappearance of diaspora.”

home, to which they or their descendants would eventually return when conditions are suitable. This is because, according to Tölölyan (1996, 13), “diasporas are displaced but homogeneous and established ‘ethnies’ that, while still in their homeland, were already endowed with protonational social and cultural characteristics.” Political activity is also much higher among stateless diasporas compared to other types, especially if they share a common goal of secession or if an ongoing conflict prevails in the homeland (Baser and Swain 2010; Østergaard-Nielsen 2001, 2003).

Recent literature, however, has foregrounded the process of *becoming* a diaspora through the strategic mobilization of constituencies around a homeland political issue on the basis of shared ideas and collective identities (Baser and Swain 2010; Bruneau 2010; Sökefeld 2006). Scholars critique the failure to engage the question of human agency in migrants’ intentions and argue that “objective” circumstances must include a subjective interpretation in the formation of a diaspora. Sentiments of belonging and attachment to a homeland do not make a diaspora since they only provide the codes for which a diaspora is imagined (Sökefeld 2006). Central to the imagination of community are discourses on shared identity that catalyze or hinder mobilization and, at the same time, are also products of the mobilization process. Hence, emphasis on mobilization avoids the trap of essentialization and groupism and recasts the research problem on why and how discourses that become the foundation of a diasporic identity arise among a certain group of people across time and space.

To explain the construction of diasporas through political and social mobilization, scholars have used and advocated the use of social movement theory, which requires examining the interaction and combined influence of the shifting political environment, constellation of actors and organizations, and construction of a diasporic consciousness (Adamson 2012; Amarasingam 2015; Fair 2005; Koinova 2013; Landolt 2008; Lyon and Uçarer 2001; Østergaard-Nielsen 2001; Sökefeld 2006; Wayland 2004). Like all types of mobilization, the making of a diaspora hinges on the ability of political entrepreneurs to galvanize existing networks of migrants and refugees and to draw on resources in response to opportunities (Adamson 2004; Moore 2002). Often, these leaders gained experience from earlier forms of collective action, such as political exiles, who, prior to their departure, were engaged in movements to overthrow the existing homeland government (Shain 1994/95). They carefully select mobilizing issues and formulate them in a language that appeals to migrants.

In pursuit of a political goal, a key task of these diaspora entrepreneurs is “to construct or deploy ideologies and categories that can be used to create new political groups out of existing social networks . . . and frame the experiences of those who have subjectively experienced dislocation and marginalization” (Adamson 2004, 49-50). This is because migration does not entail the mere transfer of identities from the

country of origin to that settlement, but rather a recreation in a new context. To foster mobilization, political entrepreneurs may draw upon highly parochial or particularistic ideas, articulated in the language of national loyalty and attachment to a territorial homeland (Lyons and Mandaville 2012). They may also use universalist frameworks such as liberalism to advance the goals related to their homeland (Adamson 2004; Koinova 2010). For example, both Jewish- and Arab-Americans have portrayed their commitment to Israel and Palestine respectively as an extension of their allegiance to American democratic values and strategic interests (Shain 1994/95).

In sum, diaspora as a social construction suggests attention to the discursive and political practices of elite actors often during contentious events and episodes, which render more visible a transnational imagined community. In essence, like other social movements, diaspora mobilization as a transnational political project stems from the interplay of opportunities and threats, resources in the community, and strategic deployment of ideologies and identities. Unpacking the underlying processes and mechanisms that lead to different pathways and trajectories is central to the analysis of diaspora formation.

## Research Methodology

The data for the book come from a wide range of sources, including archival documents, semi-structured interviews, and published historical accounts. I conducted data collection in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, The Hague, Leiden, Nijmegen, Rotterdam, Tilburg, and Utrecht) in July 2012, in October to November 2013, and in June to July 2019; the Philippines (Manila, Quezon City, and San Juan) from February to April 2014; and the U.S. (Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco Bay Area, and Seattle) from June to August 2014. I will conduct further interviews in the Netherlands and in the U.S. from May to August 2020. By using multiple methods, I am able to carry out both data source and methodology triangulation to develop a comprehensive understanding of diaspora formation.

The primary data sources consist of more than 3,000 pages of the following: (1) rare written records of social movement organizations (minutes of meetings, position papers, press releases, flyers, official correspondence, and newsletters such as *Ang Katipunan*, *FFP Washington Report*, *MFP Newsletter*, and *CTF Bulletin*) in mostly Dutch, English, and Tagalog; (2) unpublished personal accounts of activists (autobiographies, diaries, letters, memoirs); (3) government documents (communiqués, official reports, policy papers, transcript of hearings); (4) news accounts in the ethnic and mainstream press (*Philippine News*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*); and blogs and posts in social media forums such as Facebook and Twitter. I gathered a significant amount of these data from the personal archives of activists and the various collections on the

Philippines at the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam, the Daniel Boone Schirmer Collection of the University of the Philippines-Diliman Main Library in Quezon City, the Suzzallo and Allen Libraries of the University of Washington in Seattle, and the Asian American Studies Center of the University of California, Los Angeles. A Filipino key informant, who is fluent in Dutch, translated a few documents from Dutch to English.

A challenge in using written historical data is the absence of dates in some of the documents. To supplement archival data, especially where historical documentation is missing, I have conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews of movement participants and their children. I will have interviewed 85-90 key informants, averaging 100-120 minutes each. I selected them using snowball sampling, which is commonly used for members of a population that have not all been previously identified and are more difficult to locate. This is especially the case for Filipino activists who worked clandestinely in both the Netherlands and the U.S. I am interviewing until I reached a “saturation” point, that is, when no new information was being elicited. Currently, I have had face-to-face conversations with 75 key informants and one through Skype. I conducted the interviews in English and Tagalog, depending on the key informant’s preference. Sampling sought to maximize variation in gender, legal status, and migrant generation of the informants.

### **“Marcos is not the Philippines”<sup>3</sup> The Antidictatorship Movement and Loyalty to the Homeland**

If allegiance to the homeland constitutes a core foundation in the creation of diasporas, how does protesting its government convey migrants’ desire for membership despite being outside of its physical boundaries? Whether real or imagined, the homeland has been depicted as an authoritative source of value, identity, and loyalty (Brubaker 2005; Redclift 2017). Because of its central role in the nation-building project, the state has often managed to keep other sources of loyalty at bay in the migrants’ imagination of the homeland. Thus, unlike mobilizations to defend the integrity and sovereignty of

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3 On September 1983, a month after the assassination of opposition leader, Benigno S. Aquino Jr., antigovernment protests and riots occurred in the Philippine capital, Manila. U.S. President Ronald Reagan was scheduled to visit the country in November. In reference to the chaos that had ensued following her husband’s murder, Corazon Aquino said to the press, “I am sure the people around Mr. Reagan are reading what’s going on here and maybe they can tell him that Marcos is not the Philippines” (Foa 1983).

the ancestral homeland from external forces in which the conflict between “us” and “them” is obvious, movement struggles that oppose the government in power are often fraught with contradictions. Migrants may often feel that challenging the homeland state is tantamount to betrayal of their country of origin, including their own ancestry, culture, and history.

This section analyzes how, through the transnational antidictatorship movement, activists challenged the state as a natural reference point for the development of migrants’ homeland-oriented collective identities. In the strategies that activists pursued to delegitimize the government of Marcos, they framed the state as an entity that does not always serve the best interests of its people; in the process, activists contested the idea that the state should have the monopoly of migrants’ expression of loyalty to the homeland. At the same time, by protesting the Marcos regime, they opened the arena for different imaginations of national membership to flourish—one that disentangles the state (*Philippine government*) from the nation (*Filipino people*). The case study of the antidictatorship movement in the U.S. and the Netherlands, therefore, shows that through activism that calls into question the legitimacy of the state to represent the transnational community of its people, migrants construct loyalty to the homeland from below—that is, protesting an institution that has the power to narrowly define who and how one should be part of the homeland (often based on citizenship statutes) opens up migrants’ imagination of what membership to the nation entails and what kinds of collective identities are the foundation of this belonging.

#### *Movement Growth and Expansion: Building a Constituency*

Marcos’s imposition of martial law in 1972 offered a favorable opportunity for the expansion of the movement as activists took advantage of the critical discourse moment (Chilton 1988; Gamson 1992) to invigorate pre-existing activist networks, create new organizations, and elaborate on ideologies that inform their critique of Marcos. Although martial law signified increased repression of the movement in the Philippines and overseas, activists interpreted it in ways that emphasized opportunity rather than constraint. They exploited the discursive opening that martial law provided to break the consensus among Filipinos in the U.S. and the Netherlands on the dictatorship’s perceived positive outcomes in the Philippines. In this stage of mobilization, the goal was to sow conflict in the community that would allow migrants to question the foundation of their belief systems; in the process, within these antagonisms, activists built a movement constituency. Whereas movement spillover was key in the initial phase, the period of growth and expansion illustrates how forms of collective action spread to places in which they are not native through relational and mediated diffusion (McAdam and Rucht 1993; Strang and Soule 1998).

In both countries, contention crossed the borders of the nation-state through the brokerage (Tarrow 2005; Vasi 2011) of migrants, exiles, and solidarity activists, who served as intermediaries, facilitating the transfer of information between previously unconnected social sites. The key position of these actors in transnational social fields influenced the content and reception of the messages that were communicated and the constituency that was mobilized.

During the Marcos dictatorship, the Filipino community in the U.S. was one of the largest and most heterogeneous ethnic groups in terms of education, income, legal status and citizenship, length of residency, migrant generation, occupation, and province/region of origin. Most left the Philippines to permanently settle in the U.S. While they publicly expressed pride as Filipinos and continued devotion to their homeland, these actions remained in the realm of cultural heritage, often through the celebration of religious traditions and Philippine Independence Day. For instance, second-wave immigrants romanticized the culture of the Philippines in customs and practices such as *fiestas* as well as cultivated a variant of Filipino nationalism that incorporated loyalty and gratitude to the U.S. They relished the fact that they, as immigrants from an American colonial outpost, could assimilate into U.S. culture more easily than other immigrants (Habal 2007). Most Filipino immigrant parents transmitted and nurtured a political identity among the second generation geared towards assimilation into the American mainstream. This entailed limited participation in or withdrawal from politics in the Philippines. For the few immigrants who continued to be involved in homeland affairs, they tended to be politically conservative due to their religious views. How then can activists mobilize a community whose members view belonging to the homeland nation as largely cultural? More importantly, how can they portray their struggle from afar to depose a native home regime as a patriotic mission, especially since they are detached from the day-to-day suffering of the people under dictatorship?

Several groups were formed just after the declaration of martial law, but four were the largest in terms of size and scale of mobilization: the National Committee for the Restoration of Civil Liberties in the Philippines (NCRCLP), which is comprised of Filipinos from center to left of the political spectrum; the Katipunan ng Demokratikong Pilipino (Union of Democratic Filipinos [KDP]), an anti-imperialist cadre organization with links to the CPP-NDF; the Movement for a Free Philippines (MFP), founded by self-exiled former Philippine Senator Raul Manglapus and other bureaucrats and politicians who had fled the Marcos regime; and the Friends of the Filipino People (FFP), which rallied non-Filipino allies. At this stage of movement expansion, these new organizations carefully navigated the political culture of the Filipino community and framed their opposition to Marcos with the goal of attracting a broad constituency. For instance, NCRCLP's focus on human rights was a strategic choice to avoid alienating



most first-generation immigrants who espoused conservative views. An activist reflects on NCRCLP's decision to limit the discourse that informed their resistance to human rights, despite consensus among its members on Marcos's removal from office as the most favorable outcome for the Philippines, "I think it was important to try to unite the broadest cross-section of the Filipino community against the dictatorship . . . We recognized that we needed to have a broader approach to build consensus in the Filipino community to oppose dictatorship and that was to have it pitched to civil liberties."

One of the early campaigns of NCRCLP that appealed to Filipinos in the U.S. was the fight against the payment of income taxes by Filipino citizens overseas.<sup>4</sup> In its statement published in *Kalayaan*, NCRCLP framed opposition to the policy by divorcing support for the state from love of the nation—that is, fulfilling one's duty to the homeland government does not mean expressing one's allegiance and loyalty to the people. By highlighting the number of Filipinos in the U.S. and their power to change the status quo as a united collective actor, NCRCLP also advanced a migrant agency frame—in other words, the actions of the large number of Filipinos overseas can influence political outcomes in the homeland.

To pay your taxes is to support the Marcos dictatorship. *Your hard earned [sic.] dollars will be used to kill our Moslem brothers, maintain political prisons, repress students and teachers, draft your twenty-year old brothers and cousins to fight in Mindanao, maintain the Marcos households in England, Switzerland and California, crush the peasant and labor movements, and in general support and prop up Marcos's rule.* Let us not be cowed by the threats of the Marcos agencies abroad. There are 350,000 of us in the United States. If we unite and refuse to pay taxes, the Marcos dictatorship cannot do anything to us. (NCRCLP 1973, 1 emphasis added)

Although all the newly-formed organizations shared a similar goal of putting an end to martial law in the short term, they differed in their analysis of a key element of the movement related to agency and identity: the role of the Filipino activists in the U.S. in the struggle against Marcos and their membership in the Philippine nation. The contrast was starkest between the KDP and MFP. In his speech at MFP's founding

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4 According to a new regulation imposed by the Marcos regime, all overseas Filipinos must pay taxes according to the following schedule: gross income not over \$6,000, one percent; over \$6,000 but not over \$20,000, two percent; and over \$20,000, three percent.

convention, Manglapus spoke about the significance of the formation of MFP just a few blocks from the White House, “where it all began 75 years ago,” referring to U.S.’s decision to annex the Philippines at the turn of the century (MFP National Convention 1973, 5). He compared his exile in the U.S. to the past journey of Filipino propagandists to Spain (Manglapus 1986, xix). MFP members saw themselves as the new *ilustrados* and as “eyewitnesses, with personal experience of what martial law was like on the ground” (Fuentecilla 2013, 14). Although most of the exiles were not directly connected to the communist movement in the Philippines, their opposition to the U.S.-backed Marcos regime made their applications for asylum difficult based on the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (or McCarran-Walter Act), which denied asylum to immigrants who espoused political ideologies opposed to American principles.<sup>5</sup> Some escaped without passports and access to their funds in the Philippines. Thus, they depended on their social network for short-term accommodations, housing, and employment (Gaerlan 1999). Others experienced lowered social class position, as they joined the low-skilled American workforce (Fuentecilla 2013). MFP framed their journey to escape the dictatorship and their immediate immersion into movement organizing despite difficulties associated with their immigration status as testament to their commitment to the Filipinos left behind under Marcos. The activists were insistent in being called “exiles” rather than “migrants” or “immigrants,” for the term captured their identity rooted in persecution, forced displacement, and goal of return.

MFP often made distinctions between Filipino nationals who were temporarily living in the U.S. as students and exiles, and those who had acquired permanent residency and citizenship and had made the country as their home. In his historical account of the MFP, former activist Jose Fuentecilla regarded the post-1965 professional immigrants as possessing “relatively weak ties to people and institutions in the homeland” (Fuentecilla 2013, 22) with activities limited to fundraising for infrastructure projects in their hometowns through their provincial associations and cultural and social events to strengthen friendships and foster community through alumni organizations. In MFP’s assessment, migrants’ cross-border involvement in civic initiatives in their villages and engagement with coethnics in social gatherings in the U.S. were constitutive of fragile bonds, because their concept of the Philippine nation was confined to their hometown and organizational interests. On the other

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5 For example, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service denied the application for political asylum of Heherson Alvarez and his wife, Cecile—prominent critics of the Marcos regime in the Philippines—in 1975. The couple used a refugee document given by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees during their stay in the U.S.

hand, MFP considered “the younger, newest segment of this wave, mostly students—single, undecided about where to put down roots, and perhaps with plans to return home after completing their degrees” as receptive to organizing efforts related to the Marcos dictatorship (Fuentecilla 2013, 24).

Manglapus’s prominence enabled recruitment of members to MFP. By 1979, the organization had 79 chapters in California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Texas, and other states that had a number of Filipinos. The *Philippine News*, the biggest U.S.-based Philippine newspaper in circulation, offered favorable publicity for MFP to the Filipino community. MFP regarded the Filipinos in the Philippines as its most important audience with the Filipinos in the U.S. performing a secondary, supportive role in the struggle. It urged Filipinos in the U.S. to send news clippings in their letters to their families in the homeland to inform them of the overseas resistance to the regime (Fuentecilla 2013).

In contrast to MFP, KDP did not see the concerns of Filipinos who were in the U.S. temporarily and those who had chosen to settle permanently as distinct and thus constituted two different communities. Building on the ideologies and resources of Kalayaan Collective, KDP fought transnationally on two fronts: against the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines and against capitalism in the U.S. The duality was strategic as much as it was ideological. KDP did not view the Filipinos in the U.S. as an exile community that would return to the Philippines once the political situation improved (Odette Polintan and Dave Della, unpublished interview, July 24, 2014). Permanent immigrants and a growing second generation, keen on settling or maintaining a home in the U.S., comprised a huge proportion of the total population of Filipinos in American society. In addition, the membership of KDP was disproportionately composed of U.S.-born Filipinos, who tended to be more interested in domestic rather than homeland issues (Habal 2007). KDP members who were U.S. citizens also acknowledged the privilege that came from their social position, which enabled them to condemn Marcos and to hold the U.S. elites responsible for his power without deleterious consequences.

Movement resources also defined KDP’s dual approach. The combined leadership of Cynthia Maglaya, Bruce Occeña, and Melinda Paras was crucial in setting KDP’s principles and political program. Maglaya was an immigrant from the Philippines and a founder of *Kalayaan International* while working as a Tagalog instructor at UC Berkeley’s Asian American Studies Program. A biracial Filipino/white native of Brooklyn, New York, Occeña was an anti-Vietnam War activist, a member of Venceremos Brigade, and a participant in the Third World Liberation Front strikes in 1968 that were instrumental in the institution of ethnic studies in colleges and universities. Paras, also of mixed ancestry, was born and raised in Wisconsin and was an anti-Vietnam War activist

who went to the Philippines to organize and recruit American soldiers stationed in Clark and Subic. She became a member of KM, and after being arrested shortly after martial law was declared, she was deported back to the U.S. and banned entry into the Philippines (Espiritu 2009; Gaerlan 1999).

Through their organizational composition and ideological foundation, KDP reflected the national membership of Filipino migrants in the U.S. and captured the sentiment of those who continued to consider the Philippines as their homeland—whether in legal, material, and symbolic terms—despite putting down roots in other countries. Connecting authoritarian rule in the Philippines and capitalism in the U.S., KDP saw the experiences of Filipinos in the U.S. as deeply entangled with the history of Filipinos in the Philippines. The organization advocated the institution of national democracy in the Philippines so that Filipinos do not have to leave the country and the establishment of socialism in the U.S. to combat racial discrimination and social injustices against Filipino migrants and other minorities. For KDP, while a nationalist framework was useful in mobilizing against the dictatorship, an international approach was required to address the structural roots that led to Marcos's rise to power. As they considered Filipinos in the U.S. as part of the working class, KDP eschewed the leadership of the oligarchic elite in the movement. Drawing on stories of resistance of early Filipino migrants that were adapted in plays, literature, and other forms of artistic expressions, KDP activists kept alive the role of the “colonized intellectual” and sought to develop national consciousness based on the critique of the Filipino elite—a product of colonialism—of which Marcos belonged.

Propaganda and movement recruitment were fundamental tasks that defined the day-to-day operations of the KDP. The former was accomplished through the publication of *Ang Katipunan* newspaper, which was sold in churches, groceries, schools, and public places that Filipinos frequented. KDP directly enlisted members by tapping into Filipino youth programs and networks focusing on Filipino identity and cultural heritage. The Far West Convention, an annual gathering of Filipino-American youth based in the West Coast, was a major arena for KDP to enlarge its membership (Florante Ibañez, unpublished interview, August 6, 2014). Conceived in 1971 by the Filipino Youth Activities of Seattle under the leadership of Fred and Dorothy Cordova, the convention provided a space for mostly U.S.-born Filipinos to learn about their history and understand the challenges they face in American society through workshops and cultural performances. KDP activists considered the convention as their most intensive political work with people constituting the “most active middle forces West Coast wide” (“Internal Memo to KDP Activists” n.d.). Within a year of its founding, KDP established chapters in Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. It attracted a representative

cross-section of the Filipino community, especially second-generation Filipinos of working-class backgrounds.

Unsurprisingly, the movement against the Marcos dictatorship encountered resistance from Marcos's emissaries and propagandists and conservative and insouciant members of the Filipino migrant community. But it also faced hostility from progressive activists who believed that mobilization should prioritize the concerns of Filipinos in the U.S. and that involvement in divisive Philippine issues could undermine pre-existing initiatives and endanger the whole Filipino population. Marcos's suppression of Filipinos in the U.S. regardless of citizenship and the conflict on the primacy of issues that the ethnic community must tackle reveal the contradictions in migration and national belonging—that is, while increased mobility often encourages fluidity of identities, the act of delineating both physical and symbolic borders through state policies and actors' "discursive practices" (Foucault 1972) implies that the boundaries of the nation-state remain rigid.

On May 18, 1973, Philippine Consul General of Los Angeles Ruperto Baliao resigned from his post and turned over to the *Los Angeles Times* confidential documents, including a blacklist of 150 supposedly anti-Marcos Filipinos in the U.S.<sup>6</sup> Marcos instructed the consulates not to renew their passports ("Consul Baliao Denounces Marcos" 1973, 1). The list consisted mostly of Filipinos who were American citizens by birth or naturalization or Philippine nationals with permanent residency in the U.S. Most were writers and editors of Filipino-American newspapers critical of the dictatorship, such as *Kalayaan International* and *Ningas Cogon*, and activists affiliated with KDP and NCRCLP. However, the document also included leaders in the Filipino community, who were not members of antidictatorship groups but were involved in activism on domestic issues confronting Filipinos in the U.S. such as employment and housing discrimination and access to social services.

The Marcos regime also resorted to indirect repression and disinformation. Unable to control the press in the U.S., the Philippine government used a network of agents to discourage subscribers and advertisers from supporting *Philippine News* and the Chicago-based newspaper *Philippine Times* (Lachica 1979). It sponsored the New York-based newspaper *The Filipino Reporter* to publish favorable news and editorials about the economic and political situation in the Philippines ("Consul Baliao Denounces Marcos"

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6 *Philippine News* published the names of 150 Filipinos in the U.S. accused of being against the government of Marcos.

1973, 1). Marcos also fostered return tourism through his Balikbayan (Homecoming) Program, launched in September 1, 1973 to showcase the accomplishments of his government and the benefits of martial law to overseas Filipinos. Balikbayan also intended to attract migrants to maintain their links in the Philippines so that the state can tax them on their foreign earnings (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc 1994). Lastly, Marcos's media propagandists portrayed the exiles of MFP as disloyal to the nation and as "steak commandos," an attack on both their physical absence from the territory of the Philippine nation-state and their class position that had enabled them to pursue their activities in the U.S. (Vergara 2009).

The conservative, pro-Marcos members of the community saw the actions of the KDP and MFP as a perpetuation of the dominance of Manila-based, Tagalog-speaking Filipinos in the U.S., despite a sizable number of Ilocanos that comprised the migrant population. Ilocanos felt loyalty towards Marcos because he was from the Ilocos region and invested in the development of the area to maintain his electoral base. Combined with their service in the U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East during World War II, they considered allegiance to Marcos, who also served in the U.S. Armed Forces in the Philippines during the war, as an act of Filipino patriotism (Domingo 2010). The biggest challenge for the antidictatorship movement, however, was appealing to those who remained indifferent to the political developments in the Philippines, either due to their desire to assimilate into American society and thus abstain from any form of contentious politics or because of their view that the challenges of Filipinos in the U.S. as racialized immigrants must take precedence in political organizing.

MFP tapped into the history of heroism among exiled Filipinos, especially the Propaganda Movement and La Solidaridad. In an advertisement entitled "History Repeats Itself" published in *Philippine News* for Manglapus's new book *Philippines: The Silenced Democracy*, MFP wrote, "Our people back home cannot wait any longer... Let us be inspired by the courage and foresight of Jose Rizal, Marcelo H. del Pilar, and Graciano Lopez Jaena who used their freedom in exile to work for the freedom of their countrymen at home" ("History Repeats Itself," 1976, 2). The persistent use of "exile" in MFP's writings suggested that Filipinos in the U.S., like their counterparts in Spain in the nineteenth century, were living overseas only temporarily and that the Philippines was the country to which they truly belonged. In contrast, because KDP worked on two fronts and was the only organization that consisted of a significant number of Filipino Americans, it faced opposition from some activists with roots in the identity movements in the 1960s, who considered the conditions in the Philippines and resistance against the Marcos regime as completely separate from the fight for equality

of Filipinos in American society and the search for their collective identity. The Far West Convention became a site where these conflicts transpired (Domingo 2010). Through *Ang Katipunan*, KDP appealed to the community through “a kind of moral prescription, an admonition not to forget” (Vergara 2009, 125). In an editorial entitled “Stand Up for the Homeland,” KDP called attention to the relative privilege of Filipinos in the U.S. despite their marginalization, compared to those in the Philippines under the dictatorship:

There is no question that Filipinos in the US have many problems and suffer much hardship, especially discrimination because of national origin and even skin color. But this cannot be an excuse for us to divorce ourselves from the problems and needs of our homeland. Such attitudes are only a reflection of unpatriotic and selfish ideas. *Because we are able to temporarily escape the dire poverty and oppression we faced in the Philippines, we should not ignore the conditions of our brothers and sisters who remain back home.* (“Stand Up for the Homeland” 1975, 2)

Compared to the U.S., the community in the Netherlands during the dictatorship was small and largely homogeneous, composed mostly of temporary, contract-based workers. Given the small number of Filipinos in the Netherlands, community infrastructure was initially built to alleviate estrangement and longing associated with the migration experience and to forge ties with the Dutch population. The Catholic Church was the principal venue where Filipinos regularly met, which catalyzed the formation of ethnic organizations. In 1965, the Philippine Nurses Association of the Academisch Ziekenhuis (University Hospital) was formed in Leiden. Operating as a cultural and social club, it provided a space exclusively for Filipino nurses to fraternize outside of the work environment. In the 1970s, Dutch-Filipino friendship associations became a popular venue for Filipino migrants to learn about Dutch culture and society, in light of the absence of official integration program for temporary workers. The Dutch-Philippine Club was established in 1973 in Gendringen, where one of the Berghaus factories that employed Filipino seamstresses was located. Six years later, the Dutch-Philippine Association was formed in Utrecht, which spearheaded discounted cultural trips to the Philippines for Dutch citizens and formal social gatherings with support from the Philippine Embassy. In essence, most of the Filipino organizations abstained from activities related to homeland political affairs.

Two simultaneous processes changed this state of affairs. The first is the formation of a Dutch solidarity group on the Philippines by Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers

(Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers [SNV])<sup>7</sup> volunteers and missionaries who returned to the Netherlands while the country was undergoing political and social transformations. The first wave of mobilization among Dutch social movements was beginning to subside in the early 1970s, and the New Left gained control of the Labor Party. The Social Democrats reformed their agenda to adhere to socialist principles, which included support for social movements and adoption of extra-parliamentary activities as part of their repertoire (Kriesi 1993). The rise of the socialist-oriented Labor Party in Dutch politics provided a favorable opportunity for the formation of organizations focusing on Third World concerns. As a continuation of their work in the Philippines and as a response to letters of appeal they received from Filipinos urging them to create awareness of the Marcos dictatorship in Europe, the former volunteers and missionaries founded Filippijnengroep Nederland (Philippine Group Netherlands [FGN]) in 1975 in Utrecht. For two years, FGN functioned as an informal working group where members met every week to discuss the situation in the Philippines and to create a platform for the popular dissemination of its analysis to the Dutch public.

With the initial objective of drawing attention to the escalation of human rights violations in the Philippines, FGN published a monthly magazine called *Filippijnen Bulletin* (Philippine Bulletin), which was circulated to their existing and nascent networks. It framed FGN's formation as a contribution to the ongoing liberation struggle in the Philippines and linked this to the conflict within Dutch society: "the similarities between the Filipino people and Dutch to the extent that they both suffer under the same social [capitalist] system" (translated from Dutch) (FGN, n.d., 3). FGN called for solidarity and stressed the experience of Dutch volunteers in the Philippines who bore witness to the struggle of Filipinos. Since the Dutch public was relatively unfamiliar with the situation in the Philippines, FGN piggybacked on the popularity of Latin American dictatorships and inserted the Philippines into policy discourses on human rights and democracy that were gaining traction in the Netherlands.

The installation of a new coalition between the Christen-Democratisch Appèl (Christian Democratic Appeal) and the Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) in 1977 changed the political context for FGN in paradoxical ways. Despite the coalition's conservative politics, FGN considered the Christian Democrats' principles as an opening to engage the Dutch state. Due to

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7 Similar to the Peace Corps in the U.S., the mission of the government-run Dutch volunteer program, established in 1965 under the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is to provide technical assistance to developing countries and to understand the cultures of their people.



its strong adherence to Christian doctrines and the Philippines' being a predominantly Catholic country, the coalition was receptive to appeals on human rights issues, but not on support for armed struggle. During this period, political protests intensified and ushered in the second wave of mobilization mostly by five Dutch new social movements (NSMs): ecology and anti-nuclear, peace, solidarity, autonomous, and women (Kriesi 1993). These movements offered an auspicious environment for the growth and expansion of FGN. Through its campaign against the construction of the World Bank-funded Bataan Nuclear Power Plant in the Philippines, FGN connected with antinuclear groups. It also established ties with the Dutch peace movement, particularly its Christian current, and linked the Philippines to their issues related to nuclear weapons, cruise missiles, and militarism, highlighting the role of U.S. military bases in the Asia-Pacific region in its frames.

The political atmosphere also became more conducive to international solidarity against dictatorial regimes. Throughout the developed world, solidarity groups developed a common repertoire of contention. This consisted of exposing events and issues not covered by mainstream media, transforming public opinion, and providing alternative analyses and explanations through public outreach, educational campaigns, and exposure trips (Nepstad 2004; Smith 1996). The solidarity movement in the Netherlands flourished, having the highest mobilization capacity throughout the second wave, compared to the other NSMs (Kriesi 1993). Notable country-specific committees—such as those in support of the struggle of the Vietnamese and of national liberation movements in East Timor, Nicaragua, Palestine, and South Africa—made significant strides in developing a strong organizational infrastructure and in influencing public discourse on humanitarian and development aid. FGN developed relations with other solidarity groups, especially the committee on Nicaragua, as both noted similarities in the character of the Marcos and Somoza regimes as well as the evolution of an organized insurgency. Like other solidarity groups, FGN informed and appealed to the Dutch public by personalizing distant or abstract issues through life stories of ordinary Filipinos that spoke to a generalized abhorrence of the Marcos regime's behavior. From Utrecht, FGN expanded to various provinces of the Netherlands, including North and South Holland in the northwest, North Brabant and Limburg in the south, Gelderland in the east, and Groningen in the northeast. Catholic church groups, students, and local Dutch activists who attended FGN events took the initiative to set up city, regional, and sector-based chapters. They operated as autonomous organizations but established formal ties with and implemented the national activities of FGN.

The second process is the migration of the top leaders of the CPP-NDF to the Netherlands. As Marcos intensified his campaign to quell the communist insurgency in

the mid-1970s, the CPP-NDF began deploying cadres overseas both to escape persecution and to build diplomatic relations with socialist parties in Western Europe (Quimpo 2008). Through the help of religious congregations and a permissive Dutch asylum policy, they were able to obtain refugee status in the Netherlands and settle in Utrecht, where most of the members of FGN resided. The absence of Filipino organizations focusing on political issues in the Philippines encouraged the refugees to join FGN and eventually set up the NDF international desk in its office. This common space led to the blurring of lines between FGN as an international solidarity organization and NDF as a national liberation movement. The activists' commitments oscillated between FGN and NDF, such that one cannot be engaged in the former without also being involved in the latter. Activists spun through the revolving door between the solidarity and revolutionary movements. With the informal establishment of NDF, a significant portion of FGN's work shifted. FGN's activities centered on building an infrastructure of material and political support for CPP-NDF. These included disseminating propaganda to media, government, and other social movements; connecting CPP-NDF with Dutch political parties and left-oriented foundations and grant-giving bodies; and organizing meetings between CPP-NDF and exiled members of prominent national liberation movements. In essence, FGN incubated the Philippine revolutionary movement in the Netherlands while mobilizing structures were being transplanted, replicated, and/or adapted in the host society and while creating and anticipating favorable conditions for mobilization. Although FGN did not specifically target the Filipino community in the Netherlands in their campaigns, except indirectly during protests at the consulate, it earned notoriety among the 1960s wave of migrants who attended and openly criticized the organization's campaign. A solidarity activist observed,

When we were invited somewhere to give presentations on the Philippines in the 70s up to the 80s, wherever there would be Filipinos, they would get very upset because we were very negative. They would say, "Why don't you talk about the nice and beautiful things about the Philippines?" We would respond, "Yeah, that's true, but we also talk about poverty, repression, human rights . . . These people are struggling for a better life and we want to support them and tell their stories." (Evert de Boer, unpublished interview, October 8, 2013).

Such reaction from the Filipinos in the Netherlands was expected since this migrant stream left the Philippines during the early years of Marcos when economic and political conditions were robust. Many of them clung on to idyllic ideas about the homeland to cope with their daily travails from living in a foreign land. Their persistent self-projection towards the country has much more to do with a few selected memories of it in the past than with the present state of affairs (Boccagni 2010). FGN recognized

that the movement against the dictatorship would not have the legitimacy and capacity to expand in the Netherlands without support from the migrant population and a public challenge to the state's construction of the Marcos dictatorship as representing the interests of the Filipino people.

To conclude, during this stage of movement expansion owing to the right set of external circumstances that martial law offered, activists built a grassroots constituency to support the transnational resistance against Marcos. This was necessary to show that the movement possessed legitimacy to challenge the homeland government—that is, the community had granted these non-state actors the authority to speak for their material and symbolic interests. As stated earlier, at the core of pro-democracy movements is the contest over interpretations of national loyalty (Shain 1994/95). Parties in conflict compete for support by describing themselves as the genuine representatives of the people. Unlike home governments, which usually enjoy the advantage of proximity to their citizens and control of communication channels, a challenge for migrants and exiles is depicting their long-distance struggle as a nationalistic act.

The strategies that activists pursued to build a constituency depended on the economic, political, and social composition of the community. In the U.S., where a heterogeneous population of Filipinos from different migration vintages existed, the movement consisted of groups across the political spectrum, representing both narrow and broad goals to manage a diverse and contradictory set of interests. While the KDP advanced an agenda that spoke to the class and racial identities of its predominantly young, second-generation constituency, the MFP formulated their claims in ways that were not hostile to elite members of the migrant community, who were keen on supporting the oligarchy in the Philippines. On the other hand, with a small, homogeneous migrant community in the Netherlands, the antidictatorship movement started with solidarity groups, which broadened the base of movement adherents among Dutch citizens. It accomplished this by connecting the anti-Marcos struggle to the campaigns of pre-existing organizations through the process of frame bridging.

In both countries, we saw how contention spread through the brokerage of actors who presented themselves as living testaments of Marcos's atrocities and thus legitimate political actors. We saw how this occurred in the Netherlands, where similar to the North American missionaries in the Central American solidarity movement in the 1980s (Nepstad 2004), the vertical ties and horizontal connections of Dutch volunteers and religious workers enabled them to make the conflict in the Philippines visible and relevant to a public geographically removed from the Southeast Asian country. The social attributes of the solidarity activists, their structural position in Dutch society, and cultural knowledge allowed them to connect the antidictatorship movement to

the burgeoning new social movements in the Netherlands. In the case of the KDP and MFP in the U.S., activists from the Philippines acted as “transnational hinges” (Tarrow 2005, 190) that communicated messages of the movement in the homeland to be adapted to new sites and situations. As transmigrants who retained political ties and continued to identify with their communities of origin, these activists had access to organizational resources and information about the Philippines, which strengthened their credibility in the Filipino migrant communities in the U.S. on homeland issues. Thus, the U.S. case also illustrates that miscibility, aside from brokerage, influences the spread of social movements; that is, contention spreads faster among groups that are compatible ideologically and are connected by interpersonal networks (Vasi 2011).

With a constituency built, opposition began to take root organically and spread across networks. Combined with opportunities that critical events and policy conflicts offered as well as those that movement participants and adherents created themselves, activism moved to formal inter- and nongovernmental settings. The objective was to cast doubt among political elites in the U.S. and the Netherlands on Marcos’s authority to represent the Filipino people.

*Movement Upsurge and Strategic Capacity: Delegitimizing Marcos in Institutional Arenas*

Between 1975 and 1980, the antidictatorship movement in the U.S. and the Netherlands pursued strategies to simultaneously decertify the Marcos administration and certify contenders to his authority (the Communists, Moro separatists, and elite opposition), where activists’ target audience was hostland governments and civil societies as well as the global public. Since Marcos’s claims to authority were being undermined in the Philippines, he sought the validation of external actors, especially the U.S., to maintain the illusion of legitimacy. Activists, therefore, worked to decertify Marcos in multiple arenas to amplify the erosion of the dictator’s authority from Filipino citizens; at the same time, they also made visible the ascendance of challengers to the regime and depicted them as genuine political actors that represent the interests of the nation. Furuyama and Meyer (2011, 103) describes certification as “the process by which authorities recognize, engage, or endorse an actor or actors as representatives of some larger constituency.” It becomes an effective mechanism to the extent that multiple certifiers express support at critical junctures over time (Furuyama and Meyer 2011; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001).

The processes and mechanisms of certification and decertification took on different but related forms and produced varied outcomes in the two countries. Durable ties between the Philippines and the U.S. created the conditions for foreign policy lobbying. In their campaign to decrease aid to the regime, activists adapted their demands based on their assessment of the political context, enlargement of the multiorganizational

field, and their own perception of what is possible within the parameters of a lobbying strategy. Strong linkages allowed activists to deploy symbols and activate narratives that alluded to the rise of the Marcos dictatorship as an outcome of U.S. colonization of the Philippines, thus grounding their claims and demands for the U.S. withdrawal of support to the regime. In the Netherlands, foreign policy was unable to provide activists with an established point of access into the institutionalized political system due to the country's limited relations with the Philippines. Activists, however, recognized that despotic regimes are still vulnerable to foreign criticisms, especially in the wider sphere of global public opinion. Since the political culture in Western Europe was conducive to universalistic claims-making, they created their own political opportunities through the nongovernmental human rights tribunal and damaged the reputation of the Marcos regime through naming and shaming in international forums. In both strategies, activists uncoupled the nation (Filipino people) from the state (Marcos regime) using frames based on discourses on colonialism, human rights, and national interest.

In his observation of the Marcos dictatorship, political scientist Stephen R. Shalom states, "One of the ironies of the neocolonial relationship between the United States and the Philippines is that leaders in Manila are as dependent on Washington for their power as they are on any of the sectors of the Philippine population. No ruler of the Philippines was more aware of this than Ferdinand Marcos during his more than two decades in power" (1990, 20). Despite differences among movement organizations on their views about the national membership of Filipino migrants, they shared a common belief that U.S. endorsement was pivotal for the regime's survival. They formed coalitions, such as the Anti-Martial Law Alliance, to pressure the U.S. government to withdraw support. Foreign policy lobbying was a key tactic that activists pursued for the following reasons: the U.S. economic and military aid to the Philippines helped Marcos maintain power; the Filipino community was sizable, especially in California, Hawaii, New York, and Washington; and the antidictatorship activists in the U.S. possessed cultural, social, and symbolic capitals. Lobbying centered on cutting allocations for the Philippines in the Foreign Assistance Act.

From May 20 to June 24, 1975, a few months after the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam, the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House of Representatives' Committee on International Relations, headed by Democratic Representative Donald Fraser of Minnesota, convened hearings on the human rights situation in the Philippines and South Korea, signaling to activists a transformed atmosphere for campaigns directed at U.S. foreign policy in Asia. According to FFP's assessment of opportunities, the political climate and dynamics among the elite after the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam offered an auspicious moment for

advocating an overhaul in U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia. For the first time, the U.S. Congress invited opponents of Marcos to testify on the political situation in the Philippines. Initially framing the situation in the Philippines as a human rights issue, the approach of the movement was to use moral shocks (Jasper 1997), wherein activists showed evidence of U.S.-supplied weapons used to suppress social movements, shut down mainstream mass media, and maintain political prisons across the archipelago, among others.

Throughout their sworn statements, the witnesses held the U.S. accountable for the dictatorship in the Philippines, arguing that Marcos would not have had the capacity to repress his people without aid intended to protect U.S. interests in Asia. In accusing the U.S. of acquiescence to Marcos, the witnesses put on trial America's commitment to Western liberal democracy that it had introduced to the archipelago during its colonial rule. They also argued that, as a global leader and champion of government by the people, the U.S. needed to uphold the tenets of democracy in its former colony. Three months after the hearings, U.S. Congress passed the Human Rights or Harkin Amendment (Section 116) to the Foreign Assistance Act, which prohibits economic assistance to any country that commits human rights violations, unless it can be shown that the aid will directly benefit the people. Congress also required the State Department to issue a report each year on the human rights practices in countries that received aid from the U.S. Since its enactment, Section 116 became the primary instrument that the movement used in their lobbying efforts to dismantle the regime.

Activists shifted their framing—from human rights and colonialism to national interest—when they targeted the U.S.-Philippines Military Bases Agreement. Movement leaders knew that as long as U.S. politicians considered the military bases as crucial to the national security of American people, lobbying efforts founded on moral shocks and human rights would be futile. A challenge for the activists was portraying the bases as unnecessary for the protection of U.S. economic and military interests. In the context of the Cold War, the Subic Naval and Clark Air Bases in the Philippines became the most strategic among all overseas basing facilities, allowing the U.S. to project its forces into both Pacific and Indian Ocean regions and thus maintain dominance in the whole Asian continent. For U.S. politicians, fortifying the bases in the Philippines was imperative, especially since after the Second Indochina War, the Soviet Pacific Fleet established itself in the naval facilities of Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam and the airfields of Cambodia (Feeney 1984).

However, since the suspension of bases talks during the Ford administration, public consensus on overseas military installations began to change. Academics, journalists, and former generals started to challenge the importance of the bases. Editorials, opinion columns, and news reports expressed consternation over the degree to which

politicians would give in to Marcos's demands to keep the U.S. bases in the Philippines, at the expense of American taxpayers and the sovereignty of the Filipino people (see Lescaze 1977; Mathews 1976; New York Times 1976, 1977, among others). These provided an opportunity for the movement to target the fiscal foundation of the bases and appeal to U.S. national interests. FFP portrayed the bases as a misappropriation of government funds that could otherwise be allocated to programs and services for American citizens. In a hearing on aid to the Philippines by the House Appropriations Committee held on April 5, 1977, FFP testified on the human rights situation in the Philippines and specific program requests for the Philippines in the 1978 fiscal year. James Drew and William Goodfellow delivered FFP's statement, where they attempted to create further doubts among the political elite on the continued value of the bases: "We believe that these distant installations are of no vital strategic importance and only serve to corrupt traditional American values by being pawns of the Marcos regime in its demands for more U.S. dollars in order to sustain itself" ("Statement on Behalf of the Friends of the Filipino People" 1977). In essence, maintenance of the bases in the Philippines meant violation of liberal democratic principles that constituted the core foundation of American government.

In spite of numerous congressional hearings on the Philippines, the enactment of legislative measures to curtail aid to authoritarian regimes, and the election of Jimmy Carter, who pledged to administer a foreign policy based on human rights, Marcos received military aid at a continually increasing rate. Lobbying efforts declined in the 1980s as the Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions in 1979 altered the opportunities and resources for the movement. With the U.S. bases secure, talks about Marcos's human rights obligations began to dissipate, and the Philippine president used the fall of his fellow autocrats to strengthen his position vis-à-vis the U.S. executive and legislature. Although the movement found new supporters in the U.S. Congress, Carter became more intransigent to their demands than ever before, and lobbying to cut aid produced bleak results.

Across the Atlantic, the asylum of CPP-NDF leaders Luis Jalandoni and Consuelo Ledesma in the Netherlands and the deployment of CPP-NDF cadres instigated the chain migration of refugees and their families, who, like their counterparts in the U.S., were from elite and upper middle-class backgrounds in the Philippines. Dutch asylum policy in the 1970s, which was based on the 1965 Aliens Law, inadvertently facilitated the transplanting of resources for mobilization from the Philippines to the Netherlands. The act made no distinction between aliens (those who left their home countries for non-persecution reasons) and refugees (those who fled their homeland because of oppression) (Walaardt 2011). The Dutch government implemented a quota system from 1977 to 1987, where "some 250 refugees were invited annually, together with

some 400 people for family reunification and a very small number of medical cases” (van Selm 2000, 76). Since there were no *asielzoekcentra* (asylum seeker centers) in the Netherlands until the late 1980s, asylum seekers had to find their own place of residence after reporting to the police (Ghorashi 2005). This gave the opportunity for Filipino refugees to live close to each other in Utrecht, where almost all of the Dutch solidarity activists resided.

Spatial proximity facilitated the creation of a social movement community. The city provided a physical and conceptual space where activists shared, nurtured, and maintained movement symbols, rituals, and ideology (Staggenborg 1998) through everyday activities, from attending life-event celebrations to hosting political discussions in their homes. The offices of FGN and NDF became movement community centers, which also functioned as venues for mutual aid and support. For both Filipino exiles and Dutch solidarity activists, their personal and political lives converged in Utrecht. These cross-cultural intersections facilitated the crystallization of a political refugee identity and the emergence of a group narrative among Filipinos that emphasized both cosmopolitan and national loyalties. Within the movement community, a transnational advocacy network (TAN) focusing on the Marcos dictatorship and human rights in the Philippines emerged. The TAN, which consisted of Filipino refugees, European solidarity activists, church-based NGOs, and academics pursued naming and shaming—a tactic that entails publicizing human rights violations and employing pressure as the perpetrators and their actions gain attention (Keck and Sikkink 1998)—through the arena of nongovernmental human rights tribunals.

In 1978, activists filed a complaint to the Lelio Basso Foundation’s Permanent People’s Tribunal based on traditional legal standards and those enshrined in the 1976 Universal Declaration of Rights of Peoples. The tribunal, which grew out of the Bertrand Russell Tribunal II on Latin America<sup>8</sup> in the early seventies, is a permanent body composed of legal scholars and activists, policymakers and advocates, scientists and medical professionals, and creative artists, from which small groups are selected to hear specific cases. The goal of the activists was for the tribunal to serve as a venue to express appeals to public conscience, to apply established rules and principles of international law, to delegitimize and politically isolate the Marcos regime in the international community, and to mobilize support for the Philippine national liberation movements.

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8 The second Russell Tribunal, convened from 1973 to 1976, focused on the military dictatorships in Argentina and Brazil and the *coup d’état* in Chile.



From October 30 to November 3 in 1980, the tribunal on the Philippines met at the University of Antwerp, Belgium to examine the appeals presented by the NDF and the MNLF on behalf of the Filipino and Bangsamoro peoples<sup>9</sup> respectively. Like other non-government tribunals, international legal scholars, policymakers, scientists and medical professionals, creative artists, and religious leaders from different countries constituted the panel of member-jurors.<sup>10</sup> The participation of non-lawyers was intended to weaken the barrier separating law from humanitarian activity and to create a broad human rights constituency (Blaser 1992). The jurors evaluated more than 3,000 pages of secondhand comprehensive reports on the economic and political situation in the Philippines; personal testimonies of six witnesses from the Philippines—a peasant, a student, a writer, a union leader, a former civil servant, and a member of a tribal minority—and one from Italy—a domestic worker; and visual evidence gathered by the joint preparatory committees on the tribunal. An estimated 500 people attended the session, most of whom were members of solidarity groups in Belgium, Canada, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden, and the U.S. (Komite ng Sambayanang Pilipino 1981).

The legal brief accused Marcos and his military as guilty of “violation of the rights of peoples, violations of human rights, and crimes under international law including genocide” (Komite ng Sambayanang Pilipino 1981, 25). They also held on trial the U.S. government, the IMF and World Bank, and various multinational corporations<sup>11</sup> for participating in transgressions against the Filipino people through its direct aid and loans. The tribunal informed the governments of the Philippines and the U.S. of the charges against them through their embassies in Italy, where the tribunal is

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9 Bangsamoro refers to the population of Muslims in the Philippines.

10 The member-jurors were: Sergio Mendes Arceo, Archbishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico and a leading figure in the progressive wing of the Roman Catholic Church; Richard Baumlin, a legal expert and Swiss parliamentarian; Harvey Cox, professor of theology at Harvard University; Richard Falk, professor of international law at Princeton University; Andrea Giardina, professor of international law at the University of Naples; Francois Houtart, professor of sociology at the University of Louvain; Ajit Roy, renowned Indian writer for the *Economic and Political Weekly*; Makoto Oda, noted Japanese novelist and vice president of the Permanent People’s Tribunal; and Ernst Utrecht, fellow at the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam. Nobel Prize winner George Wald presided over the panel (Komite ng Sambayanang Pilipino 1981).

11 These included Bank of America, Royal Dutch Shell, Mitsubishi, Dole, Goodyear, Pfizer, General Motors, and Cargill.

incorporated, and in Belgium, where the session would take place. Both were invited to send representatives to the tribunal to respond to the allegations but failed to do so.<sup>12</sup>

The tribunal considered the joint complaints of the NDF and MNLF separately, but framed the judgment in identical terms. In its final verdict, the tribunal found “that the Marcos regime by its reliance on ‘permanent’ martial law and numerous blatant abuses of state is *deprived of legitimate standing as a government in international society* and lacks the competence to act on behalf of the Filipino or Bangsa Moro people” (Komite ng Sambayanang Pilipino 1981, 276-277 [italics supplied]). The decision acknowledged and affirmed the authority of the NDF and MNLF as genuine representatives of their respective peoples, which have the right to enforce the rights of their people even through armed struggle. This recognition of the revolutionary movements enabled the two liberation fronts to legally receive assistance from established government and other international bodies.

The delegitimization of the Marcos regime and the endorsement of NDF and MNLF in the international community presented a unique opportunity for broadening the movement beyond the campaign against the dictatorship. During the tribunal, the network of movement adherents and constituents diversified, which brought together, for the first time, existing solidarity organizations, political parties, national liberation movements from other countries, church groups, and trade unions across Europe to lend support to the Philippine revolutionary struggle. Through their solidarity manifestations read in the plenary, they played an instrumental role in backing the two contenders of state power. The tribunal enabled the parallel processes of certification and decertification as more than 6,000 letters and petitions arrived in Antwerp from private citizens across Europe, North America, and the Asia-Pacific, calling for the condemnation of the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship and international recognition of the NDF and MNLF (Komite ng Sambayanang Pilipino 1981).

As the tribunal propelled the Philippine conflict into the international public sphere, political conditions in the Philippines and in other parts of the world offered the impetus for the escalation of contention. Events in the homeland stripped the Marcos regime of its residual authority and unraveled the unity of the elite opposition. Movement leaders in the Netherlands perceived the lifting of martial law in 1981

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12 Four months after the tribunal, the Office of the President of the Philippines issued a ten-page response to the tribunal’s verdict. The Philippine Embassy in The Hague circulated the reply to newspapers in the Netherlands.

as a sign of Marcos's weakening power. When Philippine Congress amended the Constitution and changed the system of government from parliamentary to semi-presidential, Marcos called an election and won. Despite Marcos's democratically-sanctioned extension of power, the activists saw the splintering of the Philippine elite and its gradual removal of support to the regime following the elections as an opportunity for the advancement of revolutionary work. The assassination and martyrdom of Aquino in August 21, 1983 finally fractured the elite opposition, which gave the NDF the standing of being the only viable actor that could topple the dictator.

In sum, the dynamic interaction between domestic and international political opportunity structures (majority control of Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives, withdrawal of U.S. troops in Southeast Asia, U.S. intervention in Latin America, growth of the Communist and Moro separatist movements, cleavages within the Filipino elites) as well as expansion of resources for mobilization (creation of social movement community, TAN, and Anti-Martial Law Alliance) allowed for a surge in movement activity that called for tactical innovation. In the U.S., since U.S. economic and military aid to the Philippine president was crucial for the continuation of his rule, activists worked to discredit Marcos's commitment to liberal democracy. The movement's pursuit of foreign policy lobbying was an outcome of robust ties between the Philippines and the U.S., which enabled the creation of a broad alliance network and information infrastructure. This is particularly important in lobbying and interest group politics, where persuasion, facilitation, and bargaining characterize the interaction between actors and their target.

U.S.-Philippines linkages allowed activists to deploy symbols and activate narratives that alluded to the rise of the Marcos dictatorship as an outcome of U.S. colonization of the Philippines, thus grounding their claims and demands for the U.S. withdrawal of support to the regime. Because colonialism is a familiar discourse that defines U.S.- Philippines relations, even in congressional hearings on appropriations and human rights, activists foregrounded the colonial narrative and connected this to U.S. domestic and foreign policies. Although activists did not achieve their goal of significantly cutting aid to the regime, lobbying undermined the authority of Marcos in the U.S. Congress and thus prevented the formation of elite consensus around the necessity of maintaining his government for U.S. national interests. The activists were able to take advantage of the congressional hearings to decertify Marcos, as the inquiries comprise of multiple actors, such as the executive and legislature, mainstream mass media, and civil society, each of which is an audience for the statements, symbols, and actions of other players (Jasper 2004).

### *Conclusion*

If a diaspora is created through activism, how do migrants' transnational mobilizations to undermine the government in their country of origin construct collective identities that foster continued belonging to the homeland? Is allegiance to institutions of power, such as the state, necessary in diaspora formation? This chapter showed how, in the movement against the Marcos dictatorship in the U.S. and the Netherlands, Filipinos challenged loyalty to the regime as fundamental to their attachment to the Philippine nation. Activists framed protesting a government that no longer has legitimacy from its citizens as an expression of love for the homeland. Although the strategies varied due to differences in the relationship between the Philippines and the U.S./Netherlands as well as the demographic composition and resources of the migrant community, they are similar in terms of the way they depicted the Marcos government as not representative of the Filipino people; thus, to contest the state is to demonstrate unity with the nation.

In each stage of social movement development, activists worked to disrupt the hegemony of the government in migrants' imagination of the homeland—in essence, to show that “Marcos is not the Philippines.” During the period of movement emergence, activists in the U.S. took advantage of political openings that global events offered and the pre-existing networks and infrastructure that previous protest waves have built. With the objective of catalyzing *collective* action from *individual* grievances, activists connected the rise of the Marcos regime to the larger macrohistorical context of the Vietnam War—that Marcos's power was a product of U.S. interference in politics in Southeast Asia. In contrast, changes in the implementation of Dutch bilateral aid precipitated the creation of movement adherents that would articulate criticism of Marcos.

As the movement grew from a core group of activists and expanded to various sectors of the migrant community, the goal focused on interrogating ideas about the Filipino nation, particularly whether and to what extent those who have permanently settled outside the Philippines and have renounced their Filipino citizenship still maintain any relationship with the Philippine state and therefore possess the right to criticize it. Thus, during this period of constituency building, to mobilize migrants for the anti-Marcos struggle, activists in the U.S. redefined the Filipino people to include those who have had connections with the Philippines—both material and symbolic—in spite of assimilation in the host societies. To rally Filipinos in the U.S. as people who have a stake in the Marcos regime's survival or demise, activists elaborated on movement identity and agency frames. On the other hand, in the Netherlands, since the movement started with adherents (Dutch solidarity activists) rather than constituents (Filipino migrants), activism centered on building grassroots infrastructure to anchor

the transplanted Philippine national democratic movement until it is able to embed and tether itself in the migrant community. This was necessary so that mobilization against the regime not only reproduces the agenda of the NDF in the Netherlands but also reflects the grievances of the Filipinos living in the country, whose political subjectivities are based on their lived experiences as migrants.

When a strong social base for the movement existed and political conditions were conducive, activists moved to delegitimize Marcos. In foreign policy lobbying, through the use of narratives, scripts, and symbols on anti-imperialism, colonialism, nationalism, and sovereignty, activists in the U.S. portrayed Marcos as a leader who prioritizes his personal interests and that of the U.S. rather than the Filipino people. Philippine leaders' subservience to foreign powers is a familiar cultural repertoire for both movement participants and their target authority, U.S. legislators, given the U.S. colonization of the country. Along with this, activists also foregrounded the history of Filipino resistance to colonizers in framing their identities. For instance, in KDP's embrace of *Katipunan* in its name and reference to its activities as the Second Propaganda Movement, the fight against the Marcos dictatorship is a continuation of the nationalist movement during the Spanish colonial period, which was composed of Filipino exiles in Europe and revolutionaries in the Philippines. In making this historical connection, transnational activism against an illegitimate state is a critical component of the Philippine nation-building project. Furthermore, through naming and shaming, activists characterized Marcos not only as unfit to govern the Filipino people but also to represent them in international community due to his non-adherence to liberal democratic ideals and human rights norms. By recognizing NDF and MNLF as more suitable representatives and granting them the status of belligerency based on universal principles, the tribunal challenged the monopoly of the state to symbolize the nation.

In essence, the antidictatorship movement accomplished three outcomes that contributed to Filipino diaspora formation: (1) it denaturalized the relationship between the state and the nation in the imagination of the homeland, (2) it contested the idea that resistance to the state is an act of disloyalty to the nation, and (3) it opened up opportunities to imagine loyalty and belonging to the homeland beyond the state. However, while necessary, the development of homeland-oriented collective identities is not sufficient for a diaspora to come into being. Equally important is solidarity with co-nationals/ethnics wherever they are located. The transnational movement for migrants' rights among Filipinos was key in this aspect of diaspora construction.

## Modern-Day Anti-Heroes: The Movement for Migrants' Rights and Cross-Border Solidarity Building

The imagination of a shared homeland conceptually distinguishes diaspora from any other transnational community; however, while necessary, it is not sufficient to explain the formation of diasporas. Migrants must also create bonds with their co-nationals/-ethnics who have left the homeland and settled elsewhere. Is shared nationality and/or ethnicity enough to build these affinities? What does a permanent immigrant in the U.S. have in common with a seafarer in the Netherlands? Butler (2001, 193 [emphasis supplied]) argues that “conceptualizations of diaspora must be able to accommodate the reality of *multiple identities* and *phases of diasporization over time*.” In fact, difference and divisions are important characteristics of diaspora, not just commonality and solidarity (Anthias 1998).

This section shows how, through the migrants' rights movement, Filipinos in different countries of temporary and permanent settlement developed affective bonds with each other and created “decentered, lateral connections” (Clifford 1994, 306). As they participated in activism, they built relationships, networks, and communities rooted in their country of settlement. In the process, they also reconfigured symbolic boundaries and transformed how they saw themselves. I demonstrate in the section how narratives that reflected the violence of dislocation, alienation from the homeland, marginalization in the host countries, and empowerment through organized resistance became the ties that bound Filipino migrants together. Regardless of differences based on social class, gender, religion, or migration cohort among others, overseas Filipinos created a collective identity rooted in discourses around *displacement* (by the homeland state) and *disenfranchisement* (by the state in the countries of settlement or temporary residence).

Filipinos in the U.S. have been involved in campaigns for migrants' rights from the farmworkers' movements and union organizing since the 1920s to community activism in defense of ethnic enclaves in the 1960s. Because the community in the Netherlands is younger, and the Filipino movement for migrants' rights emerged alongside the antidictatorship movement, I focus in this paper on the processes by which they formed multiple identities based on *displacement* and *disenfranchisement* when activists simultaneously participated in the antidictatorship movement and migrants' rights movements, thereby both engaged in transnational practices and assimilation.

### *Development of Associational Life in Hostland Civil Society*

A key strategy that Filipino activists pursued in the movement against Marcos in the U.S. is lobbying legislators in Congress to decrease aid to the Philippines. To

strengthen their leverage on politicians, especially those who represented states with a sizable number of Filipinos, such as California, Hawaii, and New York, activists organized ethnic grassroots constituents and established linkages with pre-existing social movement networks and local civic organizations. Aside from convening public forums and holding demonstrations outside the Philippine consulates to display the existence of resistance in the U.S., they also met with Filipino immigrants in spaces of daily social interaction.

Activists distributed their organizations' newspaper at Asian grocery stores that Filipinos visited regularly. Since a majority of Filipinos in the U.S. were Catholics, they also went to churches every Sunday and to restaurants where parishioners celebrated the Sabbath with their families and friends. Lastly, they attended events and activities that focus on Filipino identity and cultural heritage, such as hometown fiestas, political holidays, and religious celebrations. While the initial goal of activists was to mobilize a Filipino constituency around foreign policy lobbying, an unintended outcome was their exposure to the issues and problems that Filipinos encountered every day in these autonomous public spheres. As the experience of Juana<sup>13</sup> indicates, her homeland activism brought her to political spaces where Filipinos were organizing on concerns related to their social location in the hostland.

Being an immigrant, I was initially just involved in the anti-Marcos campaign, but in the meetings, I met Filipinos who were active in some local issues such as problems with the FACLA [Filipino American Community of Los Angeles]. I got to know who they are, then I started going to their events. In these events, I met other Filipinos involved in the concerns of nurses, which I knew nothing about. Then, after a few months, I started going to more and more meetings...

Most of the anti-martial law work was done by [Filipino] immigrants. On the other hand, the Filipino-American group tackled issues regarding youth, students, labor, and so on . . . At that point, I became more 'aware' – let us use the term 'educated' instead – of the other issues facing Filipinos in the US. So I got involved with the issues around immigration and solidarity work.

(Juana, Greater Los Angeles Area, California)

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13 Because data on this part of the paper are based on life history—rather than key informant—interviews, I have changed the names of interviewees to protect their identities.

In large cities such as Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle, where Filipinos lived in ethnically and racially mixed neighborhoods, grassroots organizing for the anti-dictatorship movement also laid the foundations for inter-ethnic collaborations and civic engagement beyond the Filipino migrant communities. Activists joined Third World solidarity committees and took part in activities organized by groups such as the Central America Resource Centre. Their participation in these movements allowed activists to establish political and social relations with a segment of the U.S. population that they would not otherwise interact with intimately and see the commonality in their struggles, especially on the role of the U.S. in creating the conditions that led to their displacement and migration.

My job with the anti-martial law [movement] got me involved in solidarity work with the people of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, South Africa as well as the Iranians. The issue of anti-martial law in the Philippines is not isolated, right? . . . So there was a flow of activism and anti-imperialist work at that time. I was a member of different solidarity groups and learned from other activists about what was going on in their countries and what we need to do as immigrants and refugees here in the U.S. (Eduardo, San Francisco Bay Area, California)

In the Netherlands, the settlement of activists in Utrecht offered an opportunity for them to establish links with social movement communities. Unlike their counterparts in the U.S. who prioritized foreign policy lobbying due to the role of their hostland government in sustaining the dictatorship, the activists in the Netherlands focused on international efforts to delegitimize Marcos in the realm of public opinion. To anchor the movement against Marcos to the global struggle against dictatorship and imperialism in the Third World, the activists joined country-specific solidarity groups—such as those in support of national liberation movements in East Timor, Nicaragua, Palestine, and South Africa. The city of Utrecht provided a physical and conceptual space where activists shared, nurtured, and maintained movement symbols, rituals, and ideology through everyday activities—from attending life-event celebrations to hosting political discussions in their homes. The movement communities served as sites for social learning and strategic adaptation. As activists became incorporated into these networks, they were socialized into “the local ‘rules of the game,’” enabling them to “readjust their activist skills and experiences accordingly” (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017, 61).

We learned a lot from the Eritreans who were here before us. Many of them were members of the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front . . . When they have activities like a forum, there’s a lot of singing – very festive. And people from the audience, even if they are not Eritreans,



go up the stage and give them money. So we said, it's very important to study movements that have a lot of support here. We thought we cannot just replicate our strategies in the Philippines here. We have to know what makes them [the Dutch citizens and other immigrants] come out and back us too. (Janet, Utrecht, Netherlands [translated from Tagalog])

By being involved in multiple issues, Filipino activists were always politically engaged. Migration issues and solidarity work provided the requisite abeyance structures (Taylor 1989) for activists to nurture their values, identity, and political vision despite less visible and fewer interactions with target authorities in times of abatement of conflict in the homeland or a nonreceptive hostland environment. Thus, in times of decline in the protest cycle, activists involved in the antidictatorship movement were able to sustain commitment and achieve a sense of purpose in spaces where they organized and on issues that affected Filipino immigrants daily.

We were always waiting for something to happen in the Philippines. But there was a big ebb from the declaration of martial law until the Ninoy Aquino assassination . . . There was no upsurge . . . So, here, the approach was, while we would have periodic protests and programs, most of our day-to-day work was actually organizing Filipinos on the basis of democratic rights – police brutality, licensure discrimination, racism, stuff like that. (Rene, San Francisco Bay Area, California)

In sum, while the activists who migrated to or sought refuge in the U.S. and the Netherlands continued with their mobilization against the Marcos dictatorship upon settlement, they also became simultaneously involved in campaigns for minority rights, which points to the onset of the political assimilation process. This dual activism was due to the activists' contact with movement organizations of both U.S./Dutch citizens and other migrant/refugee populations to obtain material and symbolic support for their transnational activities. As they developed linkages with these groups that they would not have encountered had it not been for their homeland agenda, they formed a protest infrastructure based on the needs and resources of the locales and became absorbed into the civic life of the host society.

#### *Formation of Multilayered and Intersectional Identities*

Within these associations in civil society, activists interrogated their definitions of an immigrant, a citizen, and a Filipino, along with other dominant identities. In particular, activists questioned primordial ethnicity and modern nationalism as

foundations for collective identity and continued attachment to the Philippine nation-state. Their regular contact with co-ethnics from different social locations – “Filipinos they would have never even developed friendship with in the Philippines because they live in the bad side of town” (Josephine, Utrecht, Netherlands [translated from Tagalog]) – also prompted their critical self-reflection about their class position in both the Philippines and the U.S./Netherlands. These civil society spaces constituted a discursive field for the conflict-riven process of meaning-making by diverse, often opposed, actors. As they encountered Filipinos that they would not have intentionally connected with if not for their homeland activism, they were confronted with challenges to their identities and privileges as well as contradictions to their social roles. The experiences of Maria and Eduardo capture this dynamic.

Maria was a political refugee who went to the Netherlands when the CPP-NDF deployed cadres to Europe to organize overseas Filipinos in support of the revolutionary struggle. Raised in an upper middle-class household and educated in private Catholic schools, she rarely interacted with Filipinos outside of her class in the Philippines. When she moved to the Netherlands, her social circle consisted mostly of Filipino anti-dictatorship and Dutch solidarity activists as well as exiled intellectuals from other countries. Tasked to recruit Filipino domestic workers to the movement, she grappled with her class identity as she attended weekly social functions organized by labor migrants. While she was initially indifferent to the norms in these gatherings, her attitude gradually changed as she developed friendship with the women and learned about their lives. She recalls an incident that was an ‘eye-opening experience’ for her.

The women invited me to their holiday party. I went wearing only a t-shirt and a pair of jeans. I noticed that all the women were dressed in formal gowns that they had ordered months earlier from the Philippines, and I just thought how ridiculous that was. When I talked to one of the attendees wearing a gown, I was so ashamed. And it stayed with me. Until now. She said that the annual Filipino Christmas party was the only thing she looked forward to all year – that she was excited to wear a gown with all the other Filipinos in the Netherlands. I thought to myself, “How shallow.” Then she said, “It made me feel good about myself.

Wearing something nice at the Filipino party. Because, you know, the rest of the year, I scrub toilets every day, wearing dirty clothes.” I felt slapped. I was so arrogant, thinking that I am above this trivial stuff because I know better, because I am an intellectual and this is beyond me. I was so elitist. And I was supposed to organize them. Since then, whenever I attend an event, I really dress up because it

is important to them. (Maria, Tilburg, Netherlands [translated from Tagalog])

Through her frequent interactions with Filipino labor migrants, Maria also understood the demobilizing effect of their lowered class position. Some anti-dictatorship activists regarded overseas Filipino workers as apolitical by choice. Maria saw the role of structure in their decisions not to participate in homeland politics. As economic migrants forced to leave the Philippines to support their families, their objective was to earn as much income as they can and save for their eventual return. Moreover, international norms and statutes protect refugees like Maria; labor migrants, in contrast, were under the authority of the Philippine state, through the embassies, which encouraged migrants to be proper guests in the Netherlands and prohibited participation in protests. In instances where Filipinos had joined demonstrations, representatives of the consulate intervened and confiscated their passports and work permits. Thus, overseas Filipino workers did not have the privilege of social class and migrant status that would allow them to participate in transnational activities.

Maria was at the forefront in the movement for migrants' rights, particularly on the legalization of undocumented workers and assistance to victims of sex trafficking. Her work immersed her in dense networks of actors, where she developed a minority identity based on her perceived common fate with other marginalized groups in Dutch society, despite her privileged status in the Philippines. Maria eventually ran for office and won a seat in the local council in Tilburg. In a compendium of migrant stories, she wrote,

During my first ten years in The Netherlands, my social circles were limited to those active in the solidarity work for the Philippines, the overseas Filipinos, and those relevant to the care of my children such as our family doctor, their dentist, children's day care personnel, their babysitter and teachers. My first real encounter with the Dutch *masa* [masses] was when I started to work in several disadvantaged communities of Tilburg. In a way, this marked my real immersion into the Dutch society. All along I have always assumed that migrants are the worst-off group in society – that because of discrimination and racism and also due to language and cultural barriers, they are only able to take on the very low-paying and odd jobs. But in those disadvantaged communities where I worked, I saw that even a native Dutch can also live in utmost poverty. I then realized that class differences exist in all societies. The problems faced by many ethnic communities (i.e. non-Dutch) here are mainly because they are poor, and not because of their ethnicity per se. And that they share many

problems with poor locals. *I started to develop an affinity for the less-privileged people of the Dutch society, both migrants and native Dutch alike. I guess this was the point in my life when my perspective gradually changed from that of just a migrant to that of being a Tilburger.* (Butalid-Echaves 2007, 348 [emphasis added])

Eduardo went through a similar transformation as Maria. Prior to migration to the U.S., he was part of the underground movement against the Marcos dictatorship. He was reluctant to move to join his family and originally decided to stay in the U.S. only temporarily. Eduardo became a member of the KDP and lived with other activists in a collective in Oakland, California. In this space, he recognized his differences with other Filipinos due to his class upbringing, despite similarities in political ideology and ethnic culture.

My parents were not wealthy, but rich enough for us to have a good future. I was used to having maids in Manila, so I had to overcome my class background . . . For example, we had to take turns cooking, and all I could cook was this *ginataang manok* (chicken in coconut milk) that another activist taught me. I would make that every time it was my turn. They finally got fed up and they said, “No, we’re not going to eat this anymore.” . . .

There was another time, in the beginning of my stay with the collective, they would ask, “Do you want coffee?” And I would say, “Yeah, sure.” They would ask, “Oh did you make it?” “On second thought I don’t want coffee.” . . .

I was not challenged by my comrades [about my class] in the Philippines the same way as my comrades here in the U.S. [did]. Even though a lot of the Filipino activists here were part of the underground movement in the Philippines, they were all *petit bourgeois*, highly educated. But there are a lot of the Fil-Am [Filipino-American] activists here, their parents were farm workers. So there was also a little bit of cultural clash between the two [Filipino nationals and Filipino Americans]. (Eduardo, San Francisco Bay Area, California)

At the outset, Eduardo’s commitment to KDP was confined to the anti-dictatorship movement, where he organized demonstrations and established links with the U.S. Left. But as he lived with U.S.-born Filipino activists, he became more aware of the struggles of his co-ethnics in the U.S. and developed a desire to learn about “this part of Filipino history that was not taught to us in the Philippines.” Within the movement communities in the Bay Area, Eduardo discovered for the first time the long history of

Filipino radical activism in the U.S., including protest repertoires and an oppositional culture nurtured by the previous generations. The *manongs* (older brother) residing in the I-Hotel told tales about their hard lives in the Philippines before they left for the U.S., the trauma of being uprooted and trying to make it in America despite racism, the solidarity forged with other ethnic and racial groups due to shared fate, and the hope and contradictions of collective resistance through union organizing. His interactions with *manongs* inspired Eduardo to travel to Delano, California, to investigate the problems that farm workers, including non-Filipinos, faced.

Activists also gained personal knowledge on the ways in which the racial structure in the Netherlands and the U.S. limited the choices of those at the bottom of the racial hierarchy in these societies. Coming from a racially homogenous country, where most of the activists belonged to ethnolinguistic groups that collectively possessed economic and political power, they were “not sensitive about race” (Cristina, Amsterdam, Netherlands) because “it was not part of our upbringing” (Conrado, Tilburg, Netherlands). As they met Filipino migrants who experienced discrimination in their workplaces, their involvement in homeland activism became the first stage in their socialization into racial politics that helped them develop a lens to understand their own racialization.

When I was in the Philippines, my knowledge of race was theoretical. I would read about it, for instance, on the case of Palestinians in Israel. But it was not my day-to-day experience growing up. Classism, yes, not racism. Because I did not belong to an ethnic minority. I am Kapampangan, one of the largest groups in the Philippines. So, in New York, where I first settled, I did not really think much about race, because my reference point was still the Philippines. Then when I talked to Filipino nurses and doctors about the Marcos dictatorship, I learned that they were discriminated heavily by management and patients because they were not white. Slowly, I began to see race in my day-to-day experience. I started to notice I would be the only non-white person in my class in NYU [New York University] and professors treated me differently because I spoke with an accent. (Leonora, San Francisco Bay Area, California, USA)

Lastly, while nationalism can easily mobilize emotions such as love, loyalty, and pride, especially during high points of contention, the territorial nation-state as a basis for collective identification and solidarity can also be called into question as the processes of migration, displacement, and resettlement often lead actors to reconfigure the boundaries of the “imagined community” (Anderson 1991) and/or to seek belonging in other communities to make sense of their experiences. As the activists developed

associational life in the hostland, they began to contest the discourses of resistance into which they were socialized in the Philippine national liberation movement. Their main critique is the primacy put on loyalty to the homeland nation and commitment to the fight for regime change above all struggles.

For Luisa, a political refugee in the Netherlands, this framework was not grounded on the economic, political, and social realities that migrants faced every day. Organizing Filipinos in the Netherlands – most of them low-skilled workers in Amsterdam and Rotterdam with temporary or undocumented status – entailed addressing first the problems tied to their position in Dutch society. She observed that Filipinos were ambivalent about joining the antidictatorship movement; however, their networks were easily mobilized on issues related to their status as migrants and workers – their main collective identification in their host society. For instance, the Filipino migrant community provided support to seafarers of all nationalities who went on strike for six weeks at the port of Rotterdam in the winter of 1978, demanding fair wages and decent living conditions from their employer. Other Filipino migrants in the Netherlands supported the seafarers and raised resources to maintain the strikers' daily needs. This led to the development of social movement unionism, wherein migrant organizations were built principally to defend and promote their rights in the host country. Luisa, who was involved in the strikes and strongly identifies as a “working-class immigrant” despite her entry to the Netherlands as a refugee, claims this as a pivotal moment that made her question the ascendancy of identification with the Philippine nation-state in the antidictatorship movement's repertoires.

As activists weaved multiple narratives of Filipino migrants as well as confronted and navigated challenges to their class, race, and nationality, they extended the bedrock for the construction of their political identities. For instance, in advocating support for the presidency of Jackson, Rene – a former student activist in the Philippines who was arrested at a demonstration in front of the U.S. embassy in Manila during Vice President Spiro Agnew's visit in 1969 – wrote in the KDP newsletter an article calling for unity with other minority groups in the U.S.

. . . Deep down, Filipinos realise that no matter what, they are still part of the voiceless, powerless and disregarded sectors of the population that Jackson speaks for and about. Many Filipinos may have forgotten their predecessors in the 20's and 30's were exploited in the backbreaking jobs in California and Hawaiian farms, forbidden to marry outside their race and confronted by 'No Filipinos Allowed' signs in restaurants and hotels. The truth is, even today race and national oppression – a system that has victimized Blacks, Native

Americans, Mexicans, Asians and other minorities – are still part of the Filipino experience in America. Only the forms have changed . . .

Thus, activists' contact with older Filipino migrants, native-born co-ethnics, and non-Filipino activists and subsequent immersion into the civil societies in the U.S. and the Netherlands catalyzed the interrogation of their class, racial, and national identities and change in the discursive and experiential foundations of their collective identification and their movement priorities. Would multilayered and intersectional identities have formed without the Filipino activists' development of civic life in the U.S. and the Netherlands? Should the activists have limited their social interactions to their transplanted networks, they would not have seen the interconnectedness of their struggle with other migrant and refugee groups and the shared history, fate, and interests with other members of the population in their host societies.

### *Conclusion*

In both the U.S. and the Netherlands, Filipino activists tried to develop a constituency around the antidictatorship struggle in sites where there already existed a migrant civil society and a movement community by the native-born population. As the activists developed associational life in their host societies, they encountered members of the hostland population that they would not have met otherwise and learned the political culture of their localities. We saw this in the activists' participation in organized public events, such as strikes and demonstrations as well as quotidian activities in alternative living arrangements and autonomous public spaces, such as ethnic groceries, churches, and community centers. These different forms of social interactions – from public claims making to “everyday politics” (Yates 2015) – facilitated the creation of dense ties and networks and introduced migrants to counterhegemonic ideas and discourses that became the foundation for interpreting their positions and roles in the hostland.

While embeddedness in hostland civil society is necessary, it is not sufficient to explain the assimilative effect of homeland activism. The main contribution of this article is specifying the agency-centered mechanism and process – brokerage and transformation of political identities – that lead to this outcome. The stories of the Filipino activists demonstrate that as they acquired an organic understanding of how the social structures in the U.S. and the Netherlands shape the life chances of their co-ethnics and other marginalized groups, they began to question their multiple identities – as Filipinos, immigrants, refugees, citizens, and workers – and recognized common experiences, grievances, and goals with members of the population in their hostlands. Within these civil society spaces, the migrant activists expanded the framework for the construction of their identities and developed group discourses and narratives to make claims as political subjects in both the homeland and the hostland. The stories,

thus, point to the “unstable terrain of contested membership” in social movements (Gamson 1997, 192) that allows members to negotiate the boundaries of groupness, as the external “them” and the constitution of “us” change.

## Discussion and Open Forum

Dr. Joel Rocamora started his comments by commending Dr. Quinsaas’s clear thesis. He then engaged the work by complicating the main argument which, for him, is the job of the academic. Dr. Rocamora introduced two propositions. One is that diaspora is not so much a connection of Overseas Filipinos to “Filipinoness” because probably half of the Filipinos who have been abroad for a very long time are people who go in and out of the Philippines. Rather, most of these Filipinos maintain connection to their families because of remittances. Relatedly, the other proposition maintains that diaspora is not a unilinear process. For Dr. Rocamora, there are situations that appear to have some elements of diaspora facilitated by a certain connection to a nation that may be disrupted or weakened by certain events or situations.

As such, he proposed that diaspora has to do with the existence of a nation. The way he looks at nationhood is in terms of specific occasions in the history of a country where something happens or some project occurs that unifies people of all classes. He claimed:

[t]hat is when we have a nation – we have Philippine revolution 1896-1898, EDSA. But the rest of the time, I would submit we really do not have a nation. We have OFWs and we have the rest of the country. . . . It is possible to think, to have as an ambition the creation of – if not permanent a long-term unification of a nation.

He added that *Katipunan ng Demokratikong Pilipino* (Union of Democratic Filipinos [KDP]) and International Association of Filipino Patriots (IAFP) were organizations run by a party unit in the United States. The brightest and most energetic leaders of the party decided that they wanted to see if they could establish a communist movement in the United States, a communist party in the U.S. The direction that they pursued took them away ideologically from the Communist Party of the Philippines. People who wanted to organize a new communist party in the U.S. leaned in the direction of reform Soviet communism. What this did was split the movement. In fact, the support movement had to be rebuilt because Filipino Americans supported the project to create a new U.S. communist party. The large part of the organized groups in the U.S. that actually led the anti-dictatorship movement in the U.S. got separated from the National Democratic Front in the Philippines. For example, soon after migrant rights organizing happened, Dr. Rocamora was redeployed to Holland.



In Europe, in the Netherlands, the split took the form of one group being run by Jose Maria Sison and another newly set up group. This had very serious consequences for the whole solidarity movement in the Philippines. By way of conclusion, Dr. Rocamora reiterated his main point: the formation/construction of diasporic Filipino nationality cannot be seen as something that is unilinear but can go forward and then backward.

Dr. Aguilar congratulated Dr. Quinsaas for her work and wished to read the whole manuscript to be able to know the complete story. The proposition on the non-unilinear nature of diaspora made Dr. Aguilar think of the anti-Marcos movement and the lack of rationale to keep the movement going once Marcos left power. For him, Dr. Quinsaas seemed to argue that there is an active diaspora that builds on, which might eventually have a purpose. He suggested “that does not seem to be the case. I do not think we should force the story, a narrative that there is a movement that builds on. There is no central trajectory to diaspora.”

He also pointed out that the issue of diaspora is viewed differently from the homeland. He observed that the issues she is engaging within the American literature and academia are not the issues prominent in the Philippines. Given that there might be a certain pressure to be part of academic bandwagon in the U.S., Dr. Aguilar thinks there is no pressure to actually be latching on to the literature in the U.S. It is really a difficult decision to choose from which perspective to view the topic. In particular, he drew attention to the notion of “homecoming” in Dr. Quinsaas’s definition of diaspora and suggested that some of the older literature written from the Jewish perspective feature this “dream of return.” He noted that the dream of return is always contentious. And for some, it is already a diaspora even without the myth of return.

What Dr. Aguilar found most interesting is the history of the Anti-Marcos movement. His “unsolicited advice” is to block off other parts of the work and come up with a book that focuses on the anti-Marcos movement because that would be a tremendous contribution to the literature and to Philippine studies. While this history of the anti-Marcos movement might not necessarily fit within the intellectual fashion in the U.S., it would be a great service to Philippine studies to be able to map out the anti-Marcos movement and the divisions and complex responses to that in the U.S. He added that one can make an argument from the perspective of migration that boils down to social movements.

Dr. Aguilar also noted that there is an interesting argument in the literature that maintains that one must be able to identify with a nation rather than a state. He said that we must realize that that is the same argument of the Philippine state in giving dual citizenship to natural-born Filipinos who have naturalized in other countries. For him, there is something interesting that is going on in this myth of Filipinoness that

leftists and the establishment state give as justification for what they are doing. There is the same mentality about the nation.

Another thing that, for Dr. Aguilar, is worth pursuing is the case studies on members of the movement who went overseas and for the first time realize their class position overseas, in the Philippines, and in the movement. He asked, "Why is it that they begin to be conscious only about their class overseas rather than in the Philippines in a class-based movement? This is a major paradox."

Finally, he cast attention to the "slight pivot" towards the hostland once activists begin to assimilate. The center is now in fact in the destination. He pointed out that,

The class solidarity that they find overseas, they realize the connectedness to other workers like themselves in other countries. In a sense, this minimizes their concern for the homeland because now there is a bigger world that they are engaged in. This cosmopolitanism seems to have minimized their patriotism. So this is a paradox.

Dr. Quinsaats thanked the discussants for their incisive comments and responded to them. On diaspora as a non-linear process, Dr. Quinsaats suggested that taking a social movement approach highlights the ebb and flow in mobilization. For example, after Marcos dictatorship, it is indeed important to talk about the kinds of collective identities emerging, which is a chapter in her dissertation. A lot of the activists she interviewed said that they actually became very inspired by the anti-dictatorship movement. But after Martial Law, they said they had to focus on their own lives after having delayed marriage, childbirth, etc. They wanted to be active where they are because that is where their kids are going to grow up. According to Dr. Quinsaats, "Maybe it is a different type of diaspora formation, but it is still an ongoing process. The project is never complete. It is always continuous. There is always a nation formation."

Concurring with Dr. Rocamora, she noted that some of the organizers and activists were critical of the party central committee. There were rumors and name-calling. According to her, the construction of diaspora is always not based on particularistic interests such as nationalism; it is also based on universal themes like human rights and democracy.

In terms of the proliferation of diaspora as a topic and the academic perspectives being used to examine it, Dr. Quinsaats had this to say:

Whenever I attended the Association of American Studies, I feel like I am not part of it, too, because they also have a very the dominance of the group supportive of the NDF or the RAs [Reaffirmists]

– there is an uncritical adulation of the Philippine revolutionary. They do not consider me like Filipino American. The primacy of identity politics is of course very important to them. The way they engage with literature on empire, still U.S. is the point of reference whenever they critique or [examine the] construction of nationhood. But as you can see now, there are various ways in which to look at the relation [of the Philippines] to other states [and continents] such as Europe, Asia, Middle East, etc.

There are multiple ways by which Filipino migrants construct “belonging.” A lot of Filipino Americans and Filipino Dutch always think about the homeland in relation to visits, but they do not think of themselves as coming back and settling. There are those who settle, but she noticed that the idea of return is gendered. On one hand, a lot of the Filipino Dutch women do not want to come back and settle in the Philippines because, as women, they feel they do not belong to a nation where the gender relations are not what they are used to. They shared stories during their visits in the Philippines where their relatives would make sexist and rape jokes. Further, a lot of the Filipino American and Filipino Dutch women are married to white men. On the other hand, the Filipino American men are somehow located at the bottom of the “attractiveness scale.” So for them, they feel that they belong to the Philippines more because people find them attractive here.

Dr. Quinsaas relies on the storytelling of her participants, an inductive approach, to examine what belonging means. In her work, she is developing a theory of what it is to belong for a lot of second-generation immigrants. She finds that the stories are often mediated and negotiated by class identity. Even the first generation, for example, would share that what they miss in the Philippines is having maids in contrast to the Netherlands where they have to do everything. The way they define belonging is related to a certain level of comfort. Some would say, “When we go to Philippines, my dad changes. Here, it is a very egalitarian relationship, my mother and father. My dad helps out in the laundry, etc. We go to the Philippines and my dad is just sitting and expecting his sisters to cook for him, etc.” Another one said, “When we came here, we have to take these unskilled jobs [like] being janitors.” For Dr. Quinsaas, their lower class position became a way of seeing that they are marginalized in the hostland.

Racialization also plays a role. One said, “I always thought that Filipino Americans complain too much about race and then I come here and it’s true. People are very racist.” During the Open Forum, someone from the audience asked about the theoretical conceptualization of diaspora. He noticed that the key concepts often used are pinoyness and loyalty to the homeland. He asked, “Does it have to be belongingness and loyalty?” “Is diaspora really about roots, or about routes?” For him, identification

is not the same as belonging. His other point on diaspora is its perceived necessary identification with the homeland, which is assumed as a singular place when it is not. For him, the homeland is imagined differently depending on class or culture. He further asked, "Is it necessarily the nation?" He noted that a more ethnographic approach reveals that migrants are more likely to identify with the localities in the Philippines than with the Philippines itself. Lastly, he also interrogated the work in terms of the applicability of the concepts. He inquired whether the concepts generated by Dr. Quinsaats would still be applicable in the context of Europeans going to America during the past century, of African slaves taken to the United States, or of the Chinese brought to the U.S.

Dr. Teresa Encarnacion Tadem, Executive Director of UP CIDS, wanted to know how migration as a strong issue impacted on the organizing of CPP in the U.S. and the Netherlands in terms of the anti-Marcos movement. In the Philippines, this issue is one cause of the split whereby ethnicity and gender are seen as secondary to class. Secondly and related to this, she pointed out that there is so much talk about homeland and nation, but the socialist ideology does not focus on the nation and nationalism. There seems to be a contradiction. Lastly, the focus of the case study is organizing migrant rights, and a lot of help from Europe is fundraising to support the revolution in the Philippines. She asked, "Were their organizing derailed because they were confronted with a community whose main concern is migrant rights and migration?"

In response, Dr. Quinsaats referred to her slide on the NDF program for organizing migrants and its requirement on the loyalty to the Philippines. This led her to question NDF then if it really believed in proletarian internationalism. For her, if NDF does, they would not have written that. They would also not have kicked out KDP who is trying to build a communist party and organize around workers' rights in the U.S. As a critique, some organizers also asked, "Why are you not considering us as part of the Philippine nation just because we have U.S. citizenship?" It is for these reasons, among others, that Dr. Quinsaats considers the NDF more of a national liberation movement, a nationalist movement, rather than a movement for proletarian internationalism.

On the theoretical conception of diaspora, Dr. Quinsaats pointed to the literature on symbolic ethnicity, which relates conceptions of diaspora to belonging, national loyalty, and identification (e.g., Irish Americans identifying to be part of Ireland because it is part of their ancestry). She claims that she does not want to de-emphasize these, but her focus is approaching the concept of diaspora through transnational practices within communities. Constructing diaspora with a focus on practices, such as practices of activism, practices of consumption of goods from the Philippines, practices of wearing the Philippine flag, does not assume that there are primordial origins of a transnational community. A focus on practices highlights the processes of diaspora

formation. Another way of diaspora formation could be the hometown association. For example, some migrants would say that they could identify more with a barrio/town association or alumni association of an elementary school than with Migrante who tried to organize in their locality.

In terms of the tropes of “roots and routes,” she problematized the issue of return. Some Filipino Americans who come here and do exposure trips do not settle here. She wondered that perhaps discovering roots as a return does not really have to be physical, that is, they do not have to come here and live with us.

Speaking to the issue of theoretical generalizability, Dr. Quinsaas said that the reason she highlights the process of loyalty, identity formation, dislocation, and narratives is that she wants the work to be relevant to African diaspora and other diasporic formations.

Dr. Aguilar added that we would need to ask individual Filipino Americans why they want to come back and trace their roots. In most cases, we would find that they want to find out their ancestral homeland – whatever their roots are – in order to fit into American society. The pivot is still towards the Filipino-American society in the U.S.

Dr. Rocamora observed that the class consciousness of Filipinos moving to the U.S. is very unstable. When they arrived in the U.S., they buy commodities that only the upper class in the Philippines gets, such as a house, a car, a refrigerator, or a beautiful sofa. However, when it comes to employment, what they get are lower class jobs. Therefore, it becomes difficult for people to say where their class location is. The result of this precariousness is being conservative, such as the support for Duterte and so on. For him, that might be one of the explanations why Filipino Americans are so politically conservative.

Dr. Quinsaas shared that she started doing analysis of survey data on the origin of political conservatism, including the Donald Trump supporters. Three patterns of conservatism are significant among Filipino immigrants. First, the higher one's income is, the more conservative and more likely he/she is to vote for Trump. Second, religion is a predictor. The more religious one is (measured in terms of attendance to masses), the more likely he/she is conservative and would support Trump. Third pattern has to do with the concept of ethnic/racial homophily. The more one interacts with Filipinos, the more likely he/she is going to be conservative and support Trump. Interaction with fellow Filipinos becomes an echo chamber (whose coordinates are class and religion) reinforcing conservative views. Another thing that she found is that one's high consumption of fake news is more likely to lead to conservative views. She announced that she is set to do ethnography to triangulate the findings.

When it comes to *Filipinos for Trump* and Filipino Republicans, she still emphasized the process of formation of conservative politics. Particularly, she is interested in how Filipino Republicans make sense of Trump going after immigrants.

She stated that in the Netherlands, the stories of Filipinos supporting Duterte are interesting. They would share that they have been very tired there. They have five jobs – cleaning five bathrooms, five houses. They say that Duterte is the only reason why they can come home. They look at Duterte as a way for them to escape their exploitation or their suffering. They believe discipline, suffering, and Duterte will be keys to progress. They would say that when they come home, their money would easily run out because their relatives would ask for it. They say it is time to bring back discipline. They say that Filipinos abroad use the pedestrian lane, but when they come home, they would not follow the law. They forget discipline when they come home to the Philippines.

On stories relating to class politics, a participant shared, “*Okay lang na mahirap ako dito kasi sa Pilipinas naman meron akong bahay na may limang rooms.* (It is okay that I am poor here [in Rome] because anyway in the Philippines I have a house with five rooms.)” Another way of making sense of their marginalization is comparing themselves with workers of other nationalities by taking pride in the fact that Filipinos are the most preferred maids in Italy because they know how to speak English, etc.

Dr. Aguilar added that class relations have become a transnational process. It is really possible for them to have a very complicated class consciousness, thinking that they could be an ordinary proletariat in Italy but a property owner back in the Philippines. On Filipino Americans who settled in the U.S., he posited that the story could be somewhat different. These are the people who do not dream of return, never like the migrant workers who always think that they might come back someday when they stop working. On the question of political conservatism, he asked, “What makes Filipinos in the U.S. like Trump?”

Although she admitted that she does not have enough data to generalize yet, Dr. Quinsaat said that a lot of the attraction among Filipino Americans is Trump’s rhetoric on halting the taking of their taxes which are only given to homeless people. The narrative of the American dream remains powerful (“pulling yourself in the bootstraps”) by distancing themselves from undocumented, “lazy” Latinos and other non-whites. They claim that they “did the whole thing [immigration] properly,” but the undocumented people just came to the U.S. and take their money. Dr. Quinsaat believes that this is not just a particular moment in Trump politics. This can be traced to the deeply conservative tendencies of Filipino communities in the U.S. She said she is still in the process of making sense of this phenomenon, particularly on how they distance themselves from non-whites.

Dr. Rocamora suggested that it might be possible to find an explanation within the complex of populism. Duterte's populism has similar characteristics to Trump's populism. They are both vulgar and crass.

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